# ***Making Maths Real***

***Helping with everyday jobs provides lots of reasons for counting***:

* How many plates do we need for lunch?
* How many socks in the washing? Can we put them into matching pairs?
* I’ve only got 4 apple slices and there are 2 of us, how can we share them?
* Can you get me 3 spoons?
* Can you do 2 squirts of washing up liquid?
* Notice together when there is nothing of something left, ask how many more do we need?

Depending on the stage of your child, you can do these things together with you modelling the number talk, or your child can count things independently.

AS well as practicing counting and problem solving this helps you child to understand hw useful maths can be.

***Collect lots of things from around your home***, that are all different sizes. Muddle them up on the floor. Together you and your child can:

* Sort/order them into big things and little things
* Line them up in size order
* Where do the middle size ones go?

There can be lots of talk:

* Bigger than
* Smaller than
* Huge
* Enormous
* Small
* Tiny
* Medium
* Biggest
* Smallest
* Tallest
* Shortest

Ask questions:

* Where does this one go?
* Is this bigger or smaller than…?
* Is this shorter or taller than…?

***Boomerang Maths*** – you say it, they bring it back!

Start with an amount under 3 to start with and increase it up to 5 as they are ready, then add an object e.g. spoons. Invite your child to bring back the amount of that item. For example, “Please bring me back 3 spoons”.

You can support this by using dots drawn on a piece of paper – show them the number of dots before they go and get the items – model counting the dots with them. As their skills develop you can let them know that you need one more and ask them to go and get it – how many do you have now? Or perhaps you have too many and they need to put one back – how many do you still have?

***I’m on top of it…***you can support your child’s understanding of where things are in relation to other things with this simple game.

Ask your child to choose a toy to play it with. Sit by a chair, or to play on a smaller scale you could use a yoghurt pot or box. Ask your child to put the toy in different places in relation to the chair/pot/box, behind, in front of, next to, on top, under, through etc.

To support the understanding and for younger children, use these words as you play with them, commenting that the bunny is on top of the cushion, or the dinosaur is under the blanket.

Extend this by playing a hide-and-seek game based on finding something by direction – “You can find the dinosaur [next to] the red chair”