

**Mathematical moments with toddlers**  
**Number: the beginnings of counting**



Nina, aged 20 months, determinedly builds a tower with cubes and then enjoys knocking it down! Click [here](#) to watch the video of this. She seems to be saying one number word for each block that she places, including words which sound like *three*, *five* and *one*. Previously she has watched and joined in when her parents played the building-and-knocking-down game. Nina is now independently beginning to tag each item with a number word, demonstrating a key counting skill.

She does not yet say the numbers in the standard order, but she seems to know that these are number words to be used in this activity. As she has more experience of adults and older siblings counting and singing number rhymes with her, her familiarity with the number sequence will develop.

And as Nina's parents demonstrate counting in other contexts, it will be interesting to see in which situations she chooses to count.

Acknowledgement: Flora Kisby