

JULY 2020



## A NOTE FROM BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM MANAGER DAWN JEFFREY



### Parents and Families,

Do you remember the scene in *Frozen* where Olaf is singing that song--the one where he's hoping and wishing for **summer**? What he doesn't know, though, is that summer is only great until he melts into a **big, wet puddle**.

Anyone else had enough of **summer** and feeling like a **big, wet puddle**? Arkansas heat is no joke, but throw a mask on top of it, and you might as well just stay **inside**.

We know what you're thinking.

### *Inside?! We've been inside since March!*

We know. If social distancing and staying quarantined haven't driven you stir-crazy yet, the heat certainly will.

**Good news, though.** **Better Beginnings** has tons of resources to help you keep your child entertained inside. The plus? **They'll learn a little something too!** Quality early learning is our top priority, so we promise we have a **science, literacy, or math** resource to help you beat the heat. Need a brain break? We have **play** resources too.

Check out some of our favorites below.

- Grab your costumes, set the stage and **put on a show** with our [Bring Books to Life](#) resource.
- Secretly practice **following directions** with this math resource, [Simon Says Roll](