

April 2022



A Note From Better Beginnings Program Administrator Kelli Hilburn



Making sure children are ready for Kindergarten is a goal for Better Beginnings. One way you can help make this happen at home is to spend at least 10 minutes a day reading to your child.

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) launched the 10 Minutes Matter campaign, which includes resources and lists of age-appropriate books to aid families in reading to children at least 10 minutes per day.

A child's brain develops fastest in ages birth to five. When a child is read to, their communication skills develop and their vocabulary increases. Therefore, it is never too early to read to a child.

You can find out more about this campaign, along with a list of age appropriate books, on the DHS [website](#). Keep reading for more literacy resources and visit the literacy section of the Family Resource Library on the new Better Beginnings [website](#).

P.S. **Provider Appreciation Day is May 6, 2022.** **Child Care Aware of America** has information about this day and ways you can thank your child care provider for always being there for you and your child. If you're looking for something more personal, a care package with their favorite snack could do the trick.

Kelli Hilburn

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BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
DIVISION OF CHILD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



Here are great resources for **literacy** fun this month! You can find more low cost resources on a variety of topics in our **Family Resource Library**.

Make Reading Fun

Children take their first steps towards literacy long before they talk, sing and tell their child stories. Allow your child to play with books. All these experiences are the building blocks for reading and writing. Here are some simple ways you and your child can enjoy books together:

- With infants:**
 - **Help them turn books and turn the pages.** Ask them to touch the pages. Tell them what you see on the pages. Turn a page and say something to the child.
 - **Bring books to life.** Use your voice to bring the books to life. Use your voice to bring the books to life. Use your voice to bring the books to life.
 - **Read and play with books every day.** Make it a fun and playful time. Read the books and play with the books. Read the books and play with the books.
 - **Point to interesting pictures as you read.** Describe them. Explain what you see. Play with the books with the pictures to interesting and interesting them with your child.
- With toddlers and preschoolers:**
 - **Ask your child to point to pictures or to some things on the pages.** Turn a page and say something to the child.
 - **Have them tell the story.** Ask them to tell the story to you. Ask them to tell the story to you.
 - **Have new words.** Use the pictures in your child's books to introduce new words. Use the pictures in your child's books to introduce new words.
 - **Talk about the story.** Ask questions about what happened before, what is happening now and what will happen next. Ask questions about what happened before, what is happening now and what will happen next.
 - **Make up stories.** Use the pictures in your child's books to make up stories. Use the pictures in your child's books to make up stories.
 - **Read and play with books every day.** Make it a fun and playful time. Read the books and play with the books. Read the books and play with the books.
 - **Point to interesting pictures as you read.** Describe them. Explain what you see. Play with the books with the pictures to interesting and interesting them with your child.

What kinds of books are best?

- **Picture books with simple objects or faces.**
- **Books with soft, rough or bumpy textures to touch and feel.**
- **Books with simple stories about everyday activities.**
- **Books with simple stories about everyday activities.**

Click here to visit our Resource Library. You'll find activities and tips to help you prepare your child for life.

ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Children take their first steps towards literacy long before they talk. Talk, sing and tell your child stories. Allow your child to play with books. All these experiences are the building blocks for reading and writing.

Better Beginnings with Books

Books for Young Infants - Birth to 18 Months

- Books for Young Infants - Birth to 18 Months**
- Books for Toddlers - 18 to 36 Months**
- Books for 3 and 4 Year Old Children**

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Check out this resource for a list of age-appropriate books. This list of books is broken down by ages so you can get additional books as your child grows. Don't forget to utilize your local public library. Membership is usually free.

Bring Books to Life

Open the doors to learning and adventure with a visit to your local library. Membership is usually free and children can select from hundreds of books.

Stone Soup
by Margaret Wise Brown

Books for 3 and 4 Year Old Children

- Books for 3 and 4 Year Old Children**
- Books for 3 and 4 Year Old Children**
- Books for 3 and 4 Year Old Children**

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Families bring books to life when they talk about the book before, during and after reading, read the story with funny voices or gestures and play by acting out the story or making something together.

Make Reading Fun

Better Beginnings with Books

Bring Books to Life

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT



The 2022 Arkansas Outstanding Early Childhood Professional is...



Amber Scott from Grace Discovery Center in Hensley!

