

Math Throughout the Day: Math Talk

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From the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

Math is all around us in everyday activities such as folding laundry or measuring ingredients for a recipe. Using math talk is an easy way to engage your child in math experiences throughout the day.

What does math talk sound like?

- A caregiver says at the store, “We need five apples and six bananas.”
- A parent says, “We have one little shirt and two big shirts!” when folding laundry”
- A caregiver asks their child, “How many blocks can you stack?”
- At breakfast, a parent asks, “Is this pancake the shape of a circle or a square? How do you know?”

It is easy to use math talk wherever you are. Try using these examples during your day.

Number Concepts and Operations					
Count	Share	One, two, three, four, five		How many?	
One more	First, second, last	A lot		Altogether	
One less	Same as	A few		Add/take away	
Shape and Spatial Relationships					
In	Up	Over	Next to	Inside	Near
Out	Down	Around	Beside	Outside	Far
On	Above	In front of	Between	Top	Next to
Under	Below	Behind	Through	Bottom	
Shapes and their attributes: circle, rectangle, triangle, square, angle, side, etc.					
Patterns					
Explore features of objects such as color, texture, size, etc. Highlight and talk about patterns in clothing, pictures, buildings, and nature. Emphasize and create patterns in daily routines. For example, describe the morning routine, “First we eat breakfast. After breakfast we brush our teeth. Next, we brush our hair, and then we get dressed.”					
Measurement					
Big	Cold	Heavy	Fast	Young	Tall
Little	Hot	Light	Slow	Old	Short
					Long

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