

Together, We Can Build a Better Future

A message from Better Beginnings Program Director Dawn Jeffrey, MSE



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Officially, Better Beginnings is Arkansas's quality rating and improvement system for licensed child care and early education programs.

But what we really do is right there in our name. We help families and child care providers give children a better beginning in life.

Children are born learning – their brains are not fully formed. How healthy their brains develop depends on their experiences in their first few years of life.

Babies need a whole lot of attention – especially talking. As they grow, all that talking starts to make sense. Children learn best through play. They learn math and science concepts from stacking blocks and pouring sand. That's what quality child care looks like.

Better Beginnings helps families and child care providers **create a positive environment where children can learn, grow up balanced, and succeed in life.**

We provide online tools for families to find star-rated quality child care, a checklist to choose child care, and dozens of free resources for learning through play.

Better Beginnings helps improve the quality of child care with resources and training for provider teachers and administrators.

Arkansas child care providers are the workforce behind our workforce.

When the pandemic hit Arkansas, not everyone shut down and went home. We couldn't. Our first responders and essential workers had to work. They needed child care.

More than half of our child care facilities stayed open and we created 10 pop-up child care centers to help carry the load.

Workforce quality, absenteeism and productivity improve dramatically when parents are able to choose the highest quality care for their children.

Business depends on those same parents to keep the economy thriving.

Arkansas's economic development can be better if we can demonstrate access to the best child care – Better Beginnings certified programs. See **Build a Better Future** on the Trending Topics page of our website for more about the economic impact of quality child care and how you can support Better Beginnings programs in your community.



better beginnings

EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST

CELEBRATING OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY

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How can YOU support quality early childhood education?

Ask a local child care provider what you can do to help Arkansas's children succeed.

And please, say "thank you" from all of us.

Visit our website to:



Share this tool with your staff for finding star-rated quality child care



Discover and share how children learn through play



Watch the informational videos in our media center to discover how quality child care can affect your bottom line

Dawn Jeffrey, MSE, Program Manager for Better Beginnings, has used her knowledge and dedication to the future of children by serving in early childhood education for 36 years.

