



December 2021

A NOTE FROM BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR KELLI HILBURN



Cold weather is here! It's tempting to stay indoors where there's hot chocolate to drink and blankets to wrap up in. However, outdoor play is as important in the cold months as the warm ones.

Here are some tips to make outdoor play in the wintertime safe for your child:

- Bundle up: Lots of layers, gloves, and a hat will help keep the heat in.
- Drink plenty of water: It's easy to get dehydrated in the winter, too.
- Wear dry clothes: Wet clothes and cold weather don't go well together.

Children learn through play. The cold shouldn't stop them from being outside when they can. Fresh air and sunlight are important year-round.

There are times when it isn't safe to be outside, though. Keep reading for **science** resources from our [Family Resource Library](#) with activities to keep kids entertained and learning.

Happy New Year!

Kelli Hilburn

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

SCIENCE RESOURCES



Here are great resources for **science** fun in winter. You can find more resources on a variety of topics in our **Family Resource Library**.

STATES OF MATTER

Matter is anything that has weight and takes up space. Matter is made of tiny particles called atoms and molecules. Matter can be in different states: solid, liquid, and gas.

Scientists and mathematicians, like Isaac Newton, discovered the laws of motion. Newton is considered one of the most influential scientists of all times.

Cornstarch goes, quack, quack, and then you get your hands dirty! Really, this is not like Newton's laws of motion. It's just like Newton's laws of how things move. Depending on the pressure you apply or how you move it around, Cornstarch goes, quack, quack, and then you get your hands dirty!

Crazy Cornstarch Goop

Place 1/2 cup of cornstarch into a bowl. Add about a 1/4 cup of water and stir. Keep adding water and stirring until the mixture looks like thick pancake batter. Adding food coloring is optional.

How to Play

- When the goop hard with your finger. What does it feel like?
- What does it feel like when you slowly sink your finger into the goop?
- Scoop some goop into your hand. What happens? Can you hold it?
- Your goop onto a hard, non-absorbent surface. What happens? Can you push it with your finger?

NOTE: Do not put cornstarch goop down the sink. Dispose of it in the trash.

Resources: ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Children can learn about the different forms of matter that make up the world around them with these activities. These activities are NOT recommended for children under three.

States of Matter

5 Great Activities for a Wonderful Winter

1. Go on a scavenger hunt.

Even though we don't get snow often in Arkansas, there are still activities you can do outside for fun.

A walk in your neighborhood or local park will activate your child's brain and body. Prepare for your hunt by listing one of these:

- Make a list of things to look for like leaves of a certain color or pinecones.
- For little ones, draw pictures or tape cut-out magazine pictures on sheets of paper. Write the name next to it.
- Collect your finds and use them at home for an art project.

2. Make bird feeders

You can make a bird feeder by applying latex paint with food coloring to almost anything.

- The string to a piece and spread the mixture into the branches of the pinecone.
- Thread a string through the skin of an empty orange half and fill it with the mixture.
- Coat a stick bag with the mixture and hang it with a ribbon or piece of string.

Hang your feeders high in a shrub or from a tree branch.

3. Fun with Ice

Blocks made from ice have lots of possibilities! Let Mother Nature freeze your creativity outdoors.

- Fill plastic containers with water and let it freeze. Freeze the ice blocks to build an ice fort.
- Ice tray cubes make a fine ice kingdom for small plastic animals and characters.
- Fill balloons with water and a drop of food coloring and let them freeze overnight. Remove the balloons and create a yard decoration or just roll them around the yard.

4. Science with Ice

Fill empty milk cartons with water and freeze overnight. Remove the cartons. Let your child sprinkle the top of the ice block with coarse salt. Turn the milk carton upside down into the tunnels for added fun. Repeat process at will.

5. Play games

Peetee's is the Winter Olympics!

Resources: ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

Don't let the cold air keep the children inside. This resource includes tips on healthy winter play and fun things to do outside.

Activities for a Wonderful Winter

Inspire Discovery

Experiment and observe. Experiment some more. This is how children make discoveries. Here are 10 ways to set your child on the road to discovering science.

1. Acknowledge your baby's accomplishment when she studies her teeth. She just learned she can affect her world.
2. Put a rubber duck in baby's bathtub. What else will float?
3. When your baby drops his spiky cap to the floor, pick it up. Gravity is so entertaining.
4. How big can a ramp or incline be? What's faster? The big car or the little car?
5. Put containers of various sizes in the bath tub/sandbox for filling, pouring and building. Ideas are formed and tested.
6. Let your child dig a hole for a plant outside. Print out the changes in soil color and texture. Is there water in the bottom of the hole?
7. Stamp, quack or make a mud pie. Science can be messy. Experiments are fun.
8. Look at a rock under a magnifying glass. Does it look like the surface of a planet?
9. Look at pictures of places with different climates than your home. What would it feel like to be there?
10. Let your child water the garden. He knows he has an impact on the world when he helps things grow.

What is your child learning?

