Make This Number Line: Count Place on a Lace!

Got a shoelace? Got a kindergartener? Help your child learn to use the number line by creating one out of a lace.

What You Need:

- A clean, white shoelace
- A black permanent marker, fine point
- A bead or button with a large center hole (or a paper clip)

What You Do:

1. Have your child recite the numbers from zero to twenty-five in order. As he’s saying them, use the marker to write the numerals on the shoelace in order from left to right. Leave two finger-width spaces between each number.
2. Tie a knot at the left end of the lace and then slip a bead onto the other end. Tie a knot at the right end of the lace.
3. Invite your child to use the Lace Number Line to practice various counting skills:

   - **Counting Up and Down.** Say a number aloud, and have your child slide the bead to the matching number. He can slide the bead to the right as he counts up, and slide the bead to the left as he counts backward.
   - **Greater and Less Than.** Slide the bead to a number. Ask your child to name a number that is more (point to the right side of the number line) or less (left side) than the chosen number.
   - **Word Problems.** Take turns with your child creating fun counting stories aloud. For example: “Ian picked two apples. Then Ian picked one more apple. How many apples does Ian have now?” As the story is told, your child slides the bead to the first number (2), then slides it one number higher (3) to find the answer. Insert family or pet names in the counting stories, and have fun!