

## Tips for Doing Math at Home

**Be ready to talk to your children about math and listen to what they are saying.** Communication is very important in mathematics. Saying what you are doing and how you know the answer is correct helps students remember the strategy. Even if you don't know what to do to solve a problem, ask them what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how it is helping them. Together you can find a strategy that works. Once they have an answer encourage them to explain how they know it is the right one.

**Be more concerned with the process of solving the problem versus getting the correct answer.** There are many ways to solve a problem. The more strategies children know the more flexible they can be when solving problems. Knowing *how* to find an answer is a lifetime skill. Knowing the answer to a problem has very little importance outside of that problem.

**Try not to tell your children how to solve the problem.** Once children have been told how to solve a problem, the thinking often stops. Instead, if they are having trouble, consider asking them questions about what they are doing or have done and why they did that. Encourage them to say what the problem is and provide counting tools and charts to help them.

**Practice estimation whenever possible.** Estimation helps the thinking about a problem that preceded the doing. It is very helpful for making sense of a problem and knowing if an answer is reasonable or not.

**Model a positive attitude towards mathematics.** Children look to their parents for how to behave and react to various situations. If parents approach mathematical activities with curiosity and enthusiasm, their children will often follow. Look for ways to incorporate math activities into day to day experiences such as shopping. When children see how math is used in your life, they are likely to understand the importance of knowing it.