

better beginnings



for Families buzz

Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

FEBRUARY 2021



A SPECIAL NOTE FROM DAWN JEFFREY



Parents and Families,

ONE thing is for sure, time flies! Just **TWO** months ago, we were celebrating Christmas.

Now we are getting ready to head into month **THREE** of 2021. Next month is all about the numbers. We're excited to **MARCH into MATH with you, Better Beginnings family!**

Math can be an overwhelming topic to tackle at home. So, just **FOR** you, this edition of the Buzz features **FIVE** of our favorite [math resources and activities.](#)

Whether your child is [preparing for kindergarten](#) or as young as **SIX** months old, **math skills are critical to your child's early brain development.**

You don't even have to use a resource to practice numbers and counting. There are many opportunities to **use everyday routines to teach a math lesson.**

- Talk about how there are **SEVEN** days of the week.
- Here's an idea, work on math AND following directions with our [Simon Says Roll](#) math resource.
- Use our [Play the Way to Math](#) resource to make math fun with games like I Spy Numbers and more.

Math is complicated too, so maybe math practice will make him so tired that you get **EIGHT** hours of sleep tonight! **(We can hope, right?)**

The point is, start early. Talk, draw and write numbers together over and over and over. **Repetition is key!**

Don't expect your little one to know the square-root of **NINE** or how to solve for X before kindergarten. We're talking simple **life-skills** here.

Start by setting a goal for him to count to **TEN** on his own. You'll be surprised how fast it goes from there.

Happy counting!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Jeffrey". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dawn" and last name "Jeffrey" clearly legible.

Dawn Jeffrey M.S.E.

Division of Early Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Program Manager for Better Beginnings

CHECK OUT OUR NEWEST MATH RESOURCE!

Paper Playground for Learning Fun

Paper Playground for Learning Fun

Math • Creative Thinking • New Words

Rainy or cold weather doesn't mean your child has to be bored. You can create your own activity right at home. You probably won't even have to go to the store.

These activities are not about **scoring** (but you will make big-time cool-parent points with your child).

The objective is to develop math concepts, physical skills and **have fun**. So, get creative. **Make** goofy sports equipment and a paper playground. Talk about **numbers, distances and angles**. Toss around some **new words**. Find out more about what is learned on the next page.

You'll need:

- Lightweight balls
- Any and all kinds of tape (whatever you have)
- Crayons or markers (let your child create a masterpiece decorating the plain surfaces)
- Scissors
- Recycled newspaper funny pages, folders, wrapping paper, boxes and tubes
- Paper cups
- Large serving utensils

Get details on how to make your own paper playground on the next page.

Get more fun ways to learn about math - visit our Family Resource Library here.

Click here to learn how to recycle to make your own musical instruments!

Click here to visit our Resource Library. You'll find activities and tips to help you prepare your child for life.

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Paper Playground for Learning Fun

Math • Creative Thinking • New Words

Making these tools for play takes creative thinking, experimentation, and a good bit of tape. If a child took markers and crayons to the paper, they would be even more fun toys!

As you create together, talk about shapes and sizes. Notice how the pieces fit together.

How to make a mallet: Cut slits in the end of a paper towel tube and spread them out. Fold the ends over the side of a closed tube box. Tape. Tape. Tape. Cover tape as shown above.

How to make golf clubs: Insert a spatula or serving spoon into a paper tube. Use heavy-duty tape to secure the utensil to the tube.

What Your Child Gains from These Activities:

- Understanding of numbers
- Has opportunities to extend vocabulary
- Eye-hand coordination
- Has opportunity for using large muscles
- Develops awareness of himself in space in relation to other objects
- Develops an awareness of distances and angles
- Develops and refines physical coordination and balance
- Has satisfying and challenging experiences
- Gains self-confidence and sense of worth

Visit our Family Resource Library for more fun and games that teach math.

Click here to learn to how sorting teaches math in our free Family Resource Library.

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One of our newest resources is full of fun **math lessons**. Create your own obstacle course in your living room with our Paper Playground for Learning Fun math resource! As you play, **keep score**. Use **colors and shapes** to make **patterns**. Count **how many** bowling pins she knocks over.

MARCHING INTO MATH WITH 1, 2, 3 FAVORITE LEARNING RESOURCES!



LET'S MAKE MUSIC

Get on your feet and **count** to the beat! **Music is a great way to work on math skills with your child.** Use this resource to **make your own instruments** and try it today.



SORTING SACKS

Sorting helps her recognize **patterns, colors and shapes.** It's a great activity for those **counting skills** she has been working on too! Check out our sorting resource to enjoy some **math fun** today!



TALK MATH

1, 2, 3, 4, we declare a counting war! **Counting out loud** is a simple way to practice math skills at home. **Count how many fingers, toes, eyes and ears she has.** Point to each as you say the numbers.

CHECK OUT ALL OF OUR MATH RESOURCES HERE

DID YOU KNOW...?

You can still find [COVID-19 advice and resources](#) under the [Trending tab](#) on our [website](#).

Go ahead and save it to your favorites.

It will help you keep up with child care facilities' changing policies and procedures.



[Read the latest Pandemic Procedures from DHS here.](#)



[Learn more about looking for licensed child care here.](#)

ST. PATRICK'S DAY MATH FUN!



Next month is St. Patrick's Day!

Try looking for a **three-leaved clover** and a lucky **four-leaved clover outside**.

Or, just keep it simple and draw shamrocks and clovers. Show her how they are different by **counting the leaves** of each out loud.

Then, go inside and hide your luck somewhere safe!

VISIT OUR FAMILY RESOURCE LIBRARY FOR MORE FUN

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT

OR, check us out on **social media**.



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