



Literacy



Math



Science

Provider Buzz | August 2025



better beginnings

EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST



**A NOTE FROM
KELLI HILBURN**

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

We have the incredible honor of caring for and serving Arkansas's youngest children. However, we can't forget their families. Family involvement is crucial for young minds and our work. [Research](#) shows that when a child's family is involved in setting education goals, it establishes a relationship between families and providers that benefits the child and encourages broader community support. I encourage you to take time this month to create opportunities to engage with your

client-families and welcome them into your community.

That can start with sharing fun resources and learning activities found on the Better Beginnings website. Keep reading for resources you can use to start conversations with your client-families, such as:

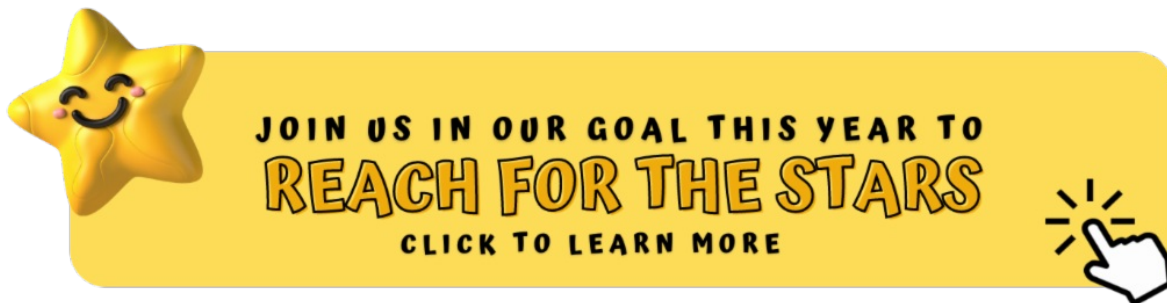
- Using [dramatic play](#) to encourage children's imagination.
- How to [raise a reader](#) at any age.
- Introducing children to sports through the [Special Olympics of Arkansas](#).

Don't forget, our conference season kicks off with the A-State Early Childhood Conference. I look forward to seeing you and learning how we can build strong partnerships to better serve children and families while reaching for the stars.

Until next time,



Kelli Hilburn
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM SUPERVISOR
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



WATCH NOW 

Kids learn best through play! Dramatic play helps children develop deductive reasoning skills while exercising their creative muscles. See how Ms. Misty encourages her students to use their imagination during play time in this video.





PLAY,
LEARN,
EXPLORE

LEARNING RESOURCES



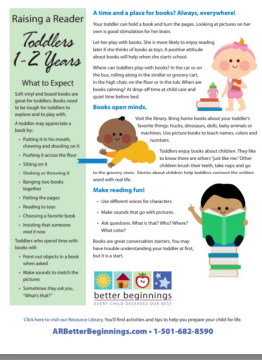




Raising a Reader - Baby's First Year

When reading to babies, you help them develop the knowledge they need to later talk and understand language. Learn more with this resource.

[View Resource](#)



Raising a Reader - Toddlers: 1-2 Years

Books open minds! Toddlers want to explore and play, so books can be a great way to help them do that. Check out this resource to elevate reading time with toddlers.

[View Resource](#)



Raising a Reader - Preschoolers: 3-4 Years

Reading with your preschoolers can help them develop language and comprehension skills. Learn more by clicking on this resource.

[View Resource](#)



LEARNING IS FUN!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



[Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#)

Arkansas children ages birth to five are eligible to

receive a free book each month from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library! Share this resource with your client-families so they can sign up today.

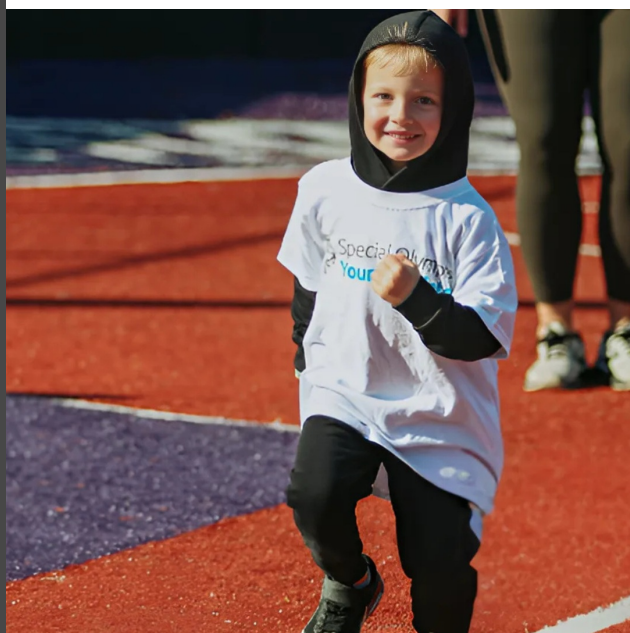
[Learn More](#)



Special Olympics Young Athletes

Differently abled children as young as two can enjoy games and activities through the Special Olympics of Arkansas's Young Athletes program! This program is designed to help develop hand-eye coordination and motor, cognitive, and communication skills through an early introduction to sports.

