

# Multiplying Your Child's Early Math Skills: Simple Ways To Make Math Fun For Your Kids

(NAPSA)—Move over flashcards and number drills. Another way to encourage your children to love numbers is to show them how math is part of everyday life. Once you help make this connection, children will be eager to learn more once they start school. Here are some simple projects to do with your child.

## Sing About It

Music and singing help children remember information better. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, researchers have found that music can help children learn multiplication tables and improve early literacy skills. One study found that using familiar melodies helped five-year-olds learn phone numbers at a faster rate than using no music or unfamiliar melodies.

One good way to get started is to sing counting rhymes and songs to your child. When getting your child dressed in the morning try singing, "One little piggy went to market." This works great when you are putting on those socks and shoes.

Be on the lookout for books, CDs or cassette tapes that feature songs about counting for your at-home play. *Cheerios Counting Songs* is a new book for toddlers that matches familiar melodies with five simple counting songs, which help increase children's awareness of numbers, colors, letters, and shapes. Children can "interact" with this latest book by placing a piece of Cheerios on the page to complete each illustration.

## Look for Numbers!

Go on a number hunt. When you are in the car, have your child look for numbers in street and store signs, and on license plates. Say the numbers aloud when you find them. Your child should be able to recognize numbers up to ten before kindergarten.

## Phone a Friend

Make a phone call. Write the



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phone number of a friend or relative down on a piece of paper. Have your child read the phone number before he dials the number.

## Don't Forget the Kitchen

Making a recipe with your child is an easy—and delicious—way to introduce concepts such as volume and weight. Let your child measure out the ingredients with measuring cups and bowls while you read the directions out loud.

Turn snack time into a game. Help your child count out four slices of banana. After they eat one, count again.

## Looking for Shapes

Pick a shape such as a triangle. Point out things that are triangle-shaped all day long and every place you go, from the living room to the store. Later on ask your child to identify something that is shaped like a triangle.

Play with shape puzzles and blocks. Working with three-dimensional objects—playing with a shape-sorter box, for example—will help develop fine motor skills and spatial reasoning while introducing your child to basic geometry.

These simple games help children discover that math is all around us and understand its importance to things we do every day. Teaching simple mathematical concepts early will help pave the way for a smooth transition in school and set the foundation for lifelong learning.