Play Pattern Hopscotch!

Creating number patterns with pencil and paper can be dull. But creating patterns with hopscotch? Way cool! Get your child's game on, and give her some math practice in the process. While developing pattern skills, students build a firm foundation for algebraic thinking. Here's a fun at-home activity that will have your child recognizing, describing, and extending patterns using hopscotch squares.

**What You Need:**

- Chalk
- Sidewalk or driveway
- Stone

**What You Do:**

1. Using chalk, draw a series of six connecting hopscotch boxes on the sidewalk or on a driveway. In the first four boxes, write a series of four numbers showing a pattern of counting by 2s. (For example, 2, 4, 6, 8). Write one number in each box.

2. Have your child extend the pattern by filling in the empty boxes with numbers that extend this sequence. To demonstrate the pattern, ask your child to hop on each of the boxes in the series, saying each number aloud.

3. This time, ask your child to draw two more sets of six to eight boxes. Fill in each set of boxes with a series of four numbers that show a pattern, such as counting by 5s, counting by 10s, decreasing by 1s, or decreasing by 2s. Do you have a math whiz? You can also experiment with counting by 3, 4, or 6...this lays the foundation for multiplication.

4. Although the boxes may look non-traditional, the game of hopscotch is still timelessly fun. Make your boxes...and then hop on. In teacher terms, you're doing "kinesthetic" learning—using the body to integrate key intellectual skills and knowledge. In kid terms, you'll be having tons of fun!