Early Math Concepts

Why are early math concepts important?

Early math skills include number identification, ordering, and oral counting. Children's development of these skills establishes a foundation for representing numbers, problem-solving, and making connections between operations and processes.

Early Math Concepts Activities

1. Model counting in everyday life. It can be as easy as driving down the road and counting the number of trees or walking down steps and counting each one. Count both by 1's (1, 2, 3, ...) and 10's (10, 20, 30...).

2. Find patterns and discuss what makes it a pattern. This can be done using snacks (gummy bear colors, animal crackers, etc.), any colored objects, or shape patterns. Also encourage your child to find patterns on the calendar and charts.

3. Give your child a glimpse of a collection of objects and then take it away after a few seconds. Have him/her "estimate" about how many objects are in the collection.

4. Discuss real-life story problems. Model your thinking by using language such as, "How many are there now?" or "How many did you start with?" An example could be, "There are 5 swings on the playground. Two of them are being used by other kids. How many are left for you to choose from?" When possible, use real objects to model the story problem.

5. Write numbers (start with numbers 1-10) on post-it notes and have your child put them in correct order. Your child can also find objects around the house that come in a set and label it with the correct post-it (for example, if there are 2 remotes laying on a table, your child could label the remotes with the number "2" post-it).

6. Write numbers (start with numbers 1-10) on a set of index cards. On another set of index cards, draw dots (or other objects, if you prefer) that correspond to the numbers written on the first set. Play a matching game so that your child has to match the number card to the correct picture card. You can extend this activity by having your child put two picture cards together and count the total number.

Matching   3   *Concept of Addition*   *How many total?*