Parent Guide

Objectives
Playing with the "M&M'S® Numbers and More—Number Recognition Activity and Early Math Skills set will help prepare children for school by developing the following skills:

- associating a number symbol with a set of objects
- learning numbers and number words
- understanding and applying sequencing and grouping skills
- using visual clues to classify and match things
- understanding and following directions
- problem solving and developing a strategy

Before You Begin:
- Play when you and the child are relaxed.
- Read game play directions out loud and make sure you both understand how to play.
- Match play to the child's interest and concentration level. Children need to change activities often, or they may lose interest.
- Introduce 1-2 new concepts at a time. Mix new concepts with familiar ones so the child experiences a sense of accomplishment.
- Praise the child's efforts and improvement as well as successes.

Remember: When it's fun, children enjoy learning.

GAME PLAY SUGGESTIONS:

FLASH CARDS
Number Recognition
Shuffle the cards and place them in a pile, number side down. Ask the child to draw the top card, turn it over, and count the "M&M'S®" on the card. Point the number and say the number. Once the child is familiar with the numbers from 1 to 10, turn the cards over after identifying each number and introduce the number word.

Sequencing
Remove the number 1 card and shuffle the rest of the deck. Place the number 1 card on the table and have the rest of the cards to the child. Ask the child to put the card for the number that comes next. Continue playing until all the cards have been played. Each child correctly plays a number card, recite the numbers in order, beginning with number 1.

When the child has mastered this game, it can be played in descending order. Place the number 10 card on the table and ask the child to complete the sequence down to 1.

Adding One More
Shuffle the cards and place them in a pile, number side up. Ask the child to draw a card, read the number, and call out the number that comes next. Once the child experiences success with adding one more, play the game by calling out the number that comes before the number on the flash card.

Adding Flash Cards
Shuffle the cards. Ask the child to select two cards and lay them character-side up on the table. Count the objects on each card and determine the total. Then the addition sentence. For example: Reinforce the addition sentence of the 2 card and the 3 card by saying, "We counted two and then three more. We counted up to five. Two plus three equals five."

More games
**ACTIVITY CARDS**

Begin with the candy side of the activity cards. Select a card and show the child how to place a token on each candy picture. Count the tokens and call out the number. Then turn the cards over and play the following games with the character side of the cards.

**Learning Numbers**

Begin with the number 1 card and set it on the table. Ask the child to count the characters and place 1 token on the card, color side up. Then call out the number. Discuss how the number of tokens match the number of characters. When the child is ready, advance to the number 2 card. As you play, name the different colors of the tokens.

**Adding**

Complete two activity cards using the directions above. Lay the cards next to each other. Ask the child to call out the numbers and then count all the tokens for one grand total. Say the addition sentence with your child. For example: Reinforce the addition sentence of the 3 card and the 1 card by saying, “We counted three and then one more. We counted up to four. Three plus one equals four.”

**Sequencing Numbers**

Shuffle the activity cards. Ask the child to select one card, set it on the table, and place the correct number of tokens on it. Continue with the next card. As the child selects each card, it must be placed in sequential order creating a number line. For example: The 4 card will be played on the number line in front of the 5 card. This game can also be played in descending order, beginning with the 10 card.

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**STICKERS**

Use the reward stickers to celebrate a job well done. You or the child can determine when to use them.

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**TOKENS**

**Sorting**

Lay the tokens color-side up on the table. Ask the child to name the colors. Then sort the tokens into piles by color.

**Counting**

Put 10 tokens in a paper bag. Ask the child to pull out tokens from the bag and count how many there are. Put the tokens back in the bag and play again. As the child learns the numbers, a larger amount of tokens can be placed in the bag.

**Adding Groups**

Larger numbers can be added using the tokens for reinforcement. Select two sets (piles) of tokens. Ask the child to count the number of tokens in each set and then add the two sets together. Reinforce the addition sentence. For example: If there is a group of 5 red tokens and a group of 6 yellow tokens, say “5 tokens plus 6 tokens equals 11 tokens.”

**Subtracting**

Select a set of tokens and ask the child to count them. Take away some of the tokens and ask the child to count again. Reinforce the subtraction sentence. For example: If there were 10 tokens and you took away 3, say “10 minus 3 equals 7.” Let the child take a turn creating subtraction sentences for you to solve.

**Matching**

Select 2 tokens of each color and place them color-side down on the table. Ask the child to turn over two tokens. If they are the same color, the child keeps the tokens and selects again. If the colors are different, the tokens are turned back over and play passes to the next player. The game is over when all the pairs have been matched.