



HELPING YOUR  
CHILDREN  
LEARN AND ENJOY  
MATHEMATICS

# WELCOME YOUR CHILDREN TO MATH AT A YOUNG AGE

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Parents are teachers too! The first five years of a child's life are a critical time for learning. As a parent or guardian, you are your children's first and most important teacher and what you do in their early years makes a difference. Young children whose parents frequently talk to them, play with them, and read to them have an advantage later on when they enter school. Did you know that parents can also give children their first positive experiences in mathematics, and these can set the tone for mathematics learning throughout their children's lives? Don't make the mistake of thinking that learning mathematics begins in school; you can give your children a wonderful start in early math learning right at home.

Your children's first experiences with mathematics should be enjoyable activities that are shared with you—where you both learn. Because parents and guardians are also children's first role models, it is important that your children see you doing math and taking the time to work with them. And what better way could there be than playing with your children AND doing math at the same time?



Photo by Rachel Davis

We hope you find this booklet to be a valuable, informative, and useful resource—one that will encourage you and your young children to do math together. Even if you haven't studied much mathematics yourself, you can promote math in your home. This booklet will give you ideas and resources to support your role in your children's early introduction and understanding of the first important math concepts. The information you will find in these pages represents our best thinking about how to help very young children learn mathematics. The California Mathematics Council's goal in publishing this booklet is to encourage stronger, more informed parent support for their children's mathematics education, and to increase the mathematics achievement of all students.

Plant the seeds of mathematics learning early in your children's lives and provide your family with many ways you and your children can have FUN doing mathematics together.