

# Watch for signs of 'math-hating'

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Published Sunday, November 28, 2010

STONE MOUNTAIN - They roll their eyes in frustration and pound their fists on their desks, proclaiming, "I hate math!"

Author and math tutor Sandra Carter of Stone Mountain has heard those words all too often, and she warns parents who also hear them to act quickly.

Arithmetic has some kids so baffled that they give up on learning it, Carter said.

Kids who say they "hate math" really are calling out for help. They fear what they don't understand.

Carter's book, "How to Help Parents and Kids Get Over the Fear of Math," shows adults how to spot the warning signs before their school-age children fall too far behind.

"They will avoid conversations about math class and probably try to avoid showing test grades," Carter said. "They will say a negative comment about the teacher. They are always looking for a calculator. If there are no batteries, they will panic. If you see any of those signs, don't delay. Have the student's math skills evaluated by a teacher or tutor."

Carter, who works in information technology, used to be one of those kids. She grew up going to work with her mother at Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., knowing that college would be her end goal. But she didn't understand how math would get her there.

"It just didn't do anything for me," she said. "I hated it. When I got to 11th grade, I had a very good teacher who turned the light on for me. He made math fun and interesting. He was able to command our attention."

Parents can help their kids understand math by making it relevant to them. Try using examples they understand, such as touchdowns in football or discounts in shopping. Explain that math is something they always will use, no matter their career choice.

Even kids who understand math can benefit by building their skills. Math is like a muscle that needs to be toned, Carter said.

Cindy Sumter of Ellenwood enrolled her seventh-grader in one of Carter's math refresher courses because her son, Torren, wanted to keep making A's and B's in algebra.

"Word problems sometimes stump him," Sumter said. "I want him to be prepared for high school. My son wants to be a doctor and isn't going to let anything stop him from achieving his dream."

For more information on the book "How to Help Parents and Kids Get Over the Fear of Math" or classes for parents and kids, visit [www.math1on1.net](http://www.math1on1.net).

Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald on Sunday, November 28, 2010

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