[Learn More](#)



Monthly Provider Call

Friday, August 5, Zoom @ Noon

Zoom with representatives from the Office of Early Childhood to hear the latest news and updates on early childhood education in Arkansas. If you're unable to attend, don't worry. All calls are recorded and available to watch on the OEC website.

[Learn More](#)

A-State Early Childhood Conference

August 5-7, 2025 Jonesboro

We hope to see you at the A-State Early Childhood Conference in August! We can't wait to discuss how we can better serve Arkansas children and families through powerful partnerships. Register today with the link below.

[Register](#)

Arkansas Early Childhood Association Conference

October 8-9, 2025, North Little Rock

Join us at the annual Arkansas Early Childhood Association Conference in October! We're excited to gather with you and celebrate your great work. We've got some big plans for this conference, so stay tuned for more information and get registered today!

[Register](#)



BETTER BEGINNINGS STAR APPROVALS

QUALITY
CARE!



Congratulations on reaching your next star level! Share your achievement with your community and client-families using our [Star Kit](#).



SIX-STAR PROVIDERS

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

- Gentry Head Start, Gentry
- Rogers Head Start, Rogers



FOUR-STAR PROVIDERS

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

- Jumpstart Daycare/Polk County Developmental Center Inc, Mena
- Kidz Zone Learning Center, INC, Little Rock



THREE-STAR PROVIDERS

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

- BGCBC @ Bonnie Grimes, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Eastside, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Fairview, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Frank Tillery, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Joe Mathias, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Jones, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Old Wire, Rogers
- Little Rock BGCBC @ Reagan, Rogers
- BGCBC @ Tucker, Lowell
- BGCBC @ Westside, Rogers
- Boys and Girls Club of Benton County SKC Janie Darr, Rogers
- Bright Beginnings Preschool, Berryville
- Casa Castillo, Centerton
- Kids R Us Childcare & Learning Center, Fordyce
- Little Hands with Big Imaginations, Paragould
- Little Sheep Day School, Wynne
- Woodland Academy, Rogers



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

- Explorers Academy, Monticello
- HE Taekwondo LLC, Hot Springs
- Innovation Learning @ Lisa Academy North Elementary, North Little Rock
- Innovation Learning @ Lisa Academy West, Little Rock
- Kids Unlimited Learning Academy, Cabot
- Little Angel's Childcare Center, Little Rock
- Right at School at Crystal Hill, North Little Rock
- Right at School at Pine Forest Elementary, Maumelle
- Stepping Stones Early Learning Center, Harrison
- Viloa Little Longhorn Preschool, Viola



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

- Jefferson's Early Learning Center 53291, Conway

Looking to increase your star level? Check out our [Provider Tools](#) to get started!

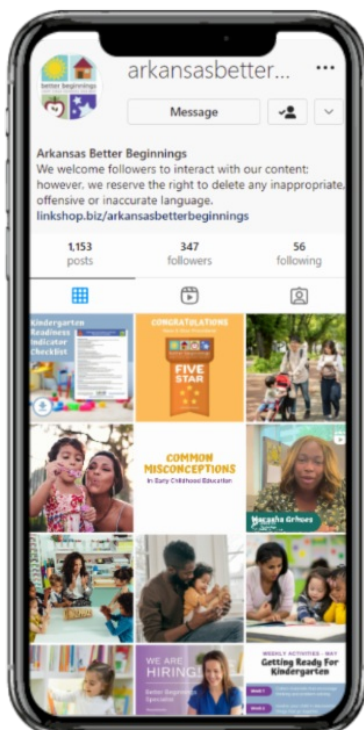
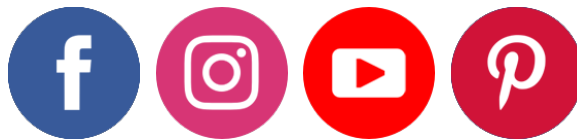
Visit our Website

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?



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

Visit our
Website



**FOLLOW US
FOR MORE
RESOURCES**





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



Better Beginnings | OEC Attn: Better Beginnings PO Box 1437, Slot S150 | Little Rock, AR 72203-1437 US

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