Transcript: Engineering in Block Play (8–18 months)

Text on screen: Engineering in Block Play (8–18 months).

Logo: Count, play, explore—for early education.

Cindy Jerila, Infant and Toddler Educator speaks.

Cindy kneels next to two children playing with blocks, encouraging them to stack the blocks vertically, one on top of the other.

Cindy Jerila: This morning, the children explored with blocks by stacking the blocks.

Try again. Try this one. Can you stack them? Are you going to help?

I encouraged them by asking them if they would like to stack the blocks. I also modeled with them to show them how to stack the blocks. And as I was stacking them, they were also stacking them themselves.

On screen: A child has stacked three blocks. Cindy is helping her with a fourth block.

Cindy: See the block? Try this one. Can you stack it right here? Good try.

As the children explored with the blocks, we noticed that they would fall and as they would fall, then I would ask the children, "What happened?" And the children would start picking them up again to restack them again.

Three, four, uh-oh. Uh-oh …

On screen: The stack of blocks falls over.

Cindy: How can we fix it? How can we fix it? Want to stack them up again? We can stack them up again.

The children noticed that as the tower got higher, the blocks started wobbling a little bit and they kind of saw that it was going to happen. They anticipated that the blocks were going to fall.

On screen: A child lifts up a pink block. She has three other blocks stacked in front of her.

Cindy: Pink block. It's a pink block. Try to put it up there? Up, two. Whoa. It fell over.

We encourage children to persist by helping them with the problem that they are having. We try to use open-ended questions. We try to model what they can do, and that helps them to self-explore and to encourage them to figure it out.

On screen: The child tries to stack the pink block one more time, but it falls.

Text on screen: A special thanks to the children, families, and staff of the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center, without whose help these videos would not have been possible.

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