What's in the cup?

You will need:

- A cup you cannot see through.
- Up to 10 counters (lego pieces, pasta, dried beans, or other small objects).
- Two five-frames.
- Partners (guardian and child)

Objective:

- To determine the number of objects in the cup when you know the total and a visible part of that total.

How to play:

1. Start with three objects.
2. Count them together to make sure there are three.
3. Partner A (child) closes their eyes and Partner B (guardian) puts some of the three counters into the cup and leaves the rest on the table.
4. Partner B signals partner A to open their eyes by saying, "How many are in the cup?"
5. Partner A can use as much think time as they need to determine how many are in the missing cup.
6. If they are stuck or propose a solution that is incorrect, Partner B can suggest the use of a five frame. Remember that there were 3 in the whole, so fold back 2 of the five spaces. Place the visible pieces on the five-frame. Observe or count the open spaces to see how many must be in the cup. Finally, reveal the number in the cup! Success!
7. Switch roles and work with 4 counters, repeating steps 1-6 as necessary.

**As this is the guardian's turn, make sure to 'think out loud' as you determine the missing number. If your child needed the use of a five-frame last time, make sure you use a five frame to determine the missing number, too. This helps your child learn the strategy.

8. Switch roles again. Stick with 4 counters if your child needs the practice. Move onto 5 counters if your child is ready to tackle a bigger number.
9. Stick with 5 counters for the next turn, testing a different combination of parts.
10. Move slowly through the numbers 6-10. There are many possible combinations of parts for each number. Remember use another 5-frame if necessary. Fold back spaces to create spaces to create the whole. For example, if the whole is 8, use one complete 5 frame plus another five frame with two spaces folded back.
11. Stop once you and your child have tested out all possible combination of parts to make 10.

**If your child finds this task very challenging, it is okay to repeat combinations using smaller numbers at your discretion. If they are frustrated or noticeably fatigued, stop playing and keep things positive. Have a snack and a fun break and try again another time.