PBS SoCal’s Family Math initiative is a research-based, multi-platform, bilingual program (in English and Spanish) that focuses on building math positivity, confidence, and knowledge of foundational math skills for families with children ages 2 to 5. Family Math equips parents and caregivers with strategies and resources to facilitate meaningful math experiences at home through playful learning and hands-on activities.

This year, Family Math continued to provide local opportunities for the entire family to engage in workshops and events across Southern California. We expanded Family Math nationally with the release of the Family Math Toolkit and station grants.

In FY2023, some key figures in Southern California included:

- Over 13,000 parents and children received educational materials and resources through Family Math workshops, in-person and virtual outreach events and fairs.

- 4,273 parents participated in workshops or events that provided them with free access to Family Math curriculum and PBS KIDS resources.

- 4,924 children experienced Family Math workshops and outreach events with their parents.

- 87% of families identified as Hispanic/Latino.

- 90% of families who participated were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch at their child's school.
Reach

- Hosted 107 Family Math workshops and events, including introductory workshops, Parent Academies, “Peg + Cat” Family & Community Learning (FCL) workshops, Family Math Nights, and Family Story Time events
- Reached a total of 4,273 parents and caregivers, 4,924 children, and 228 educators/providers
- Distributed over 13,000 educational resources including activity kits, books, iPads, and 4,700 Family Math activity booklets
- Published 50 new activity and community videos and 19 bilingual editorial articles on the Family Math website, garnering over 11,000 page views

Impact

Gains by parents and caregivers who participated in Family Math programming included:

- 10% increase in their confidence to support their child’s learning of early math skills
- 11% increase in their knowledge and awareness of foundational math skills
- 9% increase in their feelings of positivity and enjoyment about helping their child with math

National Expansion

- The Family Math Toolkit, which includes access to over 350 bilingual assets, was released in May 2023.
- Public media stations and community organizations gained free access to workshop materials, facilitator guides, printables, broadcast videos, and activity videos to bring Family Math to the communities they serve. The website has had over 1,200 visitors.
- Ten PBS Stations nationwide received grants from PBS SoCal to support their implementation and evaluation of Family Math in their local communities. Partner stations leveraged the work that was made possible by the Family Math grants, seeking and receiving additional sustainable funding.
Deeper Exploration of Family Experiences

This year, PBS SoCal expanded the Early Learning research agenda to include interviews and focus groups. Collecting qualitative data from families helped us continue to uplift the voices of the communities we serve and gave us a deeper understanding of the impact our programs make in families’ everyday lives. The stories families shared suggested that our family workshop series empower parents to transform the way they see themselves as thinkers and doers of math, allowing them to fully embrace their role as their children’s first teacher.

In the Fall of 2022, we conducted longitudinal interviews with three mothers who joined the Family Math Parent Academy. We explored changes in parent attitudes and behaviors related to engaging in math at home as a result of participating in an in-depth series that helped families learn how to embed math learning into their everyday interactions with their children and model playful learning.

Parents who joined the 5-week Family Math Parent Academy emerged more confident in their ability to have conversations that involve math while doing everyday routines with their child, such as when cooking, shopping, or doing laundry.

Parent Academy case study findings suggested that parents:

- Became equipped with the confidence to easily weave math into their existing routines.
- Realized math was everywhere.
- Recognized math in everyday situations, which offered rich opportunities for family bonding.
- Noticed their children were more excited, interested, and motivated to do activities that involved math.

“Had I not been in the Parent Academy, I wouldn’t have been able to motivate [my daughter] to have the energy and the motivation to learn. As I said, I’m her first teacher, someone to look up to and motivate herself. I like to get involved in what my children do because it’s part of their development, but my role is to provide knowledge to them as well. I admire myself as a mother and I feel very proud that I can do this now.” -Family Math Mom

“I learned the importance of taking any opportunity to discuss math with my child. Math is all around us, shapes, patterns, counting, etc. and by exposing our children every day now, it will give them an advantage to better understand and enjoy math later.” -Family Math Mom
In the Spring of 2023, the Family Math Peg + Cat Family Community Learning Workshops provided us with a second opportunity to deeply engage in conversations with three parents about their perceptions and experiences during a collaborative workshop series that was uniquely designed for play and learning between a parent and child.

Families who joined the 4-week Peg + Cat Family Community Workshop Series reported that their children showed improvement in essential math areas including sorting and classifying, identifying and describing shapes, completing patterns, and comparing measurements.

Children who participated in the FCL:

- Became more excited about and aware of math opportunities around them.
- Actively searched for ways to practice math in fun ways, such as when baking.
- Continued to practice what they learned even after the series ended.
- Initiated math activities with their parents due to a newfound interest in math.

"I think the workshops have helped because I know a little bit more about how to help her not get bored of doing math. They have given me more ideas. I think this workshop is helping me learn and use my daily activities to transform them into math problems so that she can learn."
- Family Math Mom

FCL case study findings suggested that parents:

- Realized they had the skills and tools to be their child's first teacher at home.
- Became enthusiastic about learning at home and fostered an environment where math became exciting and doable.
- Playfully included math in their daily routines of cooking, folding laundry, and going on walks.
- Enjoyed quality time together as a family, helping them see the value of being present and engaged with their children.

"My children have put sorting into practice the most because they spend a lot of time counting things, sorting their toys and clothes. My younger son learned how to differentiate and sort items by their sizes. The older one already had a bit of understanding, but my younger son didn't follow the rules for putting his toys away. Now he's picked up the habit. He playfully organizes his toys by size or by color. He also sorts his dirty clothes into his laundry basket."
- Family Math Mom