

## **Teaching Money Skills: Bills**

**Allow your child to pay for an item that is less than \$5. Give them only \$1 bills. This can be in a store or at a “store” you create at home.**

**Use a number line 1 -10. It doesn't have to be fancy or computer generated. Simply write the numbers 1 – 10.**

**Look at the price of the item by looking only at the number to the left of the decimal. Ignore cents.**

**Find that number on the number line.**

**Now look to see if there are any numbers to the right of the decimal point. If there are, then you need to go up one on the number line.**

**If it is less than \$5 you can buy it. If the number is over 5, then you cannot buy it.**

**Do not worry about coins at first. It is important to know if you have enough money. Coins can come later.**

**Have them count out the number of one-dollar bills they need. Some children may need to match one dollar to each number on the number line (visual support).**

**Once they have this mastered, you can introduce \$5 bills. Practice distinguishing between the bills.**

**Then use the same number line and go through the same steps. If they have a \$5 bill they can use that to pay. Give them some \$1 bills and a \$5 bill to be sure they can select the correct bill(s).**

**Ask if they will get any change. They don't have to tell you exactly how much because at this point we are not worried about coins. They should, however, recognize if they get change. They can pay with a \$5 bill or ones.**

**You can demonstrate with the number line that 5 one-dollar bills are equal to one \$5 bill. Lay the \$5 bill across the top of the line and then put the one-dollar bills under each number on the line to show it takes 5 to equal the \$5 bill.**

**As they improve you can:**

**Add \$10 bills. Practice distinguishing between all 3 bills.**

**Increase the amount that they can spend to \$10.**

**When that is mastered, then you can allow them to buy 2 items and determine if they will have enough money. They can add the two together by using a calculator, adding on the number line, or adding on paper depending on their skill level.**

**Menus are a great source to practice these skills. Get them from your favorite restaurants and practice at home. Lots of restaurants have paper menus and some allow you to take their regular menu if you just explain why. It is also a good way to practice vocabulary.**

**Next you can add \$20 bills.**

**Increase your number line to 20.**

**Practice distinguishing between all the bills. Bills can be sorted by the child to reinforce looking closely at the number.**

**Let them buy 1 item until they have had some practice with all four bills.**

**With success, you can then add buying 2 items.**

**With success, increase the number of items they can buy.**

**Give them the opportunity to practice in real life situations.**