

FEBRUARY 2020



## *A NOTE FROM DAWN JEFFREY:*



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

It's never too early to encourage literacy skills. In fact, the first year of a child's life is a great time to start! There are plenty of ways to engage children as young as one month old. Share your favorite story by reading aloud to your classroom or sing songs in the classroom. These activities encourage children to use their imaginations at a young age. Check out our [Connecting with Infants](#) curriculum to get started!

For the older kiddos, try acting out books! First, talk about the book before getting started. Next, read the book from beginning to end to learn the story. Then, it's time to PLAY! Let the children "direct" by assigning characters. You don't have to leave the acting up to the kids either. Make costumes, make props and bring out all funny voices to really capture the magic. Don't be afraid to have fun. Check out our [Books and Movement: A Magical Mix](#) curriculum to learn more!

*Dawn Jeffrey*

Dawn Jeffrey M.S. E.  
Division of Early Child Care and Early Childhood Education  
Program Manager for Better Beginnings

# PROVIDER TOOL UPDATES

CHECK OUT OUR NEWLY-UPDATED [Provider Tools!](#)

## CHECKLISTS



Center-Based  
Checklist

Family Child Care Home  
Checklist

School Age Care  
Checklist

## RULE BOOKS



Center-Based Rulebook

Family Child Care Home  
Rulebook

School Age Care  
Rulebook

## CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHT



## Science Center with Lea | Learning through Play

Check out how Ms. Lea teaches science in her Dramatic Play Center!

Here are a few suggestions to help you get the most out of this resource.

- 1.) Watch the video and note the following:
  - What are your initial observations?
  - What materials and equipment were used?
  - How much teacher-child interaction was there?
  - What did you notice about the child's learning?
- 2.) Watch the video a second time with ONE topic in mind. (materials, interactions, etc.)
  - Note the new details you observed.
- 3.) How can you apply this to your classroom?
  - Do you need to create a Dramatic Play Center?
  - What can you do to improve yours?
- 4.) Set a goal for your Dramatic Play Center.

### THANK YOU | BETTER BEGINNINGS QUALITY COMMUNITY

Better Beginnings is focused on making quality child care more accessible to families of young children across Arkansas. More high quality access means more kids are better prepared for kindergarten.

The following programs are now **1-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- **NORTH LITTLE ROCK** - Carmell's Learning Center II
- **LITTLE ROCK** - Christian Scholars Learning Academy
- **SPRINGDALE** - Little Kids Early Learning

The following program is now a **3-star** Better Beginnings provider:

- **WYNNE** - Wynne Community Enlightenment Academy 2

If you are a Better Beginnings provider and are interested in moving up in star ranking, click [here](#).

## WE'RE DOING SOMETHING NEW!

We know how much time and dedication it takes to **improve your quality child care rating**. Leveling up is a big deal! As you improve your quality of child care, you're improving our **FUTURE**. **After all, our leaders are in your hands**. You should be proud when you level up. We sure are!

So, we've decided to make your recognition a little more special. When your center moves up to **2 or 3 stars**, we'll contact you for a video of your kids and staff celebrating. Then, we'll post it on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. **We want ALL of our Better Beginnings community to see what you do for your communities!**

Congratulations to **Black River Early Child Development Center** of Pocahontas and **ABC Children's Academy** of Dover for moving up to **3 stars** in January! Check out their videos below!



## 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.



[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.

## HOW CAN BETTER BEGINNINGS HELP ME?

### WHAT DO WE DO?

Better Beginnings, a program of the Arkansas Department of Human Services, connects early child care providers with resources and tools that aim to make your day-to-day simpler, and your curriculum fun! Better Beginnings is designed to improve the level of quality in childcare and early childhood education programs across the state. Better Beginnings distinguishes the quality of each Arkansas child care facility by a 1, 2 and 3-star rating system.



### WHAT IS QUALITY CHILD CARE?

High **quality** child care and early childhood education set the stage for how well our children learn, how they think of themselves and how they interact with their world. So, what is quality child care? **It's**



interactive. It's playing on the floor. It's getting your hands dirty. It's turning your classrooms into a science lab, library and outdoor adventure, all in one!

## HOW DO WE ENSURE QUALITY CHILD CARE?

Remember, at [Better Beginnings](#), we are dedicated to helping you to provide quality childcare. Learn more about leveling up through Better Beginnings. Check out our [Requirements and Information](#) page to get you started.



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.

