



February 2022

## A NOTE FROM BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR KELLI HILBURN



Let's [Talk Math](#).

There are a lot of ways you can make math fun in your classroom using objects all around you. The Talk Math resource has some great ideas. These activities are easy for you to prepare and are fun for the children in your classroom.

And because the children are having fun, they're learning cool, new math concepts and building a solid foundation for understanding future math lessons.

These are a few of my favorite activities in the Talk Math resource:

- Sorting Games: Children learn what "same" and "different" mean.
- Count it Out: Count the snacks on a child's plate with them.
- Measuring: Help children measure multiple things around the room. Use the words "longer" or "shorter" during this activity.

This resource includes some great activities for families so share it with your client-families. That way they can extend the learning outside the classroom.

We're honoring nine of your colleagues for getting nationally accredited and increasing their quality of care in this edition of the Buzz. Keep reading for more information. I personally congratulate them and hope you will do the same.

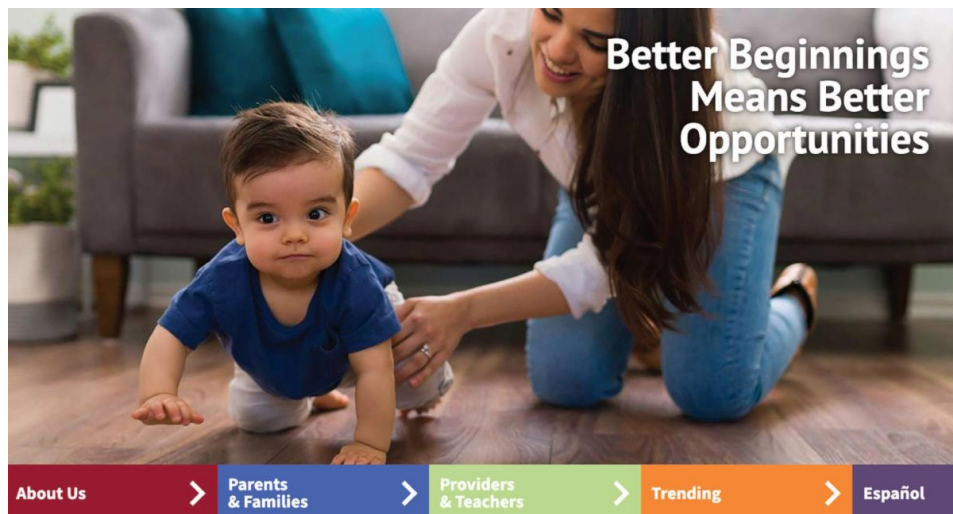
**Kelli Hilburn**

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

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Coming Soon

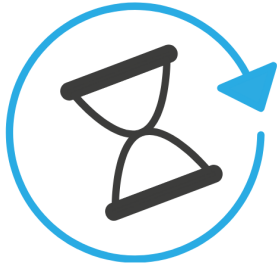


The redesigned Better Beginnings website is launching soon and we can't wait for you to see it! It includes all of the things you love about the current site - the Star Level Kits and curriculum to name a few - but is more user friendly.

You can get a sneak peek of it right now. Watch this [video](#) for a quick tour of the site.

**Watch the video for a sneak peek of the new website.**

# Deadline is Approaching



All providers receiving voucher funding must be Better Beginnings Level 2 by **June 30, 2022** in order to continue receiving that funding.

Contact Lana Davis by phone at (501) 320-8981 or by email at [BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov) for any assistance you may need.

## ARPA FUNDING AVAILABLE



## Apply Today for Well-Deserved Funds

The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) is accepting applications for grants funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). All licensed child care providers licensed on or before March 11, 2021 are eligible for a grant, no matter their Better Beginnings status.

There is enough funding available for all providers in Arkansas so apply today for these much deserved funds!

The funding can be used in a variety of ways including:

- Improvements to your centers
- Staff bonuses
- Operational costs

### American Rescue Plan Proposal

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

#### STABILIZATION - \$286M\*

\*90% of funding must go to existing facilities and up to 10% can be used for new programs.

**Subgrant Payments - \$258M\*\***  
\*\*Facility must have been open on or before March 11, 2021 to qualify.

##### Quality Improvement

Funding to assist facilities in obtaining a higher level of quality. Eligible subgrant amounts were determined based on a cost analysis of the amount necessary to move up one level in quality.

##### Operational

Funding to assist facilities in paying operational expenses incurred during the pandemic.

##### Child Care Expansion of Existing Business

Funding to address out of school time and infant/toddler early childhood education gaps across the state of Arkansas. Existing facilities will be awarded a subgrant amount based on the type and amount of increased capacity. Funding will cover minor renovations of existing classrooms, classroom start-up, or partnerships with local businesses to support essential workers by expanding or opening an on-site campus.

#### Supply Building - \$25M

Funding contracted out through public/private partnerships to create new child care centers across Arkansas for the essential workforce including care for non-traditional hours.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL DISCRETIONARY - \$178M

##### Essential Worker Child Care - \$130M

Funding to continue assisting Arkansas's Essential Workforce in paying for child care services. Essential Worker Child Care will be extended through September 2024 or until funding has been exhausted.

