Dyscalculia

What is Dyscalculia?

Dyscalculia is a term used to describe a specific learning disability that affects a child's ability to understand, learn and perform simple number-based operations and number concepts.

What difficulties might children with dyscalculia encounter?

- they may have difficulties processing numbers and quantities, including:
  - connecting a number to the quantity it represents (the number 2 to two apples)
  - counting, backwards and forwards
  - comparing two amounts
- they may have difficulties subitizing (recognize quantities without counting)
- they may find recalling basic number facts (like multiplication tables) difficult
- they may have difficulty linking numbers and symbols to amounts
- they may have find mental maths and problem-solving difficult
- they may have difficulty making sense of money and estimating quantities
- they may have difficulty telling the time on an analogue clock
- they may have poor visual and spatial orientation
- they may have difficulty immediately sorting out direction (right from left)
- they may have difficulty recognizing patterns and sequencing numbers
- they may have a poor sense of number and estimation
- they may have no strategies to compensate for lack of recall, other than to use counting

Children may have some of these difficulties or they may exhibit all of these difficulties.

How can you support a child with dyscalculia at home?

- use objects and pictures to help link mathematical symbols to quantity (money, cubes, pasta, counters, straws etc)
- use all of the senses for learning (including making it practical)
- plan to experience success and work at your child's rate
- make sure that any new skills/concepts are practised
- do not use competitive games unless you are sure that your child has a reasonable chance of succeeding
- make sure all instructions given are clear and that simple language is used
- allow extra time for completing homework
- try to focus on understanding, rather than rote memory

Useful website

www.mathematicalbrain.com/dysclink.html