



Literacy



Math



Science



A NOTE FROM KELLI HILBURN

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

April is a great time for celebration. The flowers are blooming and Arkansas Children's Week is here. We're excited to spend a week celebrating the children of Arkansas and YOU! You play a vital role in preparing children for the future. It's exciting to be your partner to help you [reach for the stars](#) and create quality learning environments for the children in your care.

This year's Arkansas Children's Week theme is [Sharing Key Experiences](#). You'll get to spend a week encouraging children to explore art, play, and discover the world around them. This is also a great time to invite your client-families to join the fun!

A big science event is occurring in our state this month. A solar eclipse will happen Monday, April 8 with many communities across Arkansas seeing totality. Check out this [resource](#) for safety tips and ways to teach your child about this amazing phenomenon.

Keep the fun going all month with the [science](#) resources included later in this edition of *The Buzz*. These resources encourage play and discovery, activating a child's natural curiosity. You'll see more resources as you read, including information on how you can [share](#) earning the next star level with your community.

I hope you enjoy this month of discovery on your continued journey to reach for the highest stars.

Until next time,

Kelli Hilburn
BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



JOIN US IN OUR GOAL TO
REACH FOR THE STARS
CLICK TO LEARN MORE



**VIDEO
CORNER**

WATCH NOW

Watch this video to hear from your colleagues about how Better Beginnings benefits the children of Arkansas. Then check out our [provider tools](#) to continue your journey to quality.

Putting Children First

**How Better Beginnings
BENEFITS
ARKANSAS
CHILDREN**

LEARNING RESOURCES

**PLAY,
LEARN,
EXPLORE**

The Sunflower Jar

ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Sunflower in a Jar

Are the children in your room asking how flowers grow? Show them instead of just telling them with this resource as your

Play, Explore, Learn Outdoors

ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Play, Explore, Learn Outdoors

Spring is the perfect season for exploring the great outdoors. This resource is full of fun

WOODLAND Mini Garden

ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Woodland Mini Garden

Check out this resource for a guide to helping children learn about nature. Take children

guide!

[View Resource](#)

activities that encourage children to explore and, therefore, learn through play.

[View Resource](#)

outside and, with your active supervision, help them collect nature's treasures from the ground to create their own mini garden.

[View Resource](#)



LEARNING IS FUN!

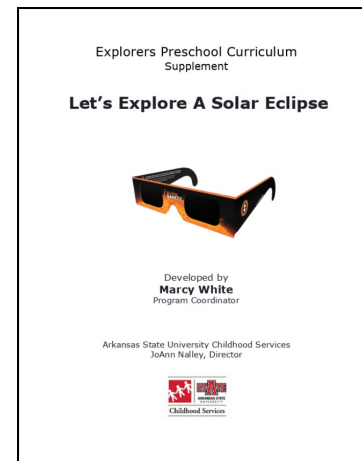
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Let's Explore a Solar Eclipse

A solar eclipse will happen across our state on Monday, April 8 with many communities experiencing totality. Our friends at Arkansas State University Childhood Services have created a curriculum supplement to help you teach children about it.

[Learn More](#)



Star Kit

Achieving the next star level is an achievement worth announcing to your client-families and your community. Our Star Kit can help you do that. Check it out on the Better Beginnings website.

[Learn More](#)



Provider Call
April 2, 12 p.m.

Zoom with representatives from the Office of Early Childhood for the monthly provider informational call. You'll get the latest news and information in the Arkansas early childhood education field. Find the Zoom link and past call recordings on the OEC website.

[Learn More](#)

Learn how to use the background check system during this month's training with OEC representatives. Don't worry if you miss. Previous recordings are available to watch.

[Learn More](#)

2024 Arkansas Head Start Association Conference

April 30 - May 3

Have questions about Better Beginnings? Our Program Manager, Lisa Busch, wants to answer them! Email your questions to lisa.busch@ade.arkansas.gov today. Be sure to attend her session at the Arkansas Head Start Association [conference](#) on Thursday, May 2 to get the answers.



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. To meet this objective, Better Beginnings encourages providers to improve their facility's star ratings. Below are the most recent facilities to advance their quality standards.



The following programs are now **6-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- ABC Academy of Valley Springs, Harrison
- Bruno-Pyatt Head Start, Everton
- Deer Preschool, Deer
- Jasper Headstart Center, Jasper
- Ouachita Child Enrichment ABC, Camden
- Shirely Head Start, Shirley
- St. Joe Head Start, Saint Joe
- Valley Springs Head Start, Harrison
- Western Grove Head Start, Western Grove
- Yellville Summit Head Start, Yellville



- There are no new **5-star** Better Beginnings providers to report.

FOUR-STAR PROVIDERS

The following programs are now **4-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- Brad Black River Child Development Center, Pocahontas
- Dallas Aeroplex Head Start, Gosnell
- Jackson-Wonder Elementary ABC Preschool, West Memphis
- Life Skills for Youth, Little Rock Monticello Pre-K, Monticello
- Nibco Children's Care Center, Blytheville
- Piggott ABC/EC Preschool, Piggott
- West Washington County Head Start, Lincoln

THREE-STAR PROVIDERS

The following programs are now **3-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- Beginnings-CCCEC Inc., Morrilton
- McCrory Elementary School, McCrory

TWO-STAR PROVIDERS

The following programs are now **2-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- Little Minds Learning Center, Heber Springs
- Nanny's Daycare LLC, Forrest City
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences DBA Kids First, Little Rock
- Wee Care Learning Center, Lake City

ONE-STAR PROVIDERS

The following program is now a **1-star** Better Beginnings provider:

- Nu Beginnings, Little Rock

Star Level Kit

Congratulations on reaching that next star level! Share your accomplishment with your client families and community with the resources located in the [Star Level Kit](#) on the Better Beginnings website.

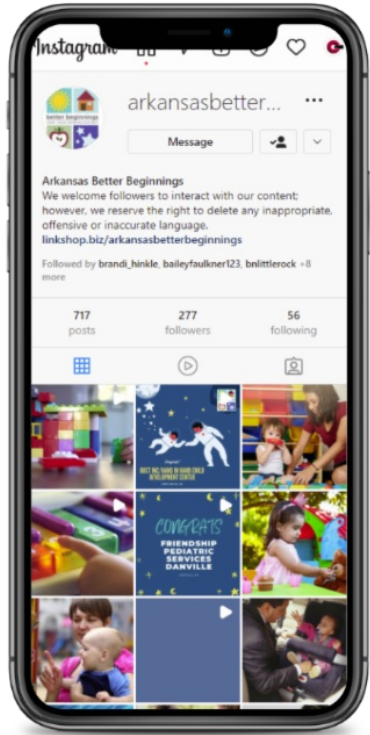
Visit our
Website

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?



Better Beginnings means better opportunities. Investing in quality child care for all Arkansas children creates better opportunities for our children, families, workforce and communities.

Learn
More



**FOLLOW US
FOR MORE
RESOURCES**



better beginnings
EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST

Better Beginnings is Arkansas' tiered quality rating and 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 Education and Office of Early Childhood.



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