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**Numeracy is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use mathematics in daily life.**

- Numeracy happens everywhere.
- Numeracy is different from literacy.
- Numeracy is more than counting and numbers.
- Numeracy is more than school mathematics.

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**More information**

Visit us for more information on how to develop your child's numeracy skills.

[www.greatstart.sa.edu.au](http://www.greatstart.sa.edu.au)

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**GreatStart**

Everyday learning for numeracy and literacy

[www.greatstart.sa.edu.au](http://www.greatstart.sa.edu.au)

a website for families with young children, from birth to five years of age.

GreatStart is part of the DECD Numeracy and Literacy strategy

Government of South Australia

Department for Education and Child Development
It’s important to remember…
The everyday activities you do at home helps with numeracy development.

It happens in the conversations you have, the games you play and the things you give to your children:

» We use mathematics and numeracy every day in some way.
» Your child starts to learn about numeracy and mathematics long before they start school.
» Your child is doing numerate thinking as they play and explore the world.
» Building early numeracy skills and a positive attitude towards mathematics is just as important as reading to your child every day.

Why is numeracy important?
Mathematical thinking and numeracy is present in all areas of our lives and is essential to developing a deeper understanding of the world around us.

Numeracy helps us to make choices, solve problems, understand patterns and respond to day-to-day challenges.

The first five years of life matter
Children are born ready to learn and their brain develops through use. There is scientific evidence that from the time a child is born, they are engaging with maths and numeracy (Numer, 2013; MCEECDYA, 2010).

The first years of life are the foundation for all later growth, development and learning. By the time a child is three years old, 85% of their brain has developed.

If your child enjoys playing with and exploring mathematical ideas as part of their day, they will have the confidence to try mathematics at school.

Families make a difference
The everyday activities you do at home can help with numeracy development. It happens in the conversations you have, the games you play and the things you give to your children.

When you:

» have a positive attitude to maths and numeracy, your child is more likely to also have one
» model mathematical thinking and problem solving, your child will be encouraged to take risks, create new solutions and problem solve.

There are many things you can do to encourage numeracy learning

» Talk about those times when you are using numeracy and mathematical thinking in your job or other real life situations. You can do this when cooking, reading a map, doing the shopping or reading the junk mail.
» Encourage your child to ask questions and use mathematical language.
» Play games together that use numeracy and mathematical thinking, like card games, board games or memory games.
» Encourage your child to help with household tasks. You might ask them to help set the table, pack their bag for kindy, pour a drink or help with the washing up.
» Read books with mathematical ideas to your child.
» Cook together with your child. You can point out the different measurements used in the recipe and use the scales to measure out the ingredients. You can predict how many cakes you will make or how much you need to feed the whole family.
» Talk about the different numeracy tools you use at home. Encourage them to use different tools for measuring such as measuring tape, scales, the microwave or the TV guide.