Early childhood teachers can foster productive math experiences for African American boys by having positive individual interactions, providing opportunities for exploration, extending children's initial interests, and structuring the environment to continuously attract and engage children in math learning.

The way in which teachers and parents approach and communicate the importance of math learning has a direct link to a young boy's perception of his ability to enjoy and excel in math. It also impacts his self-regulation skills. Therefore, making math a meaningful and inviting experience is vital in all early childhood classrooms—especially those serving African American boys growing up in underresourced communities.

Try This!

- Make a list of resources suggested in the chapter that promote engagement with mathematical concepts (e.g., tangrams, peg sorts, number cubes, design cards, jigsaw puzzles, puzzle boards, color tiles, counting cars and bears, materials for design copying and building, and board and card games). Choose three and jot down what children can learn as they manipulate the materials and play. How might you support and extend their learning?
- Refresh your mathematics materials. Organize your setting with ample table space. Redesign the storage area for easy access with containers that are labeled and have photos of contents. What activities, games, and resources can you add? Think about whether children would benefit more from an introduction to new additions or from simply exploring materials on their own at first.
- Use math talk to solve simple daily problems throughout the day. For example, "Some plates are missing muffins. How many more do we need?" or "How far do you think you are throwing the ball? I wonder how we could measure the distance."

naeyc Accreditation
Early Learning Programs

This chapter supports the following NAEYC Early Learning Program Accreditation Standards and topic areas:

Standard 2: Curriculum
2.A Essential Characteristics
2.F Early Mathematics

Standard 3: Teaching
3.A Designing Enriched Learning Environments
3.F Making Learning Meaningful for All Children