- Develops awareness of himself in relation to the rest of the world
- Develops observation skills
- Develops curiosity, problem solving and decision making skills
- Has an opportunity to extend his vocabulary
- Learns to form and test ideas
- Develops understanding of units of measure
- Understands gravity and mass

Resources: ARBetterBeginnings.com • 1-501-682-8590

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Inspire Discovery

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



BehaviorHelp is Here to Help

BehaviorHelp is a program dedicated to keeping children in preschool programs from being suspended or expelled. The consultants take a holistic approach to meet the needs of children experiencing challenging behaviors.

Partners from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Arkansas State University Childhood Services work with providers across Arkansas to reduce suspension and expulsion.

Since launching in 2016, the BehaviorHelp team has responded to over 1,800 requests. Expulsion is prevented 97% of the time.

If your child is experiencing challenging behaviors at school, make sure your provider knows about this resource. They can request assistance through the BehaviorHelp [website](#).

DHS Division of Child Care and Early Education
BehaviorHelp

BehaviorHelp is a holistic approach to meet the needs of children who experience challenging behaviors with collaborating partners from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCCE), the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and Arkansas State University Childhood Services.

"[My consultant] was great. She gave me and my teacher a lot of hope and strategies ... she helped us get through some very challenging times." - Child Care Director

Benefits

- ✓ Supports healthy, child, social and emotional development
- ✓ Provides tools, skills, and ongoing support for child care providers and families
- ✓ Reduces suspensions and expulsions of young children
- ✓ Creates consistency of care for the child



How to Get Help

Submit a request at www.behaviorhelponline.org. A BehaviorHelp team member at DCCCE will call to learn more about your needs and assign a technical assistance provider or early childhood mental health consultant to assist you.

What can I expect?

A BehaviorHelp team member will visit your program to help you develop and implement a plan to support the child and reduce challenging behaviors in the classroom.

Why work to reduce suspensions and expulsions?

When children are suspended or expelled, nobody benefits. Parents miss work and providers lose income. Suspensions and expulsions increase children's risk for long-term problems such as school failure, school dropout, substance abuse, and involvement with the juvenile justice system.



BehaviorHelp Works!

- ✓ Since launching in 2016, the BehaviorHelp team has responded to more than 1,800 requests.
- ✓ More than 4 out of 5 teachers report they would recommend BehaviorHelp.
- ✓ Teachers report a significant improvement in the frequency and severity of behavior concerns.
- ✓ Expulsion is prevented in 97% of cases.

"It wasn't about a magic 'fix it.' That was hard at first, but I am much more happy with the skills I learned along the way." - Teacher



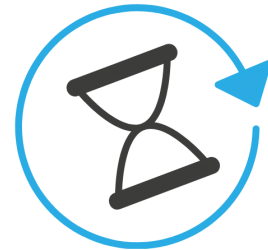
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
BehaviorHelp Support System

NOMINATIONS OPEN



Arkansas Outstanding Early Childhood Professional Nominations Due January 2022

Time is running out to nominate the next Arkansas Outstanding Early Childhood Professional! Nominations are due **January 21, 2022**. If you know an early childhood professional who deserves this award, get the nomination packet soon.



To qualify, nominees must:

- Meet minimum licensing requirements for child care staff
- Be employed by a licensed provider in good standing
- Have taught an early childhood classroom for at least three years
- Plan to remain in early childhood for the 2022-2023 fiscal year
- Be willing and able to serve as an early childhood ambassador

The winning professional will serve on committees, represent early childhood educators in the media as needed and be featured on media and social media outlets.

The nomination packet can be found on the Better Beginnings [website](#).

[Click here for the nomination packet.](#)

PANDEMIC GUIDELINES

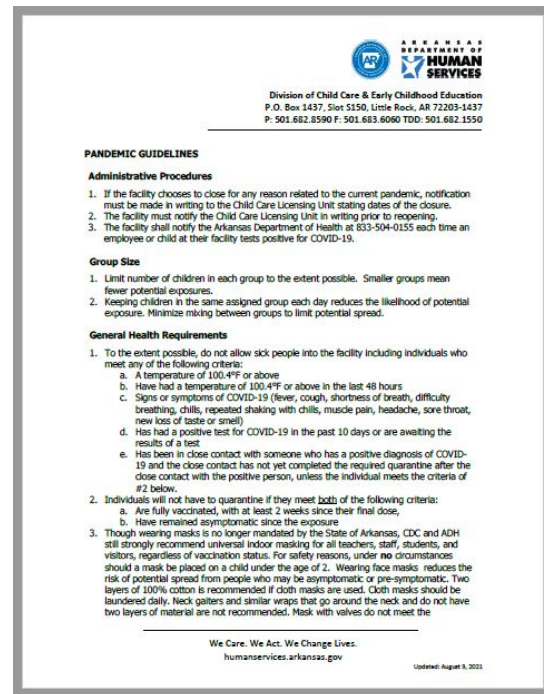


You can always find the most updated **Pandemic Guidelines** from Arkansas DHS on our website.

Find the **Trending tab** and then click the **COVID Advice and Resources for Families** button.

Or, **click here** to download the PDF or screenshot the document and save to your phone for quick access!

As COVID-19 circumstances change daily, Arkansas DHS and the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will **monitor and adjust these guidelines as needed.**



ARKANSAS DHS PANDEMIC GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?



VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT

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.



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