



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS

Families and Support

What can I do to help my child get the most out of math?

Helping your child succeed in math is not much different from helping your child with anything else.

Here's what parents and other family members say about helping their children with math.

Be positive about math

My daughter is growing up with a “can do” attitude towards math. Her skills are more advanced than mine, and I let her know I'm proud of her.

Maybe you weren't good at math, but your child doesn't have to know that. Have a good attitude and your child will, too.

I enjoy sitting down with my teenager and struggling through a problem together. Sometimes it's hard work, but every chance I get, I tell her how important it is.

When I was young, I thought only nerds could do math. Man, was I wrong. Now I realize that anyone can do math, and everyone needs it. It's where the jobs are.

Communicate with your child

It may be only a few minutes a day, but I'll sit down with my grandson and ask him what math he's working on. Sometimes by explaining it to me, it becomes clearer to him.

I've learned to listen more than I talk. Listening to my niece talk about her math problems is a challenge, but it's another way to show I care.

I try to work math into our everyday conversation at home. Since I work in industry, I know how important it is for kids to know math in today's world.

From talking with my daughter, I've begun to see math in an entirely new way. She likes taking the lead, and I'm sure that teaching me helps reinforce what she's learned.

Have high expectations

My child's teacher says “more math, more opportunity.”

I guess I'm pretty tough. From day one, I tell my son that not passing math is not an option. But I also let him know I'm there for him every step of the way.

Respect the way your child learns

Don't start "twenty questions" the minute your child walks in the door. Think how you feel when you first get home. Just like you, he/she probably needs to take a break.

Recognize that your child has their own work habits, and they're probably different from yours. You can give them a tidy desk in a quiet setting, but they may prefer headphones and an unmade bed.

For my child, doing well in math means doing his very best, not necessarily getting an "A." I love to see his excitement when he cracks a problem and knows it's right.

You've got to be ready when they are. Most teenagers won't set a time to do math. So relax. Help them on their terms, not yours.

http://www.nctm.org/resources/content.aspx?id=2878&ekmense=c580fa7b_44_192_2878_4