



MILKIDS: AGE-APPROPRIATE MONEY CONCEPTS & ACTIVITIES

MILSPOUSE MONEY MISSION

Money Concepts for Ages 3 to 5

- Introduce coins, paper money and basic counting.
- Talk about your job and how a job helps you earn money to pay for what you need.
- Introduce the difference between needs and wants to prepare them for making good spending decisions.

*Suggested Activities:

- Read story books to help start conversations about personal finances. Ask your local library for titles.
- Pick small chores that your children can do to earn extra money.
- Point out costs of items in a store. Ask your children to identify which item costs more.
- Help your children make choices about buying items. Let them make small purchases.
- Buy pretend paper money and coins and go shopping at home, so your children can practice using and counting money to make purchases.
- Host a family game night with board games. Find options online.

Money Concepts for Ages 6 to 9

- Introduce an allowance, values and the concept of saving for future needs, spending money wisely and using it to help others.
- Introduce budgeting and creating a spending plan.
- Provide plastic jars (or envelopes) or have your children make their own piggy banks for their allowance — one container for saving, one for spending and one for sharing.
- Introduce the concept of setting short-term goals for purchases or activities. Explain the difference between wants and needs.

*Suggested Activities:

- Read story books to help start conversations about personal finances. Ask your local library for titles.
- Consider helping your child make an investment in a stock in lieu of receiving one extra gift for their birthday or the holidays. With fractional share investing prevalent nowadays, you can invest \$20 into whatever stock you want. This could payoff in 10 years.
- Help your children become savvy shoppers. Show them how the same item may cost more or less at a different store. Have them identify an item they want to purchase and show them how to find the lowest cost on that item.
- Find ways for your children to share part of their allowance by giving to a community organization, faith community or charity. Help them see the end result of how that money helps others.
- As a family, write down some short-term goals, such as saving for a family vacation or a new bike.
- Host a family game night with board games.

Money Concepts for Ages 10 to 12

- Demonstrate how to create a shopping list, seek out sales, and stay within budget.
- Introduce the concept of banking.
- Explain how online shopping uses real money, not play money.

*Suggested Activities:

- Have your children help with the grocery shopping. Establish a budget, let them help with the list, and then make it a game to see whether your children can buy everything on the list without going over the budget.
- Let your children help make the holiday shopping lists based on a budget for each gift. Encourage them to come up with low-cost or no-cost alternatives to regular gift buying.
- Consider opening a children's savings account. Make regular deposits and withdrawals and discuss this process as a family. Together, review the account statement and discuss interest and fees.
- Consider setting up a savings-matching plan for your child to help them achieve their goals faster.
- Host a family game night with board games.

**Consider online options for these activities when appropriate.*

Money Concepts for Ages 13 to 15

- Discuss setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) savings goals.
- If they do not already have a savings or checking account, open an account at your bank or credit union.
- Help them learn how to access their accounts online and teach them how to protect their identity.
- Talk about credit and the cost of borrowing money.

*Suggested Activities:

- Work with your child to set a financial goal, such as saving for a used car. Make sure the goal is SMART.
- Go over a credit card or loan statement together. Show how much finance charges cost when you carry a balance from month to month. If you do not carry a credit balance, use this [online calculator](#) to demonstrate the total cost of credit.
- Discuss the household spending plan. Explain the difference between needs and wants. Have your teen pick out the items in the spending plan that are wants and those that are needs. Ask them to identify items that could be cut from the spending plan if there were a reduction in income or if there is a major purchase the family wants to fund.
- Host a family game night with board games.

Money Concepts for Ages 16 to 19

- Help your teen develop financial independence through employment.
- Discuss the cost of car ownership, including gas, maintenance and insurance.
- Show an example of the time value of money.
- Discuss the costs of college, what your family can realistically afford, and funding alternatives.
- Identify ways to save money for college and while attending college.

*Suggested Activities:

- Help your teen secure a safe job to save for future goals.
- Show them how to use future value, auto loan and student loan calculators. Click [here](#) for examples.
- Create learning activities so they know how to:
 - ✓ Establish checking/savings accounts
 - ✓ Track account balances
 - ✓ Use ATM, debit, and check cards, and can write a check
 - ✓ Create and follow a budget
 - ✓ Determine financial goals
 - ✓ Establish and maintain good credit
 - ✓ Comparison shop

**Consider online options for these activities when appropriate.*

Allowance Tips:

- If your family decides to give an allowance, consider doing so at a specific time (i.e., the beginning of the week, on set dates during the month).
- Teach children to use some of their money to save, spend and give.
- Consider a clothing allowance to help children learn to manage larger amounts of money.
- Negotiate a raise from time to time. This teaches a valuable money management lesson.

