



MAY 2021



PARENTS AND FAMILIES,

Earlier this month was **National Child Care Provider Day**. One day simply isn't enough when it comes to celebrating our fabulous child care providers. In fact, we say **EVERY day is National Child Care Provider Day!**

Be sure to tell them **thank you** for their hard work. Help your child make a thank you card for his teacher. Let him draw a picture on the front, and work together to write one of the following affirmations on the inside. Show them how **grateful** you are.

Since next month is all about **math**, we have put together a few **POSITIVE** affirmations for teachers. **Humor me as I get a little creative here.**

1. Your passion for early child education **multiplies** a child's love for learning.
2. The life lessons and skills you teach Arkansas children **add** value to their academic future.
3. You make a **difference**.
4. Arkansas's future workforce will be a **product** of the quality education you deliver today.
5. You are raising critical thinkers and **problem** solvers.

They will treasure these forever!

Dawn Jeffrey M.S.E.

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Program Manager for Better Beginnings

ARKANSAS PROVIDERS BY THE NUMBERS



A few more reasons to celebrate Arkansas providers!

- **Ten** Arkansas Better Beginnings child care providers in Washington County and Benton County are pursuing accreditation from the National Association for Family Childcare (NAFCC) in a pilot program supported by the University of Arkansas Early Care and Education Projects, Family Child Care Network.
- Better Beginnings providers are trained to provide quality care for children ages **zero to five**, helping Arkansas parents return to work when their child is as young as **four months old**.
- Better Beginnings providers spend roughly **11,500** hours with Arkansas children before kindergarten.
- **85%** of a child's personality, social skills and intellect are developed by **age 5**, so Better Beginnings providers are trained to support the development of social and academic skills throughout a child's lifetime.



CONGRATS TO THE 2021 OUTSTANDING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



SHAMANDA NELSON--MINERAL SPRINGS ABC PRESCHOOL

Shamanda Nelson, who has been teaching for **19 years**, is a Director and Teacher at **Mineral Springs ABC Preschool in Mineral Springs**. In her free time, you can find Shamanda volunteering at the Harvest Food Program, Feeding Under the Bridge Program and 4-H.

"It's a gift from God, because each day I pray that God would give me wisdom, knowledge and understanding to meet the needs of these babies," Shamanda said. "I would love to see students being more motivated about school, learning and being better citizens in the community."



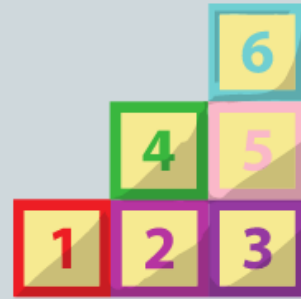
BRANDI BURTON--THE ALLEN SCHOOL

Brandi Burton is a lead teacher for children with disabilities at The Allen School in Little Rock. She has been working with children with special needs for 17 years. Brandi has also worked for the Special Olympics.

"The important thing to remember is that all children can learn but not always in the same way. It is my goal to find the method that works best for each individual child," Brandi said. "I hope to see teachers get the recognition they deserve."

YOU CAN READ MORE ABOUT THE AWARD HERE

MATH RESOURCES



Check out some of our favorite math resources from our [Family Resource Library](#) for even more **MATH FUN!**

[PAPER PLAYGROUND FOR LEARNING FUN](#)

Paper Playground for Learning Fun
Math • Creative Thinking • New Words

Many of our readers don't know your child has to be bored. You can create your own playground at home. You probably won't even have to go to the store.

These activities are not about **scoring** but you will make **hopscotch** and **jump rope** with your child.

The objective is to develop **math concepts**, physical skills and **have fun**. To get creative. **Make** your sports equipment and a paper playground. Talk about **numbers**, **distances** and **angles**. You should use **new words**. Find out more about what is learned on the next page.

