



Involve Your Child in “Doing Mathematics”

Parents are a child's first teacher. There are many things you can do to help your child be ready to succeed in school. The things you do with your child - the everyday moments you spend together - can be filled with conversations and activities that will help your son or daughter develop the skills needed to be school ready. Math is all around us – in your home, outside, in the library, everywhere you go. Try these *ParentTips* so your child will be math ready.

INFANT:

- Lay a comfy blanket down on the grass and lie underneath a tree with your baby. Talk about the number of trees, branches, and leaves you see. Talk about how strong the wind is blowing. Repeat the word tree and let your baby touch the tree's leaves and trunk.
- Hug, snuggle, kiss and talk to your baby. Stimulating your baby's senses prepares her for the kind of thinking that will help her learn to solve problems later.

TODDLER:

- Try a cooking project where you can make a rainbow snack together. Pick out an assortment of healthy foods of different colors—yellow bananas, red watermelon, green grapes, blueberries, etc. Let your child choose what to have as his snack and talk about how many fruits and different things he can eat. What does he think is the best-tasting color?
- Play “Pop the Bubble” outside. Tell your child that her job will be to try and “catch” and count as many bubbles as she can and pop them. Start blowing bubbles and watch her rush to catch them. As you play, you can sing (to the tune of Pop Goes the Weasel): Round and round the grassy yard my baby chases bubbles, Pop goes the bubbles!

PRESCHOOLERS:

- Cut play dough into shapes, then cut the shapes into pieces and talk about parts and wholes.
- Make an obstacle course with things to go over, under, through, and around. Give your child directions: “Go under the kitchen table and around the trash can.” Talk with your child about which obstacles she goes “under,” which she goes “around,” and so on.
- Ask your child questions that compare things, such as: “Which of those trees is taller?” “Which of us has more cereal?” or “Is our car going faster or slower than the blue car?”
- Drop food coloring into water, and talk about the different colors. Let your child mix colors to see what happens.
- In the bathtub, help your child to see how different things sink or float in water: a sponge, a spoon, a toy boat, and a bar of soap.
- Collect leaves on a walk, and help your child to arrange them by color, shape, edges, and size. You can do the same thing with pebbles, wildflowers, or other things you find.