



Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

March 2021

Make Math and Science Everyday Play

Kids, especially young kids, have yet to discover that math and science are things that happen all around them, every day. Math and science have become so important in the 21st century that Harvard University revised its undergraduate curriculum to include more. Harvard understood, as many forward-thinking schools and parents understand, that we live in an age of incredible advancements in science. To learn how to utilize these advancements or have a career in advancing them, requires a good foundation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (also known as STEM). In addition, kids who learn to do well in these subjects are improving their ability to solve problems and reason effectively at the same time—skills that are vital to anyone’s career. You can help your children by displaying a positive attitude about these subjects and showing confidence in their ability to succeed in them. Even if you feel anxious about your mastery of math and science, you can give your kids a boost with simple activities at home. You know more than you think!

This month, try some of the following activities with your kids. By making math and science a part of everyday play, you are helping them to establish a solid base for learning.

- While in the car with your child, play an exciting game of 20 Questions or “Animal, Vegetable, or Mineral.”
- Cook together. When you think about it, you’ll be surprised at all the math and science involved in using recipes. Plus, it’s fun...and you can eat the results.
- When dining at a restaurant, play counting games with the sugar packets.
- With older kids, get them to calculate the tip. (Without using a Tip app)
- Make sure kids over the age of seven have a regular weekly allowance. Then help them learn to calculate how to spend and save.
- The next time you take a trip, have your child help you plot the route and then follow it. If you travel by car, teach them to calculate your gas mileage.

Play inventor by talking together about cool invention ideas. It isn’t necessary to actually build a time machine. Just a talking about the possibilities can help build creative thinking and appreciation for math and science. It’s important to work with your children to help them learn new skills. The following steps can help you teach a skill effectively:

- **Motivate.** Encourage your child to want to learn the skill by explaining the value it has to them and the family.
- **Select a good time.** Pick a time when neither you nor your child will be rushed or distracted by other activities.
- **Break the skill down into baby steps.** There are benefits to breaking a skill down into smaller parts so that the child can learn it one step at a time. Not only does it make the task easier, it also allows them to experience more successes, which helps build courage and motivation.
- **Demonstrate.** Show your child how to perform the skill, explaining slowly as you do.
- **Let your child try.** Let your child perform the skill while you stand by, ready to offer help if they need it. Be gentle about mistakes.
- **Encourage, encourage, encourage.** Make plenty of encouraging comments that acknowledge your child’s efforts and results. This builds self-esteem and keeps his motivation high to continue learning.
- **Work or play together.** Once your child has learned the skill, practice together so that you can both enjoy the companionship of the activity.

Learn more essential parenting skills by watching an assortment of entertaining and informative videos by visiting the Active Parenting page on the [ACFC website](#) and clicking on the Active Parenting tab.



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