

# Talk on the Phone!

In today's digital age, kindergarten is not too young to teach a child to manage the telephone. It's a life skill, a social studies topic for kindergarten, and it's also good ongoing practice in learning those kindergarten numbers and letters.

When you teach a child to handle the telephone, there's just one problem: when you're billed by the minute, you probably don't want to "experiment" too freely!

Here's a "phone" you can make with your kindergartener. Make a couple, and let him practice the most important numbers in your family's life.

## What You Need:

- Piece of card stock paper, in any color
- Pack of 3/4" round stickers, any color (available in office supply stores)
- Pack of 1/4" sticker "dots" in a different color (also available in office supply stores)
- Small post-its
- Markers
- Scissors

## What You Do:

1. Cut out a rectangular cordless "phone" from your cardstock. Make it about 8-1/2" long by about 3" wide. Then look at the phone your family uses most at home, and help your child copy these key features: the screen at the top showing the number (on your phone, make this the size of a small post-it, about 1-3/4x2"), the on/off buttons, and then the area where the push buttons go.
2. In the push button area, have your child stick on stickers for each number, 1-9 and 0, as they appear on your phone. Have him use his best writing to write the correct numeral on each sticker.
3. Now use the post-its to explore dialing. Write your family's phone number on a post-it and stick it in the "screen" area. Can your child dial it? Have him practice until he can do it from memory, and then have him learn your cell phone number - and 911 of course, too.
4. For added math practice, try this "mystery" game: get the dots out, along with a piece of plain paper. Make a "phone number" by making a column of dots for each digit. Your child must count the dots to make the digit. After counting seven columns, your child will have "created" the phone number.
5. Now challenge your child to stump you. Have him make dot columns, and then see if you can guess the number correctly.

## What's going on?

In kindergarten social studies, kids study key community services around them—firetruck guys, police, hospitals ... and phone services. Meanwhile, in math, they're learning how numbers represent real things. Activities like this phone game help make a kid's world safe and understandable on many levels: they see firsthand how math is all around us, how numbers can add up to real life connections, and how, even at a very young age, they can start to manage and enjoy it all.

