

## **Perceptual Subitising**

Children subitise when they instantly recognise a small group of objects as a number without counting. For example, if they hold up four fingers and they instantly know it's four without counting, they have subitised. This ability is an important component of early numeracy.

### **I See Numbers**

Throughout the day, use small number words to name the number in small groups. For example, "Can you pick up those two blocks please." Help children see and name with numbers, groups of one, two, and three and more, everywhere, every chance you get, such as three trees, not just a group of trees. Encouraging children to see the amount of something as opposed to only seeing the "something" helps them form the habit of quantifying small groups or collections. This habit will give them lots of experience recognizing groups and numbers—seeing the world through mathematical lenses.

### **Make Groups**

Lay out a small collection of items (up to 3) under a cloth so children cannot see them.

Tell the children you are going to briefly show them how many you have under the cloth, and that they will make a group that has the same number of items that your group has.

After they have finished, they hide their versions as well. Then uncover the groups, yelling "Ta-da!"

Compare the groups and ask children if they are the same. Name the number (e.g. "They both (or all) have three!").

Repeat with different small collections of objects.

### **Tricky Two**

Put small groups of counters or cubes under two or three different containers, showing the children and saying the number for each clearly.

Tip the containers over so that the counters are hidden beneath the containers. Move the containers around (mix them up).

Challenge the children to "Find the tricky two!" (or if working with another number -- "wonderful one", "thrilling three", etc.).

After the children guess, they should look under the container. If the child chooses and correctly identifies the set of two, say, "There's the tricky two!" You win the game." If the child chooses a non-example and correctly identifies it as "not two" or by its correct number, say: "Correct, that's not the tricky two! You win another pick." If incorrect, say: "That was the tricky two" or "That's 'n'(number of counters), not the tricky two."

Repeat. Once children are correct 4 or 5 times in a row (even if they had to reveal the objects to be correct), move to a higher number (foxy four, fantastic five).

Challenge: repeat with different numbers until children have mastered groups up to five.