



TEACH ♥ MORE LOVE ♥ MORE



Every single moment you spend with your child counts. So sing and read to your children, hug them, give them routines, respond to their signals, take them to a doctor regularly and choose your child care wisely. That's how children grow, learn, love and succeed.

Building Math Skills in Young Children

Math for young children is much more than counting or adding. The concepts of mathematics can be found everywhere in a child's daily routine if you take the time to look for them. Hence, for example, math can be found in cooking, building with blocks, music, setting the table and playing store. There are many skill areas that your child can learn and practice under the umbrella of mathematics. These include:

- **Grouping and classifying:** The ability to organize by dominant characteristics and sort by similarities. You can help your child learn these skills by pointing out dominant characteristics, e.g., "All the

puppies are brown," playing matching activities, providing boxes or buckets for grouping and noting opposites such as little-big -- all encourage these skills.



Number recognition: The ability to count with the understanding that each number represents one item. You can encourage this

skill by pointing to each item as you count. This is the basis for future math computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

- **Telling time:** The ability to understand the concept of time. This is encouraged by first introducing time-related words, e.g., "later," "tomorrow," "in 15 minutes" and "after lunch."
- **Space:** Deals with understanding how things fit together, how things affect one another, depth and dimension. Building with blocks is how young children can begin to explore these concepts. Understanding spatial relationships is the basis of

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If you have questions about raising your child or being a parent, call Teach More/Love More at 305-631-8111

Operated in English, Spanish and Creole 24 hours a day.

OUR MISSION: *To ensure that all children in Miami-Dade County have the community's attention, commitment and resources--and, hence, the chance to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically so that they are ready and eager to learn by the time they reach first grade.*



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Miami, Fla. 33129

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Si ou ta renmen resevwa ti jounal sa a an kreyòl, rele (305) 631-8111.

Ask the Expert

Martha Penaranda, M.S.
MUJER, Inc. therapist

I am a mother of two little girls, one is 5, the other 3. They are in Mexico, but I hope they can both come to live with me soon. I now have a new baby, and I don't know how to make them understand it. They know they have a little sister, but I want to know what to do when they are together, whom do I pay more attention to -- the bigger ones or the baby?

First, it is important that you have an open line of communication with your daughters. With love and caring you will explain the details of their new child care provider. Through love and caring your daughters will learn to understand. Continuously and regularly reaffirm your unconditional love for them. Little by little, they will be able to understand and adjust to their new family life.

Once your daughters arrive from Mexico, spend as much time with them as possible. Thus, you will help them to adapt to new surroundings and situations -- a new family, a new country, a new language and a new school.

Be very patient and loving. The process of adjusting could take two months, or more.



Bridging Home and School

Ways that child care providers can build pre-math skills for young children...

- ✓ Incorporate counting into all learning areas by offering objects of interest.
- ✓ Offer matching activities.
- ✓ Offer buckets, bags, boxes for carrying, dumping and sorting.
- ✓ Talk about shapes seen in everyday environments and during everyday activities.
- ✓ Encourage critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions to extend a child's play and thinking.
- ✓ Incorporate and label opposites in play and during conversation, e.g. big and little.
- ✓ Encourage participation with varied music styles and genres.

Literacy Corner

From Lilia DiBello
Assistant Professor/Barry University

Learning geometry begins with understanding shapes. Young children have many opportunities to connect direct experience with geometry by identifying shapes seen in everyday life. Many story books can be used to learn and explore geometric shapes. Look for shapes in the illustrations of any story you read. Below are some suggestions of books that directly address shapes:

Fire Engine Shapes by Bruce McMillan

It Looks Like Spilt Milk by Charles Shaw

The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flournoy

Curious George Flies a Kite by H.A. Rey

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Visit your local library for books, activities and other ideas about encouraging your child's literacy.

architecture and engineering.

- Shapes: The ability to recognize and identify shapes, which is the basis of geometry. Young children can learn simple shapes such as squares, triangles and circles as well as complex shapes such as cones, spheres and parallelograms.
- Patterning, sequencing and measurement: The ability to predict things, to understand the relationship between events and objects and to understand music and musical relationships. Offering activities where children develop or identify patterns, graph, chart, organize growth sequences, are exposed to music and cook will help develop these skills. This is the basis for fractions and advanced algebra.
- Critical thinking: The ability to think through problems that are abstract and not "hands-on." Developing these skills is important for high-level functioning in all areas of development, not just math. You can help young children to think critically by helping them understand cause-and-effect and by not solving problems for children but helping them work through problems.

Giving children a strong foundation in pre-math skills helps them be ready for school and ready for life. Math concepts can be integrated and incorporated into anything you do. Everything can be counted; predictions can be made; shapes can be found, and music can be created. Help your children develop a love for math by offering enriching experiences.



