

## Helping Your Child With Maths At Home

There are 3 main ways in which you can help your child with maths at home.

### 1. Involving children in stories, rhymes and games

When you read to your children or they read to you, discuss any aspects of maths that arises in the stories. Remember this doesn't just involve number but could be time, shape, space, pattern or measures.

Games teach them about many aspects of number and often involve the use of dice. Encourage your children to do the mental calculations and ask them how they worked out the answer. You may be surprised at some of their strategies.

### 2. Talking maths with your children

In the following activity areas there is ample opportunity to extend vocabulary and provide mathematical experiences which are relevant and enjoyable. Areas you might involve your children could include:

- Meal times
- Cooking
- Outdoors
- Shopping
- Wrapping presents

Talk to your children about what they have done at school. Don't be discouraged or alarmed if they deny having done any maths; much of the mathematical work that goes on in school is in the form of play activities. Many activities which have no obvious link with maths can prove a rich source of mathematical talk which will extend their ideas and vocabulary.

- Think of the simple shapes that you can see
- How many times do you see numbers written down?
- Which plants in the garden are tallest?
- What do you need to cook a meal?

Many of our children's free play has some mathematical content. Conversation and thoughtful questions can help in concept formation.

- How many are coming to teddy's tea party?
- Have I laid enough places?
- Are there enough sandwiches for 2 each?

- What shapes can I cut the sandwiches?
- How many cups can I fill from this jug?
- Can I build a garage for 2 cars?

Water and sand play are useful ways of developing concepts of volume and capacity. Use a range of containers to pour and fill.

- Which do you think holds more?
- Were you right?

Not all questions need a correct answer. 'What do you notice?' or 'What do you think?' 'What will happen if...?' are good ways to get your children thinking.

### 3. Share your everyday maths with your child

- Can I push the trolley through that gap?
- Will all the food fit in the cupboard?
- Have I enough money to pay for it?
- How many places do we need to set for tea?
- Are there enough cups?
- Are there more dishes than glasses?
- What shape is the frying pan?
- What will happen to the dough when I roll it out?
- How many bulbs can fit in this garden?
- Are there more red flowers than yellow ones?

You will be amazed at how many different aspects of maths you use daily. Look at the numbers around the home and when going for a walk. Find the shapes when you visit the park. Look for patterns in wallpaper.

Have fun with maths.