

# One + One = Fun!

## Get excited for Maths Week Ireland with Katie Mullan

Although school days may look a little different this term, it hasn't stopped preparations for the 15th Maths Week Ireland going ahead. Set to take place from October 10-18, Maths Week promotes and develops a positive attitude towards maths in young people and a wider awareness of the importance of maths. Last year over 400,000 people across the island of Ireland registered their participation for Maths Week and one of the ambassadors for this year is none other than Ireland's Hockey Captain and Coleraine woman, Katie Mullan. The 26-year-old is no stranger to showing leadership qualities and encouraging others to get involved with her time spent on the hockey pitch, but she also knows the importance of maths within her job as a biomedical engineer. Ni4kids' Elizabeth McGivern got the chance to catch up with Katie ahead of this year's Maths Week so she could share just how important the subject is and why she hopes more girls will stick with it in school so they can open up a whole host of new careers for themselves.

**F**or Katie, a love for Maths came early. Speaking about her school days she said: "I've always really enjoyed maths; behind sport it was probably my favourite subject in school." Katie believes that this passion for maths was because she always enjoyed working with numbers and was able to bring a competitive side to her learning, adding, "I think with maths at school you could always bring a competitive element into it pretty easily, as to who would get the answer first and that sort of thing, and I'm quite a competitive person so that tied in with maths nicely. I always felt challenged to come to the correct answer as quickly as possible and that brought out my competitive nature." Despite mathematics still being a male-dominated field, Katie was never put off by this and was surrounded by positive female role models in her school. "My maths teachers in school were all female and there was never stigma in school with maths being a gender generalisation. I'm an engineer and maths obviously ties in with engineering quite closely. There's definitely plenty of career opportunities for females out there which is away from that old-school idea of building bridges and walking around sites as someone who is working with numbers a lot and using their math skills in their career." When Katie isn't busy training and playing hockey for Ireland she works as a biomedical engineer. A career that wouldn't be possible without her love of maths. "I work for a company in Belfast that 3D prints anatomical models for surgeons to assist them in complex case

surgeries. It's very interesting, very fulfilling work and every case is different. There are probably more female than male engineers employed in my workplace so it's brilliant to see." When asked if a passion for maths from a young age was something that drove her to pursue a career in engineering, Katie explained that her chosen career wasn't the end goal for her education choices, but rather she

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chose subjects that she would enjoy. "I will commit an endless amount of time and effort to something I enjoy and that plays to my strengths. Picking my GCSEs, A-levels and the degree I was going to go for, I always knew that if I picked something I was interested in studying then I'd put the time and effort into it. Sometimes kids look more into the job at the end of education instead of studying something that they're interested in and something they're passionate about. For me I just loved maths in school and

Hockey star Katie hopes that in the future more girls will 'stick' with maths.



biology. I'm fascinated by the human body. It was more about me studying something I would enjoy and be interested in." Within her role as an ambassador for Maths Week, Katie hopes that she can inspire young people – girls especially – to consider the many different career opportunities out there that rely on maths. "It's more about spreading the word about maths and how the opportunities out there aren't what people may think they were in the past. I firmly believe there's something out there for everyone in maths or engineering-style subjects." If your little one isn't too keen on maths, it doesn't mean that will still be the case in a few years' time. Katie offered some advice for children who may not enjoy particular subjects right now, but hoped that they wouldn't rule out keeping with them in the future. She added: "I didn't really enjoy English, it wasn't my strength but now I love reading. I think if you stick with something and take the time and effort to work at it, you'll eventually get there. I suppose the thing about maths is, it doesn't matter what career you go down, you're going to need your maths at some point. It's not something you can shy away from and if you put the work in, you will get there eventually. The more hours you put in, the more you'll get out of it and you'll get there."

# MATHS WEEK

## 10 – 18 OCTOBER 2020



Maths is very important in our lives, and Maths Week promotes a positive attitude towards maths, helping young people of all abilities to succeed.



Normally there are lots of events all over Northern Ireland for Maths Week but with Covid-19 restrictions we are focusing on the amazing maths festivals taking place in schools and the home. We support teachers, parents and guardians by providing lots of activities to do in school and at home. Check out [www.mathswEEK.ie](http://www.mathswEEK.ie) and tune into our daily broadcasts from MathsWeekTV each weekday during this year's festival **October 10 – 18**.

### WWW.MATHSWEEK.IE

Teachers - take a look at the maths week website. For Maths Week we are focused on the idea of "Maths for All," and we have lots of ideas to engage all pupils. Why not create an atmosphere of exploration and excitement amongst your students and develop a **Maths Trail** that will help connect the maths curriculum with the real world? You could check out our new **Problem-Solving** Page that will support you as you prepare your students to become creative, resilient, cooperative problem solvers. Or tune in to our daily **MathsWeekTV** broadcasts from entertaining Maths Presenters that will have students having fun with maths.

### CHECK OUT FUN ACTIVITIES:

- TARGETBOARDS
- MATHS EYES
- MATHS TRAILS
- MATHSWEEKTV
- MATHS AT HOME
- PUZZLES & GAMES
- MANGAHIGH

### HELPING PARENTS & GUARDIANS HELP THEIR CHILDREN

Mathematics is very important in our lives and everyone can learn to enjoy maths and succeed if we can develop positive attitudes. Parents and guardians can do a lot to help. Always display a positive attitude about maths, regardless of any negative experience you might have had. Ability at maths is not genetic; success comes from positive attitude and perseverance. You can help your child by bringing maths into everyday life and play. Shopping, cooking and many household tasks have opportunities for rich maths learning. However, make it fun not a test. See more about developing a positive attitude and lots of activities and games at the parents section of the Maths Week website.

## WHEELS ON THE BUS

THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND, ROUND AND ROUND  
THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND, ALL THROUGH THE TOWN...  
THE WIPERS ON THE BUS GO SWISH, SWISH, SWISH; SWISH, SWISH, SWISH  
THE WIPERS ON THE BUS GO SWISH, SWISH, SWISH, ALL THROUGH THE TOWN...  
THE HORN ON THE BUS GOES BEEP, BEEP, BEEP; BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP  
THE HORN ON THE BUS GOES BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, ALL THROUGH THE TOWN...



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10-18 October 2020

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