

Parents Count Too

Helping your child with – Measuring temperature and time

For children to make sense of measurement, we need to show how measurement is used in practical situations. We also should encourage the language associated with measurement, by talking about:

- things that we can measure
- things we can use to measure, and later
- the units we use to measure things, such as minutes and hours or degrees.

How do children learn to measure temperature and time?

Children need opportunities to compare two or more things to understand measurement. To understand temperature they need to compare two things to measure the “hotness” or “coldness” of a substance. They need to see and talk about how temperature can affect things as well as the ways we can measure temperature.

Initially, children will learn about time through using language such as *yesterday*, *today* and *tomorrow* and through comparing the time it takes to complete activities. *I can clap my hands three times while you throw a ball in the air and catch it.*

Later, children will read the time from both digital and analogue clocks.



Parents Count Too

What can you do at home?

- Talk about events in terms of time. For example, *It's going to take about three minutes to cook this, so you might have time to butter some bread.*
- Look for different kinds of clocks and watches in the house. Ask your child if they are analogue or digital.
- Have your child help you set a kitchen timer or an alarm clock.
- Record special events on a calendar and talk about how many days or weeks before the event.
- Watch athletics and swimming events and talk about the times the athletes are achieving in the events.
- Locate the “use by” dates on groceries and discuss how many days left before the item should be used.
- Have your child help you read bus and train timetables when using public transport or read the arrivals and departures board if at the airport.
- Look at parking signs and discuss the time restrictions when parking the car.
- Have your child help you put the correct money in parking meters and talk about the amount of time before the meter runs out.
- Read the instructions on food and drink packages to see the recommended temperature for storage.
- Ask you child to pack and make a label with the “use by” date for meat or cooked foods that are to be frozen.
- Talk to your child about how temperature will change foods and drinks while you are cooking. *What's going to happen to the water when we put it in the freezer? See what happens to the chocolate in the saucepan when I put it on the warm stove.*

Parents Count Too



- Watch the weather report together and talk about the predicted temperatures. Ask your child what they might need to wear or have with them.
- Look at trees in your neighbourhood and talk about how the trees change with the seasons.
- Find different types of thermometers and talk about how they are used.
- Measure the temperature of bath water before your child steps into the tub. Talk about the water being too hot, too cold or the correct temperature for bathing.
- Talk about safety issues regarding household items that can be very hot such as the stove, iron or heater.
- Share books that are based on temperatures or seasons. A well known event or celebration, such as Christmas, could be compared to the same event in cold climate countries.