



December 21, 2017

As we reflect on 2017 and look forward to a new year with you, we want to say thank you to the providers and teachers who provide Arkansas's children with the quality care they deserve. And thank you to the families who make each day one to remember.

From all of us at Better Beginnings, happy holidays to you and yours.

MIX, POP AND GO WITH INFORMATIONAL BOOKS IN THE PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM



When we released [*Informational Books in the Preschool Classroom*](#) in October, it had eight focus areas to develop 3-to-5-year-olds' understanding of emergent literacy, science, technology and social studies.

In the last two months, we added five new focus areas highlighting similarities among diverse groups of people, the science behind bubbles, shadows and mixing colors, and the relationship between spaces through map making.

Each focus area contains instructions for implementation and use, along with recommendations for getting the most out of our latest curriculum.

For more information about *Informational Books in the Preschool Classroom*, [click here](#).

To learn more about the curriculum offered for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, [click here](#).

TIPS FOR BUYING CHRISTMAS TOYS

Black Friday may be over, but there is plenty of time to choose the right toys for your child this holiday season.



Use these [6 tips for choosing the right toy](#) to ensure your child has fun and learns a little bit, too after the dust of opening presents settles.

A few tips to keep in mind:

Make sure your child is able to operate the toy on their own to increase their level of enjoyment. If it is too difficult, they might get frustrated and move on to another toy.

Look for toys with multiple functions that allow your child to play as they grow, but are not too complicated for when they are younger.

If your child is older, look for toys they can share with others. Sharing and playing with other children teach important social skills.

For more ways to find the right toy, [click here](#).

WINTER WEATHER FUN

We may not get enough snow to hit the slopes, but our [Family Resource Library](#) has ways to let your child's scientific imagination run wild with these [activities for a wonderful winter](#).



You can pick pine cones in the backyard or at a nearby park to create bird feeders.

Once the newest restaurant for your feathered friends is open, keep track of the many types of birds stopping by. Ask your child how these birds look different from the ones you see during the spring or summer.

Whether it is too cold outside or not cold enough, you can show your child how to have fun with ice. Just use your freezer if the temperature outside is not below freezing.

- Freeze milk cartons full of water and sprinkle salt on the miniature iceberg to show your child the reaction between salt and ice
- Freeze water in ice cube trays to make igloos for small figurines

To learn more about science at home this winter, [click here](#).

To learn more about Better Beginnings and the resources available, [visit our website](#).

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