

Learning English spells 'opportunity'



Two-year-old Elias Renteria sleeps on father Ruben Renteria's shoulder at the Family Literacy Program in Pierson. Ruben Renteria and his family have participated in the program for two years. He is now working toward earning his GED. [NEWS-JOURNAL PHOTOS/NIGEL COOK]

Program helps Pierson immigrants break down language barriers

By Pat Rice

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PIERSON — Ruben Renteria was running a little late one evening earlier this week. He had to finish his plumbing job before he could make it the Family Literacy Program at Mission San Jose Church, where he is a star pupil.

"I want to thank you guys,"

Renteria told organizers during an open house to show off the success of the program. "I want to be prepared because I've got a big family. I want to be better for them, and for me, too."

For the past two years, the Family Literacy Program has cracked a language barrier in northwest Volusia County, where many families are immigrants and their first language is Spanish.

See **LANGUAGE, B8**



Severa Cruz participates in an English reading class at the Family Literacy Program at the Mission San Jose Church in Pierson. The program is sponsored by Food Brings Hope and Daytona State College, and received funding through the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.

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