

In today's high-tech world, math and science matter. Whatever your child wants to do, whether it's joining the military, joining the workforce, or going to college, he or she will need these skills.

As a parent, your main job is to stay informed and involved. Your children listen to you more than you know. Parents have the power to make the difference. For tips on how, just look inside.



School Supplies

In elementary school, your child will be using things like rulers, tape measures, scales, and protractors. At this stage, tools are easy to make. Paper plates are great for pie charts. Anything that can be counted (straws, jelly beans, pebbles) can be used for addition, subtraction, and grouping. And anything green and growing in a garden or a park can be the start of a nature conversation.

- + Simple ruler (inches, not centimeters)
- + Tape measure
- + Scales
- + Protractor
- + Clock with hands (not digital)
- + Anything that can be counted (beans, toothpicks, etc.)
- + Flash cards (buy or make your own from index cards)
- + Presentation materials. Ask your teacher what kinds of presentations your child will need to make (5th grade, for example, is a big science fair year). If you're unable to buy materials, let the school know and they might be able to help you get supplies.



Parents have the power.

A guide to helping your child succeed.

elementary
school

MATHSCIENCESUCCESS.ORG

Georgia's Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics Initiative

Supported by the National Science Foundation under Cooperative Agreement Number: EHR-0314953. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this guide are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

What to know (and do) when your child is in elementary school.

In elementary school, science and math are fun – and that’s great news for parents. Make sure there are lots of “hands-on” activities at home. Grades 1 through 5 are all about creating interest and fostering their natural curiosity for learning. If you can get your kids excited about math and science now, middle and high school will be that much easier.

Help your kids get fired up about math and science:

- + Get into the habit of asking your kids, “What did you learn today?” and then have them teach you. This will help you keep track of what they’re learning. And it will help them retain the information.
- + If you hated math and science when you were in school, never, ever admit that to your kids (because they’ll think if it was okay for you, then it’s okay for them).
- + Talk to your kids about how you use math and science at work. Ask them what they want to do when they grow up and the kinds of math and science skills that career might require. (For instance, a firefighter had better have a solid understanding of heat and energy.)
- + Some schools offer refresher courses for parents who want to help their children with homework. Check with your school to see what resources are available.
- + Don’t wait for a conference to talk with your child’s teachers. When parents are involved right from the start, kids tend to do better.
- + Encourage the mindset that, “It’s okay if it’s hard.” If your child isn’t afraid of a challenge, then half the battle’s won.



Show your kids how math and science matter in the real world.

Sometimes it can be hard to understand how math and science are useful outside the classroom. Any time you can help your child make that connection, you’ll be making it easier for him to be successful, not just in class, but also in life. Here are a few simple ways to apply math and science lessons to your child’s daily life.

- + Visit public parks or nature trails near your home, and encourage your children to collect different kinds of rocks, leaves, and even insects. Using nature guidebooks available in the library, see if you can identify the specimens they’ve collected.
- + Have your kids keep up with baseball scores and stats. Explain how statistics like batting averages are calculated.
- + Old-fashioned board games are a great (and fun) way to teach your kids about math. Try Monopoly® or Yahtzee®. Any game where you roll the dice and count out moves is good.
- + Involve your children in the kitchen. Help little ones make simple things such as popsicles while explaining liquids, solids, and what happens when liquids freeze.
- + Let older kids follow recipes from start to finish, including making a grocery list, going shopping, calculating costs, measuring, cooking, and cleaning.

5th grade is the “review and transition” year.

It’s all about making sure your child has mastered the elementary lessons and is ready for the big step to middle school. Problem solving is big. At home ask, “If Grandma gave you a dollar, how much 5¢ gum could you buy?” or challenge her to calculate your car’s gas mileage.



Math and science resources.



There are many websites and books that can help you and your child with math and science. Some build skills through games. Others help with homework assignments. Ask your child’s teachers if there are specific websites for the textbooks they use. In the meantime, here’s a list to help you get started. If you don’t have a computer at home, check out these sites at your public library.

www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=89776119

Math Power: How to help your child love math, even if you don’t.

www.ed.gov/pubs/EarlyMath/title.html

Early Childhood: Where Learning Begins. Tips on encouraging your kids and activities you can do at home (U.S. Department of Education).

www.amathsdictionaryforkids.com

A colorful interactive math dictionary filled with activities and illustrations.

www.casience.org/helping.html

Helping Your Child Learn Science. A great resource from the U.S. Department of Education for parents of children ages 3-10.

Books

“Beyond Facts and Flashcards: Exploring Math with Your Kids” by Jan Mokros. Games and activities to help you develop your child’s logic and reasoning.

“Math: Facing an American Phobia” by Marilyn Burns. Shows you how to encourage your kids to discover math concepts on their own.

“Family Science” by Sandra Markle. More than 200 safe, fun, easy-to-do science activities for you and your child to enjoy together.

For more resources, visit:

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