

USING NUMBER CONCEPTS



Mathematical reasoning is about numbers and relationships. It is more than just saying the numbers from one to ten. Children reflect their understanding of number concepts when they sort their toys, identify shapes and patterns, and correctly identify colors. Relationship words like *over* and *under*, *more*, *less*, and *equal* are also indicators of mathematical understanding. Mathematical concepts can be a part of everyday activities.

Here are some activities for you and your child to play together that will help your child use number concepts.

- ♥ Count everything: the number of steps from the car to the front door, the buttons on a coat, the French fries on your plate.
- ♥ Look for shapes in your home. Identify the shape of the clock, the window, a lamp, or a cereal box.
- ♥ Build an obstacle course, using small pieces of furniture, boxes, and toys. Practice moving *over*, *under*, *through*, and *around* the obstacles.
- ♥ Make a number book. Write a number on each page, and let your child draw or glue on the paper the correct number of items.
- ♥ Read the story of *The Three Bears* or *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Talk about *small*, *medium*, and *large*. Find other examples of *small*, *medium*, and *large*. Use these words in conversations with your child.
- ♥ Build with blocks. Sort the blocks by *shape*. Sort the blocks by another attribute, such as *color*.
- ♥ Go bowling at home. Make a bowling game with empty soda bottles and a soft ball. Help your child count the number of bowling pins that are knocked down. Show your child how to keep score.
- ♥ When doing the laundry, ask your child to help you match and count the pairs of socks. Very young children can help you sort the socks into piles according to who wears them.
- ♥ One way to help your child identify numerals is to point to and say the numbers as you dial the telephone. When your child is ready, let your child learn to dial a family member's number.
- ♥ Keep a calendar where your child can see it. Count the days until a special event. Talk about the days when routine events occur.
- ♥ Sing songs or say rhymes that tell about mathematical concepts. Two examples are "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" and "Hickory, Dickory, Dock."
- ♥ Let your child help you measure and add ingredients when you are cooking together.
- ♥ Give your child a plastic ruler. Measure household items. Make a collection of items that are the same size.

