"DO-ANYTIME" MATH ACTIVITIES

Mathematics means more when it is rooted in real-life situations. The following activities allow children to practice mathematical skills while riding in a car, doing chores, helping with shopping, and performing other everyday routines. These "do-anytime" activities are organized by mathematics topics from the Everyday Mathematics program.

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Visual Patterns, Number Patterns, and Counting

- Practice counting past the "100 number barrier." Start from different numbers, such as 81, 92, 68, 101.
- Count orally by twos to forty, by fives to one hundred twenty, and by tens to two hundred.
- Count and pair objects found around the house, and determine whether there's an odd or even number of items.
- Make tally marks for a collection of objects

- Make a game out of doubling, tripling, and quadrupling small numbers.
- Ask your child to give you the number that is ten more, ten less, one more, or one less than any given number on the hundreds chart.
- Ask your child to count by certain intervals. For example, "Start at zero, and count by fours."

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Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division

- Using the number grid, select a number, and have your child point to the number that is 1 more or 1 less than the selected number. Do problems like this: "Count back (or up) 5 spaces. On which number do you land?"

- Provide your child with problems with missing addends for ten. For example,

  8 + ? = 10 6 + ? = 10 ? + 5 = 10

- Practice addition and subtraction fact extensions. For example,

  6+7=13 60+70=130 600+700=1300

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Number Stories

- Have your child tell you a number story that goes with a given number sentence, such as 4+2=6.
- Ask for answers to number stories that involve two or more items. For example, "I want to buy a doughnut for 40 cents and a juice box for 55 cents. How much money do I need?"

- Make up number stories involving estimation. For example, pretend that your child has $2.00 and that he or she wants to buy a pencil marked 64 cents, a tablet marked 98 cents, and an eraser marked 29 cents. Help your child estimate the total cost of the items without tax and to determine if there is enough money to buy them.
- Ask questions that involve equal sharing. For example, "Four children share 8 cookies. How many cookies will each child get?"

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Place Value

- Have your child press the number 3 on a calculator. Have him or her press another 3 and read the number. Repeat for 333 and 3,333.

- Say a 2- or 3-digit number. Then have your child identify the actual value of the digit in each place. For example, in the number 952, the value of the 9 is 900; the value of the 5 is 50; and the value of the 2 is 2 ones, or two.

Say a 3- or 4-digit number. Then have your child identify the actual value of the digit in each place. For example, in the number 3, 587, the value of the 3 is 3,000; the value of the 5 is 500; the value of the 8 is 80 and the value of the 7 is 7 ones, or 7.

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Money and Time

- Start a family money jar, and collect your family's nickels and pennies. Count them from time to time. Start with pennies then add nickels. For those who want a challenge add dimes and finally quarters.
- Teach your child to set the kitchen timer when you are cooking.
- Count various sets of nickels and pennies together.
- Have your child tell you the time as "minutes after the hour."

- Gather a handful of coins with a value less than $2. Have your child calculate the total.
- Have your child total three items from a catalog using a calculator.
- Have your child tell the time using quarter after or quarter till the hour.

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Measurement

- Record family heights by marking them on a door frame. Record in centimeters as well as inches. Measure again in the same location several months later.
- Use a standard measuring tool (a ruler, tape measure, or yardstick) to measure objects located in the house. Keep an ongoing list of items measured and their approximate length and width using inches.

- Gather a tape measure, a yardstick, a ruler, a cup, a gallon container, and a scale. Discuss the various things you and your child can measure with each. Compare to see which is the best tool for different types of measurement. For example, "What would you use to measure the length of a room: a tape measure, a yardstick, or a ruler?"

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Fractions

- Compare the sizes of the pieces as you divide a pizza into smaller and smaller sections. "Is ½ of the pizza smaller or larger than ¼ of the pizza?"
- Count out eight pennies (or any type of counter, such as beans or macaroni). Ask your child to show you ½ of the pennies and then ¼ of the pennies. Do this with a variety of numbers.
- Give your child several pieces of paper to fold into halves, fourths, or eighths. He or she can label each part with the approximate fraction symbol ½, ¼ , 1/8

- Read a recipe and discuss the fractions in it. For example, ask, "How many ¼ cups of sugar would we need to get 1 cup of sugar?"
- Compare two fractions, and tell which is larger. For example, ask, "Which would give you more of a pizza: 1/8 of it or ¼ of it?"

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Geometry

- Look around the house for different geometric shapes such as triangles, squares, circles, rectangles, hexagons, trapezoids, rhombuses.
- Look for geometric shapes around the house, at the supermarket, as part of architectural features, and on street signs. Begin to call these shapes by their geometric names.

- Look for 2- and 3-dimensional shapes in your home and neighborhood. Explore and name the shapes, and brainstorm about their characteristics.
- Use household items (such as toothpicks and marshmallows; straws; and twist-ties, sticks, and paper) to construct shapes.