##### TEACH Scholarship Program - \$40M

Funding to cover scholarships for early childhood teachers to obtain a degree or credential in the field. Funding will be disseminated out by the Arkansas Early Childhood Association using the national TEACH model.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE - \$11M\*\*\*

\*\*\*Administrative budget is \$3M from Stabilization and \$8M from Supplemental Discretionary Funds.

##### Personnel - \$4M

Funding to cover 22 personnel to assist with the implementation of Stabilization and Supplemental Discretionary Funds.

##### IT Upgrades and Other - \$7M

Funding to cover IT upgrades for internally and externally facing systems.



Apply for all the grants you're eligible for so you can continue to serve your community. A link to the portal was sent to the email on file with Licensing.

Find more information on the DCCECE [website](https://www.dhs.gov/child-care).

Contact Paige Cox at [Paige.Cox@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:Paige.Cox@dhs.arkansas.gov) or 501-320-8940 with any questions you have concerning these grants.

# MEET THE TEAM



## Lana Davis - Program Coordinator



### **Describe your job in one sentence:**

I assist child care providers in creating and maintaining high quality learning environments for Arkansas Children.

### **Favorite children's book:**

*Barney Beagle*

### **Favorite toy as a child:**

I just loved to play outside and explore.

### **When you were a child, what job did you want as an adult?**

Teacher.

### **Which of these education topics to do you enjoy most and why? Math, Science, or Literacy?**

I have always appreciated literacy. Sesame Street and my mom taught me phonics, and I enjoyed spelling at a very young age.

CONGRATULATIONS ON  
YOUR ACHIEVEMENT!



## **Nine Family Child Care Homes Receive National Accreditation**

Congratulations to the following nine family child care home providers who received national accreditation from the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)!

- Mary Line, IDC & Nursery School FCCH, Bentonville
- Rita Neve, Mother's Touch Preschool, Booneville
- Lorene Cahall, Evening Shade Family Home Daycare Center, Evening Shade
- Carolyn Carney, Happy Day Child Care Center, Farmington
- Susan Meek, Sue Meek Home Daycare, Fayetteville
- Michelle Mendoza, In His Care Children's Center, Garfield
- Krista Houston, Little Eagles Nest, Huntsville
- Linda Adams, The Hunny Tree, Siloam Springs
- Lisa Wood, Lisa Wood Daycare, Prairie Grove

These providers completed approximately 120 hours of professional development and an extensive review, including an observation and council approval. Their hard work to increase quality child care in Arkansas is greatly appreciated.

Learn more about the accreditation on the [NAFCC](https://www.nafcc.org/) website.

# BETTER BEGINNINGS STAR APPROVALS



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.

The follow programs are now **3-star** Better Beginnings Providers:

- Susan Meek's CCFH, Fayetteville
- Little Eagles Nest, Huntsville
- IDC & Nursery School, Bentonville
- In His Care Children's Center, Garfield
- Happy Day Daycare, Farmington
- CB King Eudora, Eudora
- Lasting Impressions Child Care & Enrichment Center LLC, West Memphis

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

- DeWitt Daycare, Dewitt
- Scholastic Academy, Little Rock
- Kiddie Kollege, Little Rock
- SEARK Early Childhood, Pine Bluff
- Little Sprouts, Little Rock
- Kiddie Kingdom, Percy
- Precious Memories Childcare Center Too, Pine Bluff
- Countryview Preschool, Marion
- McCrory Elementary School, McCrory
- Lil Hands, Fayetteville
- The Preschool Inc., Rogers
- Cadence Academy Preschool, Bentonville
- Trisha's Child Care, Ozark
- La Petite, Bentonville
- Center Hill Child Care LLC, Paragould
- See Um Smile Playhouse, Farmington
- Small World Preschool, Mountain Home
- Cornerstone Academy NWA, Siloam Springs
- Kids Castle, Texarkana

The following programs are now **1-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- Mrs. Mrytle New Beginnings, Wynne
- Bright Beginnings Preschool, Berryville
- Angels All Around Me, Siloam Springs
- Nanci's Kindercare, Brinkley
- Topps Inc., Pine Bluff
- Early Childhood Program at Trinity Cathedral, Little Rock
- Milestone, Fort Smith
- Cornerstone, Magnolia
- Amazing U Inc., Sherwood
- The Kid's Studio, Rogers
- Happy Feet Child Care - After School, Elkins
- Mobius Learning Academy, Bentonville
- Roo's World, Rogers
- First United Methodist Church, Searcy
- Kidspiration Too Pediatric Therapy, Melbourne
- Infinity Childcare, Bentonville
- World Years Learning Center, Paragould
- Excell Program LLC, Jonesboro
- First United Methodist Church Preschool, Search
- Tumbles Daycare Center, West Fork
- Living Word Kids Academy, Jonesboro
- Cat Club Brookland Middle School, Brookland
- Kids Spot, Blytheville
- From the Beginning, Cave City
- The Learning Center of Northeast Arkansas, Jonesboro
- The Goddard School, Fayetteville
- Legacy Learning Center, Conway
- The Doni Martin Center for Developmental Services, Pocahontas

If you are a Better Beginnings provider and are interested in moving up in star ratings, click [here](#).



