

# Give your child a head start with math

August 14 2018, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter

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(HealthDay)—Many kids struggle with math—and for a number of reasons.

Knowing when to be concerned will allow you to get your child study help early on, which is important because research shows that [young children](#) who have difficulty with [math](#) typically will continue to struggle as they get older.

Signs of math difficulties can start as early as 2 years of age. Unlike the terrible 2s, however, this is not something they grow out of. For preschool children, [risk factors](#) for math struggles include low cognitive functioning, vocabulary difficulties, and being from a low socioeconomic household.

For elementary- and middle-school children, risk factors for math struggles include reading, math and attention-related behavioral difficulties, as well as being from a lower socioeconomic household.

Attending preschool or Head Start can lower the risk of math struggles. Screening and intervention efforts as soon as a child starts school also help. Kids should be assessed for math, reading and even behavior problems.

Help your kids get comfortable with math as early as possible. Play informal counting games, like counting the forks and spoons in your kitchen, or the cans and boxes as you unpack groceries. Make a game of looking for a certain number as you read the pages of a book. These activities help lay the groundwork for future classroom success.

And make sure you feel comfortable with math yourself. Kids of math-anxious parents often learn less math at school and are more likely to become math-anxious themselves when their mom or dad repeatedly tries to help with homework.

Resist verbalizing any dislike you have of math in front of your child. Instead use tools like computer and board games and even apps to help

you interact in a more positive way.

You might even start to like math yourself.

**More information:** GreatSchools.org has seven secrets to get kids [excited about math](#) with help from mom and dad.

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