

Maths Champions Case Study

Blossom Nursery Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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Introduction: Blossom Nursery has 6 locations spread across Dubai. Five of these locations participated in the Math Champion Programme. Blossom Nursery has staff from all different cultures and backgrounds. Our staff who actively took part in the Math Champion Programme have different levels of Math achievements and their roles vary from Directors, Teachers, Teacher Assistants and Language Teachers. Although everyone's roles vary, all of us found the programme beneficial and extremely useful.

Expats make 80% of UAE's population. Some children in Blossom Nursery have English as a second language and sometimes as third. It has been very helpful to understand the ways to teach Math for children whose English is not their mother tongue.

Impact of the project

The Team

Each participant in Math Programme has had growth in their knowledge of math, understanding of different ages and stages of development, how to carry out math projects and overall understands how math looks like in daily routines. At first, some of the teachers were hesitant to carry out focused math activities daily, but through the programme they began to understand that math doesn't happen only with planned activities but also through the unplanned activities, like transitions, free play, music, reading and snack etc.

Participants were receiving information as they participated in Math Champion Programme by NDNA. They would then, take facilitator roles to deliver training sessions with their colleagues, increasing their confidence and their skills as trainers,

facilitators and mastering math concepts and knowledge. We played the role of an umbrella, where any information received was conducted to the rest of the team members, ensuring that knowledge and implementation took place in many layers and in each classroom.

On weekly basis teachers shared with one another what activities they had provided through Google Platforms and using the Activity Bank from NDNA, has given teachers inspiration on delivering math activities and making the most of the resources within the setting.

“I have enjoyed learning new skills and especially how to start a math conversation with children. I learned that math is not only about numbers and shape space and measure but a lot more” One of my students A.B, 30 Months, started in emerging level, and through the focused activities she was able to reach to exceeding level in by the end of the year.”- Desara, Blossom Early Learning Center

“The programme helped us all to be more intentional and taught us skills to create new math evidences. Math is as important as Literacy and other aspects of learning. 2016-2017 has been a year where math came to focus as much as other areas” – Anna- Blossom Village

“Through the programme I have been able to analyze and assess the work of children of different ages and I can recognize and support their needs.” -Sylvie, Blossom Burj & Blossom Mudon

“I have enjoyed learning fun and new ways of teaching math in my classroom and extending my knowledge”- Ilse, Blossom Village

“The training has been as beneficial for children, as for all practitioners”- Toni Blossom Downtown

“Even though I knew most of the information, it was a good refresher to go through the programme with the team. I have been enjoying using the suggested activities. The structure of the programme, meetings on regular basis have been truly a great experience which helped me to become confident and creative in teaching math.” Anna, Blossom Mudon

“I am able to identify the children’s needs and can support each individual child in their learning and development” – April, Blossom Burj & Blossom Mudon



The environment

Blossom classrooms have continuously been transformed with new math displays and resources. Through the Environment Auditing Tool, we recognized that classrooms are well set with math resources and our focus has been the common areas or outdoors.

What is to be recognized is how Blossom teachers are keeping within Blossom ethos to reuse and recycle, have junk turned into purposeful activities where children can be exposed to math on daily basis.

Teachers also are making use of what already is part of their classroom and finding new ways to turn it into learning opportunities. E.g. Blossom Nursery uses "How Full is your Bucket" Programme and when reinforcing positive behavior, math language also has been introduced.



The Children and Their Development

Math Champion Programme has had a huge impact on our children's learning and development. Teachers gained confidence to implement math concepts, math language, provided opportunities for focused activities. Children have shown a significant progress.

Teachers recorded and measured children's level of development in the beginning of the Academic Term and on the last term. This is what has been found:

- 70% of children that joined Blossom Nursery in September were in Emerging level in either Numbers or Shape, Space and Measure.
- 97% of children that joined Blossom in September are in Expected or Exceeding level in the last term in Numbers/ Shape space and measure

Parents and Families

Some of the Blossom centres have had days designated to Math only, where teachers planned math activities and parents closely could observe how their children are exposed to math language and continue this support at home. One parent, showed interest and wanted to find out more about the Programme after receiving an introduction in our weekly newsletters.

Next Steps:

Blossom Nursery will continue to use Activity and Resources Bank and knowing best practise will help us to modify our environment continuously reaching green zone on the Auditing Tools.

To continue with implementation of daily activities for the next year, Blossom Long term planning has math concepts and goals set for each age, giving teachers ideas on different skills children need to achieve throughout the year.