Amber is the center director and has worked in early education for nearly 15 years. She worked in the classroom before becoming the director at Grace Discovery Center. When asked why she became part of the early childhood profession, she said:

"From an early age I knew I wanted to be around children. I was in and out of foster homes as a child and had no constant person. I knew I wanted to be that for someone. Little did I know it would be 100s of someones. The need to show young children love, support and consistency was what influenced me."

Congratulations, Amber! Thank you for your dedication and all you do for the children and families of Arkansas.

Learn more about Amber and the award on the DHS [website](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



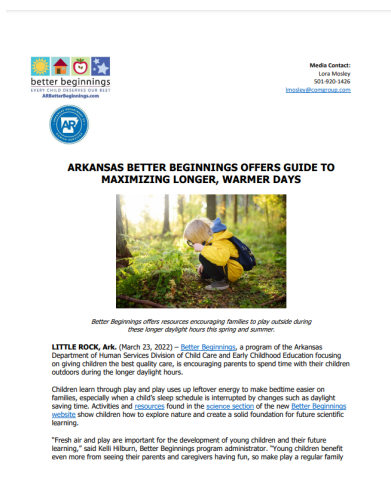
Arkansas Fatherhood and Family Initiative:

Fathers **E**ngaged and **E**mpowered to **L**earn

The **Fatherhood and Family Initiative** is proud to announce a dynamic, online session on fatherhood coming up in their second segment for **Powerful Conversations with Fathers** on June 13, 2022 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. All fathers in Arkansas are invited to listen to NBA and Hall of Fame player **Sidney A. Moncrief** speak on the positives and challenges of being a father to four growing young men. Those in attendance will be given the chance to ask Moncrief questions about fatherhood.

For more information or to register, contact Jackie Govan at 501-371-0740 or email her at jackie.govan@arheadstart.org.

Maximize Longer Days With Activities from Better Beginnings



Better Beginnings has a ton of outdoor activities that are perfect for families to do now that our days are longer and warmer. Outdoor play offers many opportunities for learning.

Check out our latest [press release](#) to see what fun you can have while exploring all that nature has to offer.

More outdoor play activities are available on the [Outdoor Activities](#) section of the Better Beginnings website. There's much to see and do outside the house. These activities can guide children as they learn through play.

Children ages birth to five in all of Arkansas's 75 counties can now get free books from the **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**!

Find out on their [website](#) how you can sign up to get one free, age appropriate book each month for the child in your life.



Safety Tips for Hot Cars

It's getting warmer outside, which means car interiors are getting hot, too. The American Academy of Pediatrics has some car safety tips for the upcoming hot months including:



- Always check the back seat and make sure all children are out of the car before locking it.
- Avoid distractions while driving, especially using a cell phone.
- Be extra alert when there is a change in your routine.
- Ask your child care provider to call if your child is more than 10 minutes late.
- Put your cell phone, bag, or purse in the back seat so you check the back seat when you arrive at your destination.

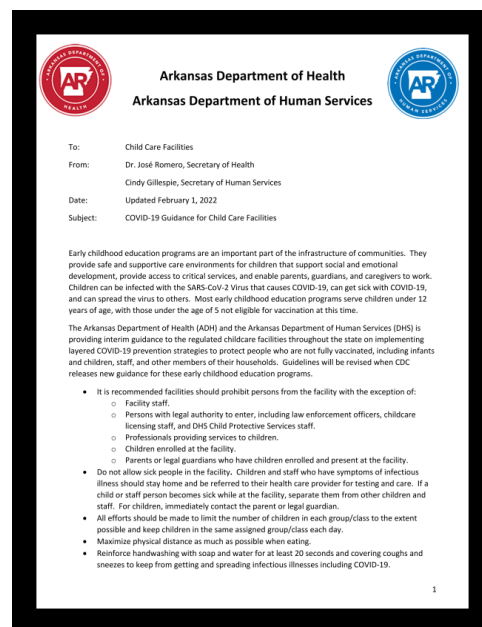
Find more tips [here](#) on the AAP website.

PANDEMIC GUIDELINES



The COVID-19 guidelines were recently updated to reflect the current state of the pandemic. As COVID-19 circumstances may change daily, Arkansas DHS and the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will **monitor and adjust these guidelines as needed.**

Find **COVID Advice and Resources** in the footer of our website. **Click here** to download the PDF or screenshot the document and save to your phone for quick access!



ARKANSAS DHS PANDEMIC GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

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.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)



Better Beginnings is Arkansas's tiered 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.



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