Family Fun with Math: Counting Flower Petals

Math learning can happen anytime! Here are a few ideas to help your children see the math all around them.

Why flower petals?

With spring in full swing, there are lots of flowers blooming and some starting to fall! Children can count flower petals to see how many petals different types of flowers have. They can then explore which flowers have more petals, and which flowers have an even or odd number of petals.

Try it Out: Take a nature walk

- Go on a walk through your neighborhood or backyard with your child and collect flowers! If you can't find flowers, you could collect fallen branches and count leaves instead
- Back home, divide the flowers up and then count the number of petals on each flower
- If the petals from a flower can be separated into 2 equal groups, that means they have an even number of petals! If not, that means there is an odd number

Talk about It:

- Here are some questions to ask your child:
    - Which type of flower has the most petals?
    - Which has the least?
    - How are the petal shapes different or similar?
    - How do you know if a number is even or odd?
    - Can you list the even numbers you know? What about the odd numbers?
- Play a game: pass the flower back and forth between you and your child, pulling one petal off each time. Whoever pulls off the last petal wins!

Make it Work for Your Child:

- After collecting flowers or leaves with small quantities, have child pull off the petals and work on one-to-one correspondence by helping the child count the petals
- Count whole flowers instead of individual petals
- Pull petals off of different flowers and have your child sort them into categories or piles of same petals

Make it Work for Your Family:

- For an extra challenge, have kids or their siblings predict how many petals are on each flower. Whoever guesses the closest number wins!
- If you can't get outside, print out pictures of flowers where the petals are easily visible, or just look at pictures on a phone or computer