

Mathematics at home

Talk together and have fun with numbers and patterns

Help your child to:

- find numbers around your home and neighbourhood – clocks, letterboxes, speed signs
- count forwards and backwards (clocks, fingers and toes, letterboxes, action rhymes, signs)
- make patterns when counting "clap 1, stamp 2, clap 3, stamp 4, clap 5..."
- do sums using objects such as stones or marbles eg $2 + 3$, $4 + 1$, $5 + 4$
- make up number stories – "you have 2 brothers and 2 sisters. There are 4 of them"

Here's a tip - maths is an important part of everyday life and there are lots of ways you can make it fun for your child.

Use easy, everyday activities

Involve your child in:

- preparing and sharing out food – "two for me and two for you". Ask, "How many for each of us?"
- talking about time – "lunchtime", "storytime", "bedtime"
- using words in everyday play like "under", "over", "between", "around", "behind", "up", "down", "heavy", "light", "round", "circle", "yesterday", "tomorrow". You can get library books with these words and ideas in them too
- asking questions like "How many apples do we need for lunches? What do you think the weather is going to be like today/tomorrow? What are we going to do next?"

Here's a tip - use lots of mathematics words as your child is playing to develop their understanding of early mathematics (eg "over", "under", "first, second, third", "round", "through", "before", "after"). Use the language that works best for you and your child.

For wet afternoons/school holidays/weekends

Get together with your child and:

- play with water using different shaped containers and measuring cups in the sink or bath
- bake – talk to your child about the recipe/ingredients using words like "how many?" "how much?" "more". Count how many teaspoons of baking soda are needed, how many cups of flour, how many muffin cases
- play dress-ups and getting dressed, use words like "short", "long", and ask questions like "what goes on first?", "what goes on next?", "does it fit?"
- create a 'sorting box' with all sorts of 'treasure' – bottle tops, shells, stones, poi, toys, acorns, pounamu (greenstone), cardboard shapes, leaves. Ask questions like "how many?", "which is the biggest group?", "which is the smallest?", "how many for each of us?"
- do jigsaw puzzles, play card and board games and build with blocks.

Here's a tip - being positive about mathematics is really important for your child's learning – even if you didn't enjoy it or do well at it yourself at school.