

# Making Sense of Numbers

Learning how numbers can be added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided is important for young children. Help your child discover the mathematical world by finding opportunities to bring numbers into conversations and play.

## Add them up!

When playing with tiny toys such as marbles or small blocks, have your child take two handfuls. Count how many pieces are in each hand. Have your child hold her hands together and figure out how many she has all together.



## Find number groups

Talk about what you see. Say, "I see three birds on the fence and each bird has two wings—there are six wings. I see two cars and each car has four wheels—that's eight wheels all together."

## Count them down!

How many are in the bowl? Encourage your child to count the number of pieces in her bowl when you are eating foods such as pretzels, grapes, or crackers. Stop and recount after she eats a few pieces. Figure out how many are left in the bowl.



## Divvy them up!

Help your child create equal shares for each person when you are playing with toys or creating with art materials. Give each person one piece at a time. When all the pieces are gone, have each person count to see how many are in his share.



Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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