

Seven Fun Ways to Help Your Kids Learn About Money



Personal finance is showing up on many school curricula these days, aimed at teaching young people how to manage money sensibly. That's terrific. But basic attitudes are formed at an even earlier age, and there's a lot Mom and Dad can do to give a preschooler an emotionally healthy understanding of what money really means. Consider these ways to have fun with your youngster while showing how those funny-colored pieces of paper fit into a balanced life.

1. Show them the money.

Once kids learn that money will buy stuff, they tend to badger their parents for more of it. One patient dad gathered his family around a table that held the bills to be paid that month and the cash equivalent of his paycheck. By the time he'd physically set aside the cash needed to pay each bill, his children were agog at how little was left. (In fact, they began to spontaneously think of ways to cut spending and earn money to help out.)

2. Discuss a superhero's finances.

If Batman weren't independently wealthy (and where do you suppose the Wayne Enterprises wealth came from?), how might he earn money to pay his butler Alfred a salary, buy new tires for the Batmobile, and send Robin to martial-arts classes? You can really have fun with this one.

3. Make a ceremony out of managing an allowance.

Once kids are old enough to handle coins, consider paying them a weekly allowance in cash. Set up three clear glass jars labeled "Spend," "Save," and "Share," and urge your children to put one-third of their allowances in each jar. They can spend the money in the first jar whenever they like, while saving the money in the second jar for something they want but can't afford right away. The money in the third jar is to be shared with a good cause they select: the town library, animal shelter, or food bank, perhaps. As you pay their allowance, congratulate them for managing their money well. They'll be pleased and proud as the cash mounts up. Just be sure to pay reliably, and keep your mitts off their savings!

4. Take a kid shopping as your "money manager."

It's easy for young kids to view a supermarket as a kind of ATM for food. To put shopping in perspective, first show your child the amount of money (in cash) that you can spend. In the store, instead of automatically picking a familiar product you usually buy, ask the child to help you decide if it's the best choice. Do other options cost less, use preferred ingredients, or omit additives? (If your child isn't a reader yet, you can explain what the labels say.) Enter the price on a calculator once a choice is agreed upon, and run a total before you check out. If you're over budget, explain that some items have to be put back. Again, ask your child to help you choose. Finally, allow your little one to pay for the groceries (under your supervision, of course). You'll be helping to train a smarter shopper – and your child will bask in the glow of your praise.

5. Involve your kids in a family financial decision that affects them.

For example, if you're trying to decide whether to pay for summer camp or use that money for a family trip next fall, ask your child to join the discussion. With younger kids, it's important not to overdramatize the choice. Stay calm and confident, so they understand that while your family has a finite amount of money, it will continue to be ample to take care of them.

6. Teach them to enjoy math.

Yes, seriously. Students who take extra math courses in school manage their credit better, enjoy more investment income, and have higher home equity, according to a 2015 study led by Harvard Business School Professor of Finance Shawn Cole. "A lot of decisions in finance are just easier if you're more comfortable with numbers and making numeric comparisons," he told *The Wall Street Journal*.^{*} So encourage your preschoolers to have fun with basic math concepts – especially daughters, who often get the message that math isn't for them.

7. Bring them to visit their Credit Union.

April is Savings Month, and at Lincoln Maine FCU, we're on a mission to help more young people begin savings programs of their own. Ask us to open a joint savings account for you and your child. Then show them how to deposit the cash they've accumulated, their grandparents' birthday check, or maybe a little seed money that you provide. We'll be glad to answer questions and give them a brief tour. From then on, we hope they'll realize money isn't that mysterious – not with you (and us) on their side.

^{*}Charlie Wells, "The Smart Way to Teach Children About Money," *The Wall Street Journal*, 2/2/15

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Addresses

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Holidays

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Monday, May 29

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Tuesday, July 4

Maine's Credit Unions Help Members Protect Their Accounts from Skimming

The issue of skimming and its impact on one's card security continues to be a source of local and national concern. Skimming is a growing problem, and one that Maine's Credit Unions take very seriously. In light of the numerous skimming devices found at ATM terminals of local financial institutions last summer, Maine's Credit Unions have served as a resource to the public to ensure that more of them do not fall victim to skimming.



Know the warning signs – follow these tips to protect your accounts:

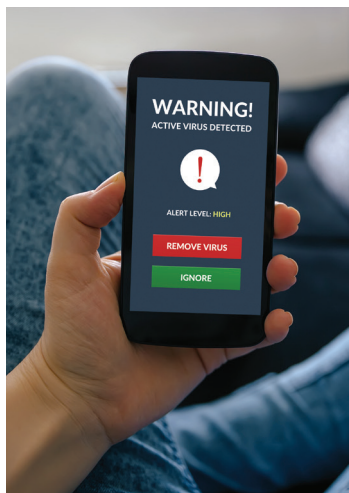
Skimming can occur at ATM machines and other point-of-sale locations. A skimmer is a device used to capture card data that can then be transferred to another card to perform fraudulent activity. Skimmers are typically placed in areas where there is low visibility. Most recently, they have been found at ATM terminals and gas pumps where chip readers have not yet been installed. Skimming is likely becoming more prevalent due to the fact that while chip technology has been implemented on traditional point-of-sale transactions, compliance dates for other point-of-sale locations, including gas pumps and ATM terminals, are not scheduled until later in 2017.

In an effort to protect against card theft, Maine's Credit Unions are instructing their members and the general public to be aware of their surroundings by examining ATM terminals closely. In many of the recent cases, hackers were able to capture PIN numbers from cameras installed at ATM terminals.

Here are some tips to follow:

- Keep your fingers covered as you enter your information.
- Do not rely on the look and feel of an ATM alone, as it is often impossible to detect skimming devices with the naked eye.
- Keep a close eye on your accounts for any suspicious or unauthorized activity. Many financial institutions offer card control apps that allow you to set controls, and will alert you to suspicious activity.
- If spotted, contact your Credit Union to report the fraudulent activity. Your financial institution will determine what steps need to be taken to recover losses and prevent additional losses.

Despite the events that occurred earlier this year, the state's Credit Union members can rest assured that Maine's Credit Unions are monitoring the issue closely. By remaining vigilant and taking extra security precautions, Maine's financial institutions are staying ahead of the hackers in many cases. As skimming technology continues to evolve, it is important that financial institutions and their members continue to work together to monitor and report fraudulent activity to protect themselves from falling victim to skimming.



As of March 1, 2017, our rates and fees have changed. To learn more visit www.lincolmainefcu.com