

Pointers for Parents

Help Your Child Learn Mathematics—Even When You Don't Know the Answers

Your child may feel more comfortable with mathematics—and be better able to do well in school and in tomorrow's business world—if you show enthusiasm for his or her work. Here are five ways to help your child deal successfully with mathematics:

- **Connect mathematics to the real world.** Young people often say “When am I ever going to use this?” If parents talk about ways that mathematics relates to what's going on around them, it is likely that young people will become much more interested. Talk with your child about mathematics that comes up on the evening news or even in sporting events.
- **Encourage independence.** Let children figure out the answers on their own, rather than telling them how to do it. Don't be as concerned with your child getting the right answers as with learning how to arrive at them.

- **Show that you believe they can succeed.** Be ready to listen carefully to your child's explanation of a problem to understand how you can help. When checking over homework, make positive comments.
- **Set the stage.** Provide a special place for study geared to your child's learning style, whether it is at a desk or sprawled out on a bed. To stay informed of your child's progress, discuss homework assignments together. Let your child show you how to do several problems.
- **Don't be afraid to ask.** If you don't understand a mathematics problem, search elsewhere for help. Locate a friend, neighbor or relative in a mathematics or science field who might be familiar with the subject.

For a free copy of the NCTM brochure “Help Your Child Learn Math,” send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to NCTM, 1906 Association Drive, Dept. M-NAPS, Reston, VA 22091-1593.

Jack Price

Looks are so deceptive that people should be done up like food packages with the ingredients clearly labeled.

—Helen Hudson