



Elementary Program

Math Moments

December 2016

The Role of Parents/Guardians in Supporting Math Learning

Children do better at school when their parents are involved. Your child's teacher will do his/her best to keep you well informed throughout the school year, and will always be glad to hear from you. Ask your child's teacher about your child's strengths, areas in which to improve, and how you can best offer support at home.

Myths and Facts:

Myth: *The math my child is learning in school is "new."*

Facts:

Your child is learning the same math facts and formulas you did—such as $2 \times 2 = 4$, and the circumference of a circle is $2\pi r$. But the way math is taught has evolved in recent decades.

Today's math learning emphasizes the development of understanding of concepts and skills, so that your child is able to apply these confidently in new situations. It also focuses on developing critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills.

Your child is learning some topics and skills that you may not have learned in elementary school. These include data management and probability, and how to use calculators and computers to help model and solve math problems.

What your child is learning in math class, and how your child is learning, are equipping your child for success in today's knowledge-based economy and our global world.

Myth: Now that we have calculators, students don't need to know how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide, nor do they need to memorize the "math facts" (such as $7 \times 6 = 42$).

Fact: Knowing how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide are essential math skills and a major emphasis in the Ontario math curriculum. Automatic recall of math facts is needed in higher-level math. Games where children need to keep track of a score or that require automatic recall of math facts are a fun way to practise. Look for opportunities where your child can develop fluency. It takes time. This is a key area where you can help your child at home, by encouraging lots of practise in a variety of ways.



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