Infant Nutrition

From Gerber

Mealtime is more than eating. Babies learn many skills then. For instance:

- ∞ Oral skills: Rather than spooning food in, gently touch the spoon to your baby's lips and let him or her come for it.
- ∞ Jaw skills: Add soft table food when your baby starts munching at 9-10 months and when the baby starts chewing at 12-14 months.
- ∞ Sensory skills: Allow your baby to get messy. Experiencing foods through sight, taste, touch, smell and sound promotes pleasant and nurturing mealtimes.
- ∞ Hand-to-mouth skills: Allow babies to explore toys and food with their hands and mouths.
- ∞ Healthy eating skills: Repeated exposure is key to learning to enjoy a variety of foods. Reintroduce something even if the child didn't like it the first time.

Peaceful Homes

From The Peace Education Foundation

Many eating problems for children stem from power struggles with adults. Children long to be in control and what a child eats and doesn't eat is something that a child can often control. When a child won't eat, ask yourself:

Is the child leveling off after a growth spurt? If so, less food is required for the same benefit.

Can choices be offered? Offering children a choice of what they eat can give children some control.

Can the child help in planning and preparing the meal? This leads to ownership and a desire to try what is created.

What is the attitude around mealtime? A calm and patient atmosphere invites conversation and encourages healthy eating.

How a child's ability to organize and classify develops:



by 18 months
Can group things in a very simple way, e.g., toys that make noise.



1-2 years
Can use language to group by basic characteristics, e.g., animals or blocks.



2-3 years
Begin to group objects by one common characteristic, e.g., color or size.



3-4 years
Begin to group objects by their uses, e.g., crayons, pencils and pens are for writing.



4-5 years
Will struggle to group objects with less obvious commonalities, e.g., a fish and diver both swim.



Be a part of the newsletter...

Send in: Photos, questions or helpful tips.

Photos will be included in each issue and added to our new photo gallery on www.teachmorelovemore.org. These photos personify our readers and do not suggest family styles or situations.

Questions will be answered by local experts.

Helpful tips from parents may be included.

Mail to: Michelle Fries, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, 3250 SW Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33129.



Join us for great free training!

The Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition and the Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership are sponsoring HeadsUp! Reading, a new distance-learning course for the early childhood community.

What you can learn:

- 1) The newest ways to help children develop a love of books, from the leading experts.
- 2) How reading and writing skills develop.
- 3) How to create environments and curriculum that nurture early literacy skills.
- 4) Important vocabulary.
- 5) The reality behind myths surrounding early literacy.
- 6) How to involve families in supporting language and literacy development of young children.
- 7) The best books to use to give children a running start.



You can earn credits toward a degree or a CDA.

Where: MDCC Wolfson Campus, Building 3/second floor/Chapman Center, 300 NE Second Ave., Miami.

(Other locations will be announced shortly)

When: Thursdays through May 8 from 7 to 9 p.m.

(Make-up sessions available every Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m.)

Whom to contact for information:

Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition: Juanita Armbrister (305-646-7221)

Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership: Lisa Blair (305-646-7232)

HeadsUp! Reading, brought to you by the National Head Start Association, is presented in cooperation with RISE Learning Solutions and the Council for Professional Recognition.

Miami-Dade Public Libraries Present Special Family Events

Celebrating Black History Month: Awele Makeba, Teller of all Tales

Awele is an internationally known actor, playwright, storyteller, recording artist and educator. She paints pictures with words, breathes life into characters and inspires through the power of story. Listen to Awele share stories celebrating the value of joy, courage and compassion in the face of adversity at these locations:

Model City: Feb. 10, 10 a.m.

North Dade Regional: Feb. 10, 4 p.m.

West Dade Regional: Feb. 11, 1 p.m.

Culmer/Overtown: Feb. 12, 10 a.m.

Miami Lakes/Palm Springs North:
Feb. 12, 7 p.m.

Lemon City: Feb 10, 1 p.m.

North Central: Feb 11, 10 a.m.

Coral Reef: Feb. 11, 7 p.m.

Northeast: Feb. 12, 4 p.m.

Call your local library for other events.

If you have a child who you suspect may have a developmental delay or disability, please consult your child's health care provider or contact:
• **Ages 0 to 3:** Early Intervention Program North: (305) 243-5600 South: (786) 268-2611
• **Ages 3 to 5:** FDLRS/ Miami-Dade Public Schools (305)274-3501

Want to subscribe to this newsletter for free?

Send this to: Michelle Fries: The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, 3250 SW Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33129--OR-- Call 305-631-8111

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I prefer (circle one): Spanish English Creole

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