Section 3: Community Sessions

Generic Outline

It is envisaged that all sessions will have the components listed below. There are some suggestions under each component heading, although it would take more than an hour and a half if you tried to do everything that is there. Part of the learning in each session needs to include the language of mathematics. Parents can reinforce mathematics language by talking about mathematics in their first language. Remember to allow time in the one to one-and-a-half-hour community session for food.

Welcome

Suggestions: music, songs, dance, karakia (or an appropriate saying in accord with the community), prayer, or blessing. These are not the "must do" list; you may well come up with ideas of your own.

Short introduction

Introduce people by acknowledging the parents who are there and the people who have planned and will facilitate the sessions. Give an overview of the session and the key purposes for the session. There may well be a sharing of parents' stories and, especially at the first meeting, the lead team's own personal stories.

Setting the scene

Create a friendly, inclusive, supportive environment: energisers, ice-breakers, appropriate video clips, inspirational stories, and games are available on the nzmaths website. These help set the tone, relax everyone, and foster closer relationships.

Key mathematics focus (doing the mathematics)

For each session decide on a specific mathematics focus, for example:

- counting
- place value
- addition and subtraction
- part–whole thinking
- multiplication and division
- fractions, decimals, and percentages.

Other areas to consider (using mathematics):

- sharing our cultures: mathematical language and mathematics activities from around the world;
- games;
- targeting specific transition groups, for example, pre-school, pre-intermediate, or pre-secondary school;
- celebration, for example, a family night with barbeque, umu, or hāngi, and children and parents playing maths games.

Note: It is recommended that you plan for four to six community sessions in one year, using topics such as those above. If you wish to do all the suggested topics, it would be advisable to have a two-year plan.

Games and activities

Some ideas:

- games and activities relevant to the key mathematics focus for this session;
- introduction of new maths games;
- rotations (stations) centered around the key mathematical focus;
- a take-home pack of the games that have been played and the equipment used;
- learning mathematical language in a language other than their own (if English is not their first language).

Wind-up

Some ideas:

- questions and discussion (how to use tonight's ideas at home);
- feedback and feed-forward (to direct future sessions);
- take-home packs;
- spot prizes/raffles;
- appreciation shown for the families' input and commitment.

Specific Outlines

The following three outlines consist of examples of community sessions that you can "pick and mix" from. Whatever you choose, make sure that it links to the needs and interests of your community. The outlines are not a prescription, but they have all been used in various parts of New Zealand.

Outline One (four sessions)

Session 1

The Number Framework to stage 5: an overview of the Framework and an outline of what the Numeracy Development Projects consist of. Counting games and activities

Session 2

Addition and subtraction: strategies to solve problems. Games and activities to support knowledge development

Session 3

Multiplication and division: learning tables; from skip-counting to fluency

Session 4

Fractions, decimals, and percentages. It is up to lead teachers and lead parents to decide if there is time to fit this topic in. Often, the first three sessions are extended because parents become very involved in the content. Some choose to have a games night to finish off for the year and save this session for the following year.

Outline Two (six sessions)

Session 1

Getting to know one another; parents as teachers; learning through games

Session 2

The Number Framework: what it is and what it means for their children

Session 3

Mathematical games: children teach the parents

Session 4

Part–whole thinking: what it means and why it is important

Session 5

Sharing cultures: mathematics activities from around the world

Session 6

Celebration: visiting classrooms and outdoor sports.

Outline Three (six sessions)

Session 1

Introductions, sharing of mathematics experiences, questions, why numeracy, basic addition and/or subtraction facts, counting, and games that help counting

Session 2

The Number Framework, strategy stages, exploring problems using teachers', children's, and parents' own strategies, part–whole thinking, children's portfolio samples and what they mean, games that help reinforce basic facts and part–whole thinking

Session 3

Revision of strategy stages, subtraction (again, link to counting), place value. Resources and games at home that help develop the understanding of place value

Session 4

From additive to multiplicative: What does that mean? How does it relate to the Number Framework?

Looking at learning of multiplication facts and relationships between division and subtraction. Games that help and/or consolidate

Session 5

Fractions: activities that can be done at home to help develop an understanding of fractions; fractions as a double operation; how fractions relate to the Number Framework

Session 6

A celebration of numeracy. A family night with barbeque tea, modelling by children, and games set out in rotation.

Note: Some schools that prefer four sessions amalgamate sessions 1–4 into three sessions and finish with a family night, where participants bring something to share and celebrate. For example, parents sharing photos, songs, videos, or stories about themselves or their children and teachers sharing something from their classrooms.