



Minds on Math at Home

By now most parents are aware of the importance of reading to children at home, but did you know talking to your kids about math is important too?

Talking with your kids about math can greatly improve their attitude to math and their achievement. And the good news? No math skill is required! In fact, it would be healthy for your child to know that you are a learner too! Research shows that when we struggle with math concepts, we get better at math—even if we never get a correct answer or any answer at all! This column will give you ideas about ways to talk about math with your kids in a risk-free way.

I struggled with math as a child: Many people feel they are “not math people”, but we now know this is not supported by research. Everyone has the ability to learn math. **But how we feel about our math ability has a great impact on our achievement in math.** Some parents are left with a feeling that they're not good at math because of their own school math experience. It is important that children do not hear those messages. Math does not need to be an elitist subject, reserved for physics and quantum science; it is also the



Honeycomb's show a specific regular pattern of repeating hexagons. This design is highly efficient in that it uses the least amount of wax to store the honey.

language of measurement, art, food, commerce, beauty, games, health, and nature. Real-world math is not restrictive and isolated; it is open, collaborative and

creative. Lets help children access this!

I'm not sure how to talk about math with my children: Great news! There are tons of resources to help parents bring math into the home. This column will be a great beginning. Talking about numbers and shapes with your child is as important as reading to them. How about some story books with math themes? Stay tuned to this column!



I don't understand the math my child is bringing home from school: This is normal! Unless you were immersed in the curriculum like a teacher or a student, you may not understand the math or the way math is taught. This will become more true as your kids advance up through the grades. It is not the intention that every skill and concept in math is remembered for life, but the habits of thinking and making sense become part of a mature mind and lay the foundations for thinking about the world around us in many ways. Rest assured it is not necessary to understand your child's math homework to be able to help them with their number sense and attitude towards mathematics. If you feel you want to better understand your child's math, ask your teacher for some videos you can watch.

Let's get started!

- Encourage a *growth mindset*. Everyone can learn! We are still learning too.
- Reassure your child that “being good at math” has nothing to do with speed. Slower processors often think more deeply. Some of our best mathematicians, composers, and artists are not speedy, and have no desire to be!
- Be careful of praising kids for being “smart”. This promotes a “fixed mindset”—the myth that we are born with ability or not. Instead, praise kids for thinking hard, trying hard, and being open and patient.
- Don't disclose your own math anxiety to your child. Instead, encourage them to embrace challenge to grow their brains.
- Embrace errors! We know that more brain activity is associated with making errors than with correct answers—in other words, we learn more by making mistakes!
- Play games! Cards and dice = fun + learning!
- Don't time things.



Please watch these:

<https://youtu.be/bxrPy1fjVU4>
<https://youtu.be/ipYInY3F8y4>

