

MEDIA RELEASE

Parents urged to develop maths in kids from birth

29 February 2012: Parents, grandparents and early childhood educators should use play time to help develop mathematical concepts in young children, advise the authors of a new book published by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

In *Young children learning mathematics: A guide for educators and families*, Australian academics Robert Hunting, Judy Mousley and Bob Perry explore how adults can stimulate young children's mathematical thinking from birth through to when they start school.

"Early learning plays a critical role in laying a foundation for later success in schooling," Dr Hunting said, speaking ahead of the book's release.

"But we need to make sure that learning is fun and rewarding," he said.

The book details a rich variety of mathematical concepts that may be developed in young children, such as arranging, sorting, comparing quantities, counting, filling and emptying, joining, matching, patterning, splitting and sharing.

"There are great opportunities for astute adults, be they teachers, carers or parents, to recognise moments in a child's play, social interactions and everyday situations when embryonic mathematical thinking might be stimulated," Dr Hunting said.

"For example, infants placing toys one at a time into a container and then taking them back out again are developing skills needed later in life to add and subtract," he said.

The book advises adults on how to engage with children as they play and ask sensible, supportive and open-ended questions to provoke children's thinking and extend their investigations.

"All children begin their lives ready to learn mathematics. The trick is to keep the flames fanned and burning brightly," Dr Hunting said.

A research-based book, *Young Children Learning Mathematics* assists early childhood teachers and carers to apply some of the requirements of the new Early Years Learning Framework that came into effect at the beginning of 2012. The book is also relevant to parents and grandparents who wish to ensure their child feels good about mathematics.

Robert Hunting is a Senior Lecturer in Mathematics Education at La Trobe University. Judy Mousley is an Associate Professor at Deakin University. Bob Perry is a Professor of Education at Charles Sturt University.

Young children learning mathematics (ACER Press, 2012) will be released on 1 March. Print copies can be purchased from the [ACER Online Shop](#) or by contacting customer service on 1800 338 402 or via email on sales@acer.edu.au

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