Transcript for the Video:

Supporting Mathematical Development in Young Children: Abstract Counting

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**Dr. Sudha Swaminathan, Eastern Connecticut State University:** Usually, children like to count things that they can see, that they can touch, objects that are right there in front of them.

**Sudha Swaminathan:** It’s important, initially, for toddlers to count what they can see and touch and feel, like their own fingers, their toys, pictures in their books.

**Teacher:** Cookies. How many? Let’s count them. One, two.

**Sudha Swaminathan:** We want to make sure that we include these objects in their environment.

**Sudha Swaminathan:** Gradually, as they get older they get more comfortable, and used to the idea that they can count things that they can hear, but not see, such as in music and movement.

**Class:** (jumping) 1, 2...

**Sudha Swaminathan:** Or when they are moving in the playground and they’re counting their jumps.

**Child:** (counting jumps) 10, 11, 12...

**Sudha Swaminathan:** And, gradually, they get even more abstract, when they start counting out members of their family who are not there.

**Child:** My sister’s number 1

**Sudha Swaminathan:** Even if children are ready to do abstract counting, we want to make sure that the environment has a lot of opportunities for counting objects and physical things that they can count.