# PANDEMIC GUIDELINES



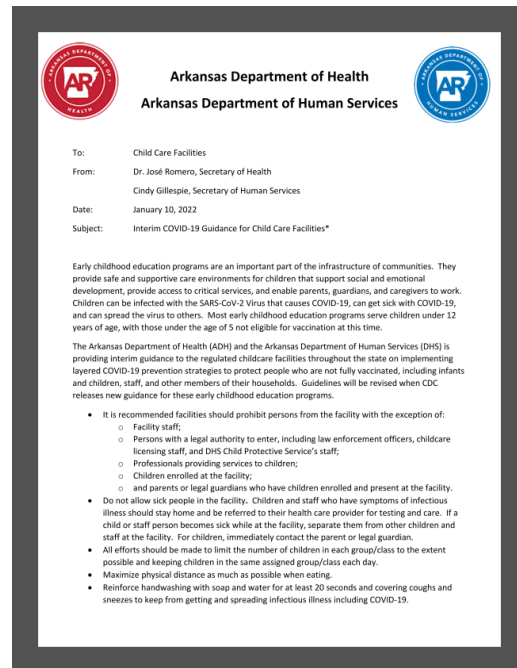
New **Pandemic Guidelines** have been released. You can always find the most updated guidelines from Arkansas DHS on our website.

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.**

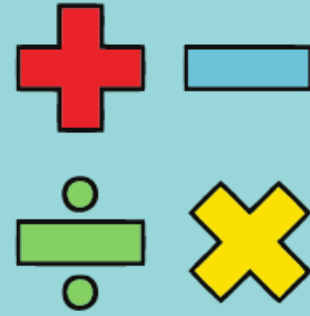
Child care providers are encouraged to call the Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Child Care Licensing at **501-320-6071** for answers to child care related COVID questions.



**ARKANSAS DHS PANDEMIC GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**



# MATH RESOURCES



Help your client-families continue the learning at home by sharing these math [resources](#) from our [Family Resource Library](#).

## MAKE it MATH

Help your toddler learn math with these fun hands-on activities.

Use recycled cardboard from cereal, snack or shipping boxes, crayons and playdough to give meaning to math. Teach your child to make playdough "worms".

Then get busy making shapes, picking apples or putting points on flowers. Talk about the shapes and colors. Count out loud as you decorate the cookies.

The important thing is to play and have fun. The more you play with math, the sooner your child will be doing the counting.

These activities help your child recognize and name numerals, shapes, colors and patterns.

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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](#)

## 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 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!

### Tube Rain Stick

**Step 1:** Decorate a wrapping paper or paper towel tube.

**Step 2:** Cut a piece of aluminum foil the length of the tube.

**Step 3:** Square the foil to make a long snake.

**Step 4:** Cut the top off two balloons.

**Step 5:** Stretch one balloon to cover one end of the tube and secure it with a rubber band.

**Step 6:** Insert the foil snake. Pour rice or small dried beans into the tube.

**Step 7:** Use the second balloon to close the other end.

**Step 8:** Shake gently from one end to the other to make a magical rain sound.

**Materials:** Toilet paper tube, Wax paper, Wrapping paper or paper towel tube, Aluminum foil, Dry beans, peas, beans, rice or popcorn.

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## Paper Playground for Learning Fun

Math • Creative Thinking • New Words

Rainy or cold weather doesn't mean your child has to be bored. You can create your own activity right at home. You probably won't even have to go to the store.

These activities are not about **scoring** but you can make big, fun, cool parent points with your child.

The objective is to develop math concepts, physical skills and **have fun**. So, get creative. **Make** your own sports equipment and a paper playground. Talk about **numbers, distances and angles**. This is around some **new words**.

**Find out more about what is learned on the next page.**

**What you need:**

- Lightweight balls
- Any and all kinds of tape (whatever you have)
- Crayons or markers (let your child create a map/page for decorating the play surface)
- Scissors
- Recycled newspaper, funny pages, folders, wrapping paper, boxes and tubes
- Paper cups
- Large sewing utensils

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

**Golf Ball Game**

**• Concept Course**

Roll or throw a ball onto a set of three when you play them indoors. Both require rolling a ball with a stick. In golf, the ball is struck with a club to go in the hole in as few strokes as possible. In cricket, the ball is struck with a mallet through the ground. The goal of cricket is to be the first person to reach the end of a course and hit the center peg.

**As you play, use about how much force is needed to get the ball into the garage or down the concept course. How many wickets are there to the course? Ask how your child decided the color order of the course pieces.**

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Make it Math

Let's Make Music - Music  
is Math

Paper Playground for  
Learning Fun



# 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.



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