

Focus on Math

Information for parents from School District 72

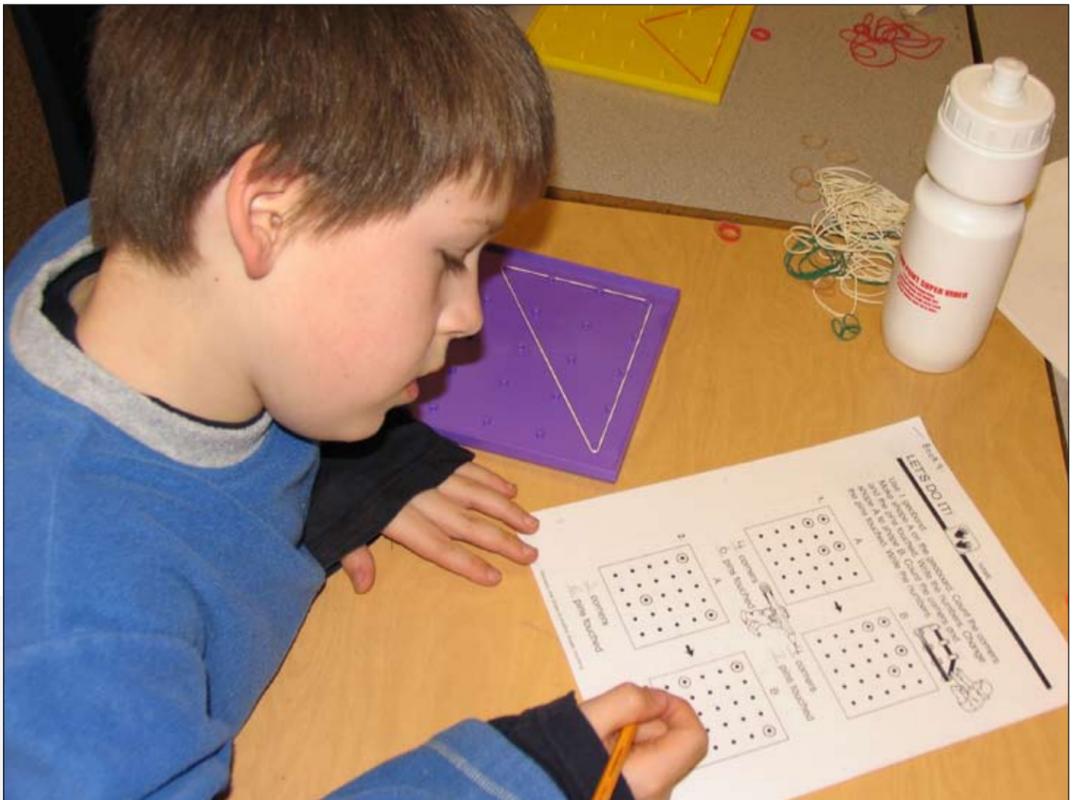
Teachers help build a child's mathematical thinking, but parents can help set the tone for math success.

Many students feel uncertain about their mathematical ability or have a fear of math. Children need to know that math isn't just something they learn at school. Math is everywhere. Whether we are aware of it or not, we use our numeracy skills every day at work, home and leisure.

Children need to make sense of math by doing, seeing, and talking about math connections with their lives. Children who learn to make sense of math in this way build a strong base in working with numbers.

As part of our *Focus on Math*, School District 72 is pleased to share with you some tips on how to have fun with math, talk about it and help your child be aware of math in everyday life.

For more information about numeracy and helping your child with math, contact your local school.



Set the tone for math success

Be positive about math!

Let your child know that everyone can learn math and that you think math is important and fun. Try to avoid saying "I was never good at math" or "I never liked math." Children are quick to copy their parents; quite often if they think a parent struggled with math they will assume that they will as well.

Make math part of your child's day.

Include your child in everyday activities that involve math – making purchases, measuring ingredients, counting out plates and utensils for dinner.

Encourage your child to give explanations.

When your child is trying to solve a problem, ask what he or she is thinking. If your child seems puzzled, ask him or her to tell you what doesn't make sense. Talking about their ideas and how they reach solutions helps children learn to reason mathematically. Treat errors as opportunities to help your child learn something new.

Numeracy websites

There are many websites for mathematics games. Here are a few that can help children develop their math understanding.

www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/LearnPtnrs/math.html

This site is full of games and activities to do at home within everyday activities.

www.eduplace.com/math/brain

This site introduces a new problem-solving brainteaser every Wednesday. It begins at a Grade 3 level and is suitable for any primary children who are ready for challenging problems.

www.kidsdomain.com/games/math2.html

This site contains about 20 games for young children focusing on counting and number recognition. It also has a section for older children.

Did you know...

Campbell River School District is a provincial leader in developing online course support with streaming video lessons and quizzes available on the Internet.

Principles of Math 10 tutorials are currently available online and material for Principles of Math 11 is in development.

For more information on how to access the online tutorials and how your child could best use them to support their regular classroom learning, please speak with your child's math teacher.

For safety, children should always be supervised when on the computer. Math games are also more fun when played with a parent. Talk about concepts and verbalize thinking.

Math is everywhere!

Fun math activities for the family

1 Count everything! Sing counting songs and read counting books. Count toys, kitchen utensils, and items of clothing as they come out of the dryer. Help your child count by pointing to and moving the objects as you say each number out loud. Count forwards and backwards from different starting places. Use household items to practice adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing.

2 Ask your child to help you solve everyday number problems. "We need six tomatoes to make our sauce for dinner, and we have only two. How many more do we need to buy?"

3 Practice "skip counting". Together, count by 2's and 5's. Ask your child how far he or she can count by 10's. Ask your child to try counting backwards from 10, 20, or even 100.

4 Estimate the number of steps from your front door to the edge of your yard, then walk with your child to find out how many there really are, counting steps as you go.

5 Include your child in activities that involve measurements. Have your child measure the ingredients in a recipe. Trade equal amounts of money. How many pennies do you need to trade for a nickel? For a dime?

6 Play "I spy", looking for different shapes. "I spy something that is round." "I spy something that is rectangular." "I spy something that looks like a cone."

7 Go on a "shape hunt". Have your child look for as many circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles as he or she can find in the home or outside. Do the same with three-dimensional objects like cubes, cones, spheres, and cylinders.

8 Make a food chart. Create a chart to record the number of apples, oranges, bananas, and other fruit your family eats each day. At the end of the month, have your child count the number of pieces of each type of fruit eaten. Ask how many more of one kind of fruit were eaten than of another. What was your family's least favourite?

The full performance standards for numeracy, reading, writing, and social responsibility can be accessed through the Ministry of Education web page at www.bced.gov.bc.ca.

