EARLY LEARNING **MATH at HOME**

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN LEARN AND ENJOY MATHEMATICS

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU AND YOUR YOUNG CHILD WITH MATH

If you want more information about mathematics and young children, and how to support your child's math learning, you should find the following list of publications and Internet websites helpful.

PUBLICATIONS

Family Math for Young Children, by Grace Dávila Coates and Jean Kerr Stenmark (Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley Press, 1997). Family Math is a program that brings teachers, students, and families together to do math and support young math students. This book, the third in the series, was developed for families with children from preschool through grade three. It is full of great hands-on activities you can do at home.

Helping Your Child Learn Mathematics (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). This publication, available in both English and Spanish, may be downloaded for free at www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/math/index.html. It suggests what parents can do with children from preschool age through grade 5 to strengthen math skills and build strong, positive attitudes toward math. Many other government education resources can also be found at this website.

Photo by Paul Giganti, Jr.

Math On Call (Great Source Education Group, 2004). This booket will come in handy when your children ask you questions about mathematics. It has short definitions, examples, and lessons on more than 300 math concepts in a very easy to read small book. This is a great reference to have as your children go from preschool to elementary school and beyond.

Young Children and Mathematics (Juanita Copley, 2009.) If you want to read more on the subject of mathematics learning and young children, this easy-to-read text provides indepth and practical information, as well as fun math activities for children ages 3–5.

Children are Born Mathematicians (Eugene Geist, 2008). This college textbook for early childhood mathematics is a comprehensive and chronological view of mathematics development in children, beginning at birth and going through the third grade.

Internet sites

The *Early Math Learning* website (www.earlymathlearning.com) includes free downloads of PDF files of this *Early Learning Math at Home* booklet as well as individual chapters. Additonal articles and resources for families will be added regularly.

The California Mathematics Council maintains a For Families section at its website (www.cmc-math.org/family/main.html). Here you will find articles on mathematics education issues of interest to parents, hands-on activities to do at home, and information on how to host your own Family Math event at your preschool or education center.

The Math Forum (www.mathforum.org) is a web portal to everything "mathematics." Here you can ask Dr. Math questions and get answers! You will also find weekly and monthly math challenges, Internet math hunts, and math resources organized by grade level.

Head Start–Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc) is linked to the federal Head Start Program. Here you will find information about government programs for early learning, including resources that are available to families.

Thinkfinity (www.thinkfinity.org) is a project of the Verizon Foundation. This website has more than 55,000 resources—including many that focus on math—that have been screened by educators to ensure that content is accurate, up-to-date, unbiased, and appropriate for students. The resources on this website are grouped by grade level and subject area.

PBS Parents, the early education website of the Public Broadcasting Service (www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/activities), offers numerous resources, including the stages of mathematics learning listed for babies through second grade children. It is also a rich source of math activities to do at home.

Math at Play (www.mathatplay.org) offers multimedia resources for anyone who works with children from birth to age five. Here you can explore early mathematical development and the important ways that caregivers nurture children's understanding of math concepts through social-emotional relationships, language, everyday play experiences, materials, and teaching.

Let's Read Math (www.letsreadmath.com/math-and-childrens-literature/preschool/) wants to make parents and families aware of the growing body of children's literature with themes related to mathematics. Here you will find a long annotated list of live links to preschool children's books with math themes, listed by title, author, and mathematics topic.

WHAT ABOUT TV, COMPUTERS, AND SMART PHONES?

We live in a world of fantastic technologies, and our children's future will involve their use of technology to do wonderful things. However, as wonderful as television, computers, smart phones, and tablets are, they are not a substitute for hands-on learning, unstructured play, physical activity, or direct parent/child interaction. For example, the activity of having a child "build" a structure out of imaginary blocks on a flat screen is NOT the same as when a parent and child build a tower with real wooden blocks.

Children should grow up using—and being comfortable with—all forms of technology, including those that can help them learn. But, for our youngest learners, time spent in front of a screen should never win out over time spent actively exploring their world. While children should do both, only parents can set limits and create a balance in the many ways that their children learn.