

Parents Count Too

Helping your child with – Measuring length and area

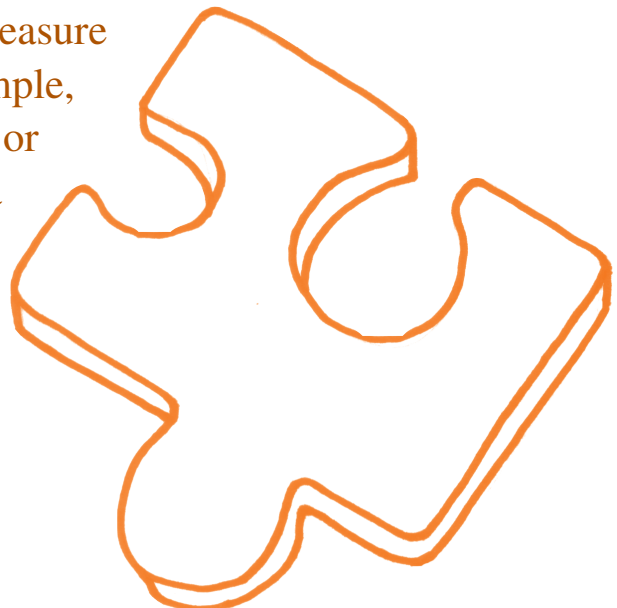
Children learn when they play. They can learn about length and area through trial and error playing with things such as blocks, ribbon, modelling clay and construction toys.

As they play, children begin to take notice of the size and shape of objects; how things fit together, how they can be stacked, the length and width of objects. Children need to be encouraged to explore and manipulate objects and talk about the things they are discovering.

How do children learn to measure length and area?

Children initially develop an understanding of measurement through comparing objects. They may hold up two blocks and say one is longer or shorter than the other. Soon after, they begin to compare more than two objects.

Children need to play and experiment with a variety of materials and objects to measure things with, before they can move to using *formal* units such as metres or centimetres. They need to measure the length of a table for example, using pegs, spoons or books or hand spans before using a ruler.



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- Draw squiggle patterns or make squiggle patterns from string glued onto paper. Colour inside the “closed” areas.
- Spread out a sheet of newspaper on the floor. Count how many books will fit on top of it.
- When wrapping presents talk about the size of the paper and if the paper will be wide and long enough.
- Talk about the size of a tablecloth needed to cover a table or covering for a car.
- Look at the area coverage indicated on paint tins before painting. Talk about how many tins of paint you will need.
- Collect coloured scrap paper and some empty cans or small cartons such as cereal boxes. Your child can create a colourful model by gluing paper to completely cover the carton or can.
- Show your child examples of patchwork and talk about the patterns. Encourage them to create patterns using blocks, scraps of paper or colouring on paper.