Spotlight on Parenting Research

Boost Math Skills by Engaging Children in the Home

Study Goals
Researchers at Purdue University were interested in the relationship between the home numeracy environment (how frequently do parents report engaging in math practices with their children?) and literacy outcomes (vocabulary skills) for preschoolers. The goal of the study was to learn more about how parent-child engagement with math concepts (in the home) can impact vocabulary skills.

Study Design
Researchers worked individually with 114 preschoolers in the classroom during the fall and spring of the academic year. Standardized assessments were used to assess children’s early literacy and math skills. Parents completed a questionnaire reporting the frequency of engaging with their children to practice various math and literacy skills in the home.

Study Results
- There is a relationship between the home numeracy environment and general vocabulary skills
- Practicing basic math skills (counting, numbers, etc.) is predictive of young children's language development or vocabulary skills

Implications for Parents & Parent Educators
- Parents can take an active role in teaching their children math skills
- Get creative about learning opportunities - count the number of apples in your cart at the grocery store, or the number of cars in the parking lot
- Check out Vroom (https://www.vroom.org/) for fun 'brain building' ideas that integrate math into your every day learning