

## **Early Steps In Understanding Maths**

Maths for the small child has nothing to do with “sums” or figures or tables or adding or subtracting. These will all come much later. Children get to understand Maths best by handling and investigating and using real objects. Maths is also the language children use in understanding and talking about certain things in his/her daily experience:

- He/she associates certain numbers with particular things – two hands, four wheels, five fingers etc.
- Counting – one, two, three, four etc.
- Colours – black, white, red, green etc.
- Spatial language: over/under, before/after, inside/outside etc.
- Matching/Sorting – objects of the same size/colour/texture/shape etc.
- Odd One Out – difference in size/colour/shape etc.

Understanding mathematical concepts comes very quickly for some children. For others it takes a long time. Be patient. You cannot force Maths understanding on a child.

## **You can help your child in a number of ways....**

Counting up to 10 – identifying and naming the written numerals.

Counting objects such as buttons on coats, cups, plates, knives and forks etc.

Looking for numbers on cars, buses, houses etc

Making up stories to go with addition

Talk about money when shopping.

Talk about time – what you do in the morning, afternoon, evening

Practice writing numbers 1-5

Look for shapes in everyday objects and talk about them

In the course of your ordinary daily routine in the home, in the shop, in the neighbourhood you should use suitable opportunities to casually introduce the maths vocabulary;

How many cakes? The glass is full/empty. We turn left at the lights.