

## MATHEMATICS FOR EVERY ONE: A PILOT PROJECT OF TEACHING MATHS TO CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

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**Abstract:** This is an empirical report about mathematics education for children with intellectual impairments in the Netherlands, Czech and Slovak republic. The process and a method of maths teaching are described, which is based on mediated learning experience. Based on a successful “pilot” project with a child with Down syndrome, it has been generalized for similar children.

For a lot of children with intellectual impairments, as for children with Down syndrome, it is hard to do mathematics. So very often it is not done. But in life mathematics is really important, e.g. in cooking, public transport, shopping and social games.

The author has a daughter with Down syndrome to whom she taught mathematics. After having successfully completed high school, she started to teach maths to other children with intellectual impairment and also these children learned to do mathematics.

Despite affluence of maths programmes for special needs children on the existing market, she had not found an optimal method so the author designed one of her own. Having experience with Feuerstein’s Instrumental Enrichment Programme, she introduced the elements of Feuerstein’s theory in her approach.

The method starts with counting and goes beyond 100. The operations of plus, minus, multiplying, dividing, time, using money and measurement are all part of this method. Every small step is learned separately. There are always a lot of exercises. Because of these very small steps, the method has a lot of effect. It is presented in separate pages one can take out; the original page is never used. Very often the child has to do a page again.

There are a lot of math games. Every child likes them and does maths without realizing that it is doing maths.

With this method a lot of children, who were described as never being able to do math, make sums, even over 100, and without counting on their fingers. They became able to pay in a shop; they know the time and are able to do recipes for 2 to 4 persons.