

## Answering Families' Questions About Math

Here are examples of questions that parents might ask during conversations with you about early mathematics. We offer ideas for how to respond, as well as suggested links for more information.

### Questions About Early Math and School Preparations

- **Isn't math something that children won't do until they start school? Why would I do math with my preschooler or toddler? Wouldn't it be too hard for them?**
  - Even infants notice number, shape, size, and other mathematical ideas! This article explains more about how math develops in young children. These short videos explain how young children learn about different math concepts like shape and addition and subtraction.
- **I think of math as sitting at a table doing homework. What does early math look like?**
  - Early math happens throughout the day, no paper and pencil needed. These short articles describe how young children talk and think about early math topics, such as counting and patterns, in their daily lives.
- **What is math like in schools today? How can I prepare my child for math in school before starting kindergarten?**
  - You can learn about the early math topics and what to do with your child to support their development of various math skills. These short blog posts have tips about how to start talking about early math.

### Questions About Positive Math Attitudes

- **How can I help my child learn to like math?**
  - Children develop attitudes about math by watching what their parents say and do. You can learn to enjoy math yourself when you discover that it's fun, useful, and important! These articles can help you with strategies for modeling positive math attitudes. These blog posts show how you can incorporate math in fun ways using games or by playing cards.
- **My child doesn't seem to notice math. How can I encourage a child who isn't naturally drawn to math?**
  - Point out the math in your daily routines and in the games you play. You can find a lot of ways to bring math into your daily conversations.

- **How do I support my child's math development if I don't feel confident about math myself?**
  - Make an effort to engage in and talk about math with your children in a positive way. If you make a mistake while doing math, demonstrate a positive attitude toward correcting your mistake and problem-solving to find the correct answer.

## **Questions About How Children Develop Math Skills**

- **How can my infant and I engage in math together**
  - Before they can talk, children listen, notice, and begin to understand what we say, what we show them, and how we explain things.  
These [videos](#) show some different ways to talk about math with young children and engage them in math activities.
- **What milestones exist in mathematics? How do I know what is developmentally appropriate for my child?**
  - Knowing what math to try out helps parents learn what their child can do (and what their child is still learning). This short [article](#) explains what the mathematical expectations are for young children. You could also check your state's Department of Education website to see if your state has published early childhood learning standards in mathematics.
- **Is it better to show children how to do math or let them figure it out for themselves?**
  - If your child is doing math, you can point out what they're doing to emphasize and reinforce the work. If your child is trying to solve a problem, you can help them figure out how to do it!