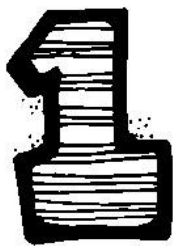


# Preschool Connection

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## Counting and Measuring

When young children begin learning to count, they count without knowing what the numbers mean. This is called "rote" counting. They don't understand that the number 3 stands for "3 of something"—whether it is 3 grapes, 3 tugboats or 3 grandmothers. Learning that numbers are based on real things will help children learn arithmetic. A child who knows that numbers represent actual objects has a solid foundation for going on to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

As a parent you can help children

develop number concepts in a variety of ways. You can share everyday number experiences:

When you do your laundry, your child can help by counting shirts, etc.

When you go to the store, your child can get two quarts of milk from the case.

When you pay, your child can count the change or count the pennies.

When you get in line at the supermarket, your child can count the things in your basket to find out which line you belong in.

When it's time to set the table for dinner, your child

can figure out how many spoons, etc., you need.

Just keep in mind that, whenever you count, try to do it in terms of something. Count beans, count spoons, count money, count books or count giant steps. In this way, you'll help your child understand that numbers represent amounts. When he counts he'll know what he's talking about. Then you can start attaching a numeral to the items you count!

Excerpts taken from Learning through Play by Jean Marzollo and Janice Lloyd, Harper and Row, Publisher, Inc. 1972 ).

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These activities are not a test to see whether your child knows the skills. If your child has trouble, give enough hints so that he or she can be successful. If the activity is too difficult or becomes frustrating, stop that activity and do something else that is fun. The main goal is to spend quality time with your child each day and to help your child be successful!

## 1 Counting Things

1. Use real things. Touch each thing as you count it. Say, "Let's count the spoons to find out how many there are. One (touch it), two (as you touch the second), three (as you touch the third). There are four spoons. Why don't you count them? Count different things.
2. Bring Me Five. Say "Please bring me five \_\_\_\_\_(flowers?)." When your child brings them, put them where you both can see and count them: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Five \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you."
3. Giant Steps. Say "Let's play Giant Steps. First I'll tell you whether you may take giant steps or baby steps and then I will tell you how many steps you can take. After you take your steps, it will be your turn to tell me." Say, "You may take three giant steps: 1, 2, 3." (Count along out loud as he takes them. Be sure he counts aloud as you take your steps.)

## 2 Inventory

Together, take an inventory of things in the house. Keep a written record of the results. Count everything! How many chairs? Sofas? TV's? Tables? Cans of soup? Windows? How many socks do you have? How many socks does Daddy have? (Who has more?) Shirts? Coats? Shoes? Toy trucks?

Variation: A Personal Inventory

Help your child make a list of the things he can do and count how many times he can do them. Ask, "How many times can you hop on the right foot?" "Hop on your left foot?" "Jump up and down?" "Clap your hands?" "Snap your fingers?"

## 3 See How Many

Materials : Large sheet of paper; glue; ruler; crayons; small objects to count (cereal, buttons, beads, etc.)

The fun is in the making. Let your child play the major role.

1. Divide the paper into eleven rows.
2. In the top row write the title: Number Poster.
3. Number the remaining rows down the left side from 1-10.
4. Glue or paste the appropriate number of objects in a line beside each number. Arrange them so that it is easy for your child to see that each successive number stands for one more.

## 4 Measure Up

With a Yardstick:

Cover the numbers on a yardstick with adhesive tape when you first introduce your preschooler to the idea of measuring. Start by asking him to find out whether things are longer or shorter than the stick. Show him how to line the stick up with what he wants to measure. It's important to help him discover that a change in position doesn't mean a change in length. Measure everything!

How long is: the dog? Your leg? Daddy's leg? The table leg? Your arm? Your foot? Your bed? The baby?

How wide is: the refrigerator? The door? The window?

With your Feet

Trace your child's foot and show him how to use it as a pattern to make lots of feet. Help him put them end-to-end to measure. Ask, "How many of your feet is it from the refrigerator to the table?"

Please take a moment each month to fill out the brief questionnaire that we have included. We would like to know how helpful (or not) these newsletters have been for you, and how we can improve them for future years.

Please complete and return to your preschool teacher.

### September 2006 Newsletter:

The information in this newsletter was (check one):

Informative. The right amount of information

Too brief

Too long

Not helpful

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The activities were:

Helpful      Activities you liked best (which numbers) \_\_\_\_\_

Not useful      Activities you like least \_\_\_\_\_

The right amount of activities?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_