

## Report to **PARENTS**

# 6 Ways to Help Kids Overcome Math Anxiety

Inspiring a love for math can open up a world of opportunities for kids. Yet, for many, math can lead to feelings of stress and anxiety. Math anxiety can affect anyone. Research shows a strong negative relationship between math anxiety and achievement. It can create a vicious circle: If kids perform poorly, they might become anxious—and that anxiety can lead to poor performance. Here are six ways to help reduce math anxiety.

## 1. Foster a Positive Attitude

Parents' math anxiety can influence children's attitudes. Many adults still believe math myths—like that someone is a “math person” or not. Kids need to hear that math is for everyone.

## 2. Make Math Relevant

Use the 5E (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) lesson model at home to engage kids in hands-on learning and real-world tasks.

## 3. Set High Expectations

Challenging kids helps them develop strong problem-solving skills. When students work through difficult problems, they engage in productive struggle and develop grit.

## 4. Create a Safe Environment for Learning

Making mistakes is part of learning. Getting the wrong answer doesn't mean your child can't solve the problem; it just means they haven't solved the problem yet. While learning math, children should feel comfortable enough to take risks and share their approaches



to problem-solving. They'll see mistakes as opportunities to learn and feel more comfortable persisting in the struggle.

## 5. Use Positive Language

Negative language can fuel self-doubt and contribute to burnout. Suggesting positive alternatives can help students change the way they think about math. Instead of “I'm bad at this,” say “I can improve.” Or instead of “This is too hard for me,” try “Learning takes time.”

## 6. Write It Out

Research shows that kids who write out or discuss math anxiety tend to do better on tests. Asking your child to write out their thoughts and ideas—expressing both their intellectual and emotional reactions to math content—can help them reflect on their comprehension, engagement, and feelings about a lesson. Soon, they will see more choices in how they respond to difficulties.

When students take control of their anxiety, they can focus more on the math and less on their worries about math. They can begin to see moments of struggle as fruitful learning opportunities, rather than sources of stress.