Divvy it Up: A Counting Game

You've probably been to a party where one of the appetizers was veggies and dip. We're all busy, and to make life easier, grocery stores often sell these vegetables precut and washed, in a plastic tray. This tray is great for snacking. But it's also the perfect tool for a little counting practice!

What You Need:

- Sectioned veggie tray, or any tray with multiple sections (and ideally a center section, too)
- 20 pennies, erasers, plastic rings, or other small items
- Small sticky notes, or scrap paper and tape

What You Do:

1. Using a dozen or so Post Its, write a number on each. For a very small child, you can provide a "clue", by drawing dots beside the number. With an older preschooler, write the number word, in addition to the symbol, for example, both "five" and "5".
2. Place a numbered post-it in each section of the veggie tray.
3. Put the pennies, erasers, or other small item in the center section, where the dip would normally go. Ask your child to pick a "section" and identify the number. Next, tell her she's going to find that number of items.
4. Help her count each penny individually, speaking the number aloud, and then moving the coins as she goes into the section.
5. Repeat with each of the sections, working on one number at a time. When your child has finished all the sections of the tray, you can reset it with new numbers, or keep practicing the same ones until she's got them down pat.

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