Materials:

- Lightweight balls
- Any and all kinds of tape (adhesive you have)
- Crayons or markers (let your child choose a non-toxic paint)
- Scissors
- Recycled newspaper (any paper, folders, wrapping paper, boxes and tubes)
- Paper tape
- Large sewing needle

Get details on how to make your own paper playground on the next page.

Get more fun ways to learn about math - visit our Family Resource Library here.

better beginnings
CHILDREN'S CENTER

Click here to learn how to recycle to make your own musical instrument!

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

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Create your own [Paper Playground](#) right at home without making a trip to the store! This resource is great for working on math. Make goofy **sports** equipment, talk about **numbers**, **distances** and **angles**. Toss around some new words.

[LET'S MAKE MUSIC! MUSIC IS MATH!](#)

Let's Make Music!
Music is math!

Box Guitar

Step 1: Decorate a shoe or tissue box.

Step 2: Cut a 3-4 inch square or circle hole in side.

Step 3: String 4-6 rubber bands around the box over the hole.

Step 4: Insert a pencil at each end of the hole under the rubber bands. (They make it sound better).

Step 5: Strum away!

TP Tube Kazoo

Step 1: Decorate a toilet paper tube.

Step 2: Cut a piece of wax paper about an inch larger than the bottom of the tube.

Step 3: Cover one end of the tube with the wax paper and secure it with a rubber band.

Step 4: Blow through the open end and start up the kazoo marching band!

Materials:

- Favorite decorating papers (stickers optional)
- Glue
- Markers
- Scissors
- String (need about half)
- Shoe or tissue box
- Rubber bands
- Toilet paper tube
- Wax paper
- Wrapping paper or paper towel tube
- Ballroom
- Aluminum foil
- City blocks, pins, beads, glue or glue gun

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

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Time to get the family band together! [Use this resource](#) to make a **kazoo**, **guitar** or **rain stick**. Work on following directions as you cut, measure and assemble each instrument. Then, put on a living room concert as you count your way through the hums and strums!

[SIMON SAYS ROLL WITH HOMEMADE DIE](#)

Simon Says ROLL

How to Make your Big Die Simon Says Game

You will need:

- 1 empty tissue box
- Glue tape
- Black marker or dark crayon
- Tough paper to wrap the box
- Paper for numbers and action cards

Number Cards and Action Cards

Use whatever paper is available at home. Packets of junk mail, envelopes, grocery bags and paper plates work well.

Write numbers 1 through 6 on individual pieces of paper or tape as your paper will allow.

Have fun with your child as you make the action cards. Use your imagination to make up funny actions. Children might like to add drawings to these cards.

What is learned from playing the game?

Children practice counting as they roll. Papers learn to recognize numbers and groups of objects (the dots, called pips). All these are important skills for kindergarten.

What is learned from making the game pieces?

Children learn new words such as glue, tape, the dots on dice and an instruction. They also learn to make toys from household items.

For toddlers: Talk about shapes. The tissue box is not square like the dice. Show them the roll.

For preschoolers: Measure the box. Measure other things around the house.

For older children: Work together to make up new action cards or game rules.

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

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Practice counting as you play [Simon Says](#) with homemade die and number and action cards. Your child will learn how to recognize **numbers** and **shapes**, important skills for kindergarten. Show your child how fun it can be to make new toys with what you have at home!

FIND MORE MATH RESOURCES HERE

CHECK OUT OUR
YOUTUBE
CHANNEL



Do you follow us on [YouTube?](#) We have resource videos, special announcement videos and even provider videos!

Our YouTube channel is just another way for you to see what [Better Beginnings](#) is all about and **stay connected!**

Check out some of our most recent videos here.



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Be sure to check our [website](#) for the latest **Better Beginnings news and updates.** You can find these under the [Trending tab.](#)

Here, you'll also find a special section for the latest [COVID-19 updates and guidelines](#) from

Arkansas DHS.

CHECK OUT OUR TRENDING PAGE

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?



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OR, check us out on **social media.**



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