

Everyday ways to support your child with Maths – Information for parents

Your child has been experiencing and learning mathematical ideas since they were born. Mathematics is everywhere, and is for everyone – all children are mathematical! Mathematics is an important tool that helps us to make sense of our world, and children can be supported to engage and to be playful with the mathematical concepts and ideas that exist in their homes, educational settings, and in the wider world.

Here are some tips on how you can incorporate mathematical learning into your child's everyday activities:



Mark and count down to special occasions on a calendar.

Talk about the days of the week and the months/seasons of the year. Discuss what happened yesterday, or what will happen tomorrow/the day after tomorrow.

Encourage your child to use a weekly/monthly planner or diary.

Talk about daily schedules with your child, e.g., lunch time is at 1 o'clock, bed time is at 7 o'clock, etc. Point out these times on digital/analogue clocks.

Involve your child when clearing out clothing, toys, books, etc. Categorise items, e.g., 'keep', 'donate', 'recycle'.

Practice sharing items, such as food and toys, equally.

Talk to your child about measures that are relevant to them, e.g., their height, shoe size, etc.

Explore and play with containers of different shapes and sizes. Talk about what holds more/less, what is empty/full, etc.

Encourage your child to use scales, measuring cups and jugs, etc. to accurately measure ingredients.

Talk about patterns that you can see, such as animal patterns, patterns on clothing, etc. Make patterns using buttons, beads, etc.

Support your child to organise clothes seasonally, and to sort clothes before washing, e.g., organising by whites and colours, following laundry care labels.

Encourage your child to help with sorting and organising clothes, e.g., pairing socks, putting clothes in the correct place in the wardrobe.

Go on a walk and look for shapes and patterns in nature.

Involve your child in shopping trips. Encourage them to think about what is in the cupboard/fridge, and what needs to be added to the shopping list.

Involve your child in gift-wrapping.

When going on a walk or drive, talk about the route you will take.

Encourage your child to use maps (physical or digital) to plan routes efficiently. For long journeys, talk about the towns/counties that you will travel through, landmarks you might pass, etc.

Talk to your child about promotions and special offers. Ask questions such as: Is it better value to share a large popcorn, or to buy two small popcorns?

Include your child in cooking/baking activities and talk about the quantities of ingredients, the steps in the recipe, the time taken, and so on.

Adjust recipes based on the number of servings needed.

Engage in pretend play with your child, e.g., playing post office, restaurant, shop.

Look at and talk about road signs. Ask questions such as: What shape is the sign? What does the number/symbol on the sign mean? Which town is the furthest away?

Draw your child's attention to speed limits, car speedometers, etc. Discuss how long a journey might take if driving at 80kph/100kph, etc.