Parents and Maths

There are many ways that parents can help their children and support the work being done in schools. Sometimes the biggest obstacle to this support is that parents are not sure of **what** to do or **how** to do it. The following topics show how Maths is related to the child's everyday life and give examples of how parents can become involved.

At Home	Out and About
At the Table	In the Park
Baking/Cooking	In the Car
Bedtime	In the Shops
Storytime	At the Beach
Playing Games	On the Street
Bath Time	In the Garden

At the Table	Baking/Cooking
How many people are there?	Which is full/empty?
How many knives/forks do we need?	How many cupfuls/spoonfuls do we need?
Do we have enough/too many?	Shapes of tins/plates
Matching cups to saucers	Counting the ingredients
Where do we put them (right/left)?	How much flour do we need?
Where do the cups go (in front/behind)	Weight and capacity – compare standard weights
If more people came, how many extras would we need?	Hand-weighing: which feels heavier/lighter?
How many spoons altogether?	More than/less than – do we need more potatoes for everyone?
Cutting a cake – fractions, decimals, percentages	Do we have enough for each person to eat 2 corns on the cob?

In the Garden	On the Street
How many flowers/trees can you see?	How many doors/windows can you count?
Let's count the flowers on a shrub.	What shapes can you see?
How long do you think it would take to run from here to there? Let's try it.	If each house had 4 windows, how many could we see on the street?
What shapes can you see – flowerbeds, shed, etc.	How many steps from one end to the other? Count together or estimate.
Is there enough room on the swing for 2 of us?	How wide do you think the path is?
Length/area of the garden – estimate and then step/measure.	How many people could stand from here to the lamppost?
How tall do you think the tree is? How could we work it out?	Reading dates, times from posters/advertisements – how long would the concert last? How much would tickets for 2 people cost? How tall are the buildings? Reading the phone numbers in a phone box – what's the biggest/smallest number?

Bed Time	Bath Time
Toys – how many altogether? How many eyes? If 1 teddy has 2 eyes, how many would 2 teddies have?	Sinking and floating.
Let's count the stairs as we go to bed.	Up and down – brushing our teeth, drying ourselves.
How do we put on our pyjamas – one let first, then the other.	How far do you think the water goes when we splash?
Sequence the day – what did we do today?	Is the towel big/small? Big enough? How many towels do we need?
Time – what time did you get up? Come home from school? Go to bed?	Full/empty – bottles, tubes, etc. Capacity of shower gel, toothpaste, shampoo.
How many minutes/hours?	How much water do you think the bath holds?
How long until you have to get up again?	How many capfuls to fill the shampoo bottle?
	Litres and millilitres.

In the Car	At the Shops
How many miles/kilometres to the destination?	Do we need a big/small box of cereal?
Destination time – we leave at 11.30 and the journey takes 3 hours. What time should we arrive?	What shelves are they on – top, middle, and bottom?
Signposts – keeping tally of distance travelled.	How many bananas do we have?
Petrol – cost per liltre/5 litres etc.	6 apples for €1.50. How much each?
Value for money – compare petrol prices.	Find three things that total approx. €5.00
Capacity of fuel tank.	Weight/capacity of items
	Estimate how many items are in the trolley?
	Keeping a running tally of cost as items are put in – estimate total.
	Change: total cost = €75.69. How much change will I get from €80/€100 ?