

FEBRUARY 2020



A NOTE FROM BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM MANAGER, DAWN JEFFREY



Happy February! This month, our **LOVE for READING is in the air.**

It's never too early to start teaching your child literacy skills. In fact, the first year of your baby's life is a great time to start! There are plenty of ways to engage your child, even in the first few months of life. Share your favorite story by reading aloud to your baby, sing to your baby or listen to your baby babble through a new book. All of these activities get your child's imagination going at a young age. He or she will go from simply looking at the pictures, to holding the book and turning pages for you. Check out our [Raising A Reader](#) resource below to learn more.

For the older kiddos, try acting out your favorite book! First, talk about the book before you get started. Next, read the book from beginning to end to familiarize your child with the story. Then, it's time to PLAY! Let your child "direct" by assigning characters and act out the story. You don't have to leave the acting up to your child either. Embrace your inner-child and don't be afraid to have fun! Check out our [Bring Books to Life](#) resources to get started with some of the classics.

*Dawn Jeffrey*

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[RAISING A READER | BABY'S FIRST YEAR](#)



[BRING BOOKS TO LIFE](#)

## CHOOSING CHILD CARE



### How do I know what's right for my child?

There are so many options out there when it comes to child care. It can be overwhelming, but [Better Beginnings](#) is here to help you through that. Get started by reviewing your options with our [Choosing Child Care](#) resources.

Find out what child care is appropriate for your child with our [Choosing Childcare Checklist](#), or find out if you qualify for [Help Paying for Childcare](#).

Remember, at [Better Beginnings](#), we are dedicated to helping you find the highest quality child care and early childhood education as possible.

# SPRING INTO ACTION AND LEARN!

**Play, Explore, Learn**  
**Outdoors**

**better beginnings**  
EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST

Playing with your children outdoors is not only fun, it's beneficial for both children and parents. Check out these simple ways to interact with your children while outside and see how many additional ways you can think of to help your child learn from the great outdoors.

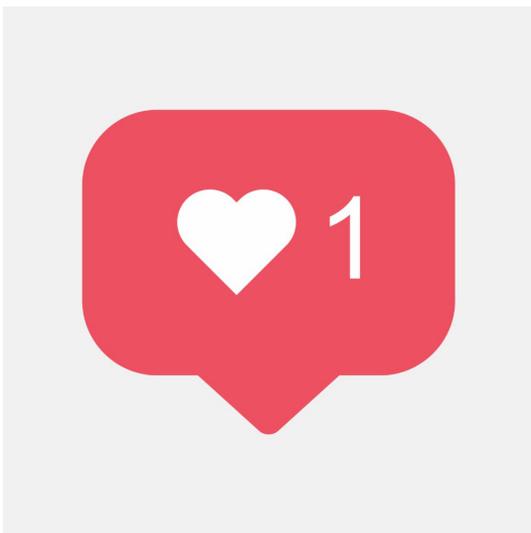
- Have a picnic! Eat lunch or dinner or a snack in your backyard or in the park.
- Collect leaves, acorns, pinecones or pine cones. Compare the items in your collection. Do they all look alike? What differences do you see?
- Look for different types of trees near your home. Find out the name of each tree.
- Blow dandelion "seeds".
- Plant some seeds and watch them grow.
- Take a flower walk. Look for different colors and shapes.
- Lie on your back in the grass and watch the clouds. Use a pencil and paper to sketch the cloud shapes that you see. What do these shapes remind you of?
- On a rainy day, press your nose to the window and watch the rain. Take a walk during a gentle rain. Splash in puddles.
- Hang wind chimes or a wind sock where you can hear and see it from a window. Listen to the sounds the wind makes. Try to re-create the sounds using household items.
- Fly a kite.
- Wiggle your toes in the sand, dirt or mud.
- Draw in the sand or dirt with sticks.
- Collect rocks. Make up a game to play with pebbles and rocks.
- Sit quietly on the ground and watch ants. (Be sure these are not fire ants!) Sprinkle bread crumbs on the ground and watch what happens.
- Watch the birds. How many different birds do you see in your yard?
- Hang a bird feeder or put out a bird bath. Keep a list of the birds that visit.
- Run barefoot through the grass.
- Closely observe a small area of grass (about one square foot). Describe what you see.

Look here to visit our Resource Library. You'll find activities and tips to help you prepare your child for life.  
[www.ARBetterBeginnings.com](http://www.ARBetterBeginnings.com) • 1-800-445-3316

Spring is just around the corner. We say it's time to **SPRING** outside and learn!

Learning **outside** reminds your child that learning can be fun. It also encourages them to love and appreciate mother nature early. Try these **Outdoor Activities** found in our **Family Resource Library** today!

## DID YOU KNOW....?



## WE'RE ON **PINTEREST!**

We've got **sensory** resources, **creative** resources, **toddler** resources and **music** resources. We have boards for **every age** and **every holiday**. What are you waiting for? **Follow us TODAY** to have quality child care resources at your fingertips anytime you want.



**Arkansas Better Beginnings**

1.8k monthly viewers

Follow

[www.arbetterbeginnings.com](http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com)

Better Beginnings connects Arkansas families with information and quality child care that helps children experience a safe, happy, healthy childhood.

# What is **Better Beginnings**?



What is Better Beginnings? We help providers across the state provide your kiddos with **quality** child care and **early education**. We also connect families to learning resources that can enhance your child's development **outside of the classroom**.

Visit our website to learn more.

OR check us out on **social media**.



Better Beginnings is Arkansas's quality rating improvement system for child care, early education and school-age programs that have gone above and beyond the state minimum requirements. Better Beginnings is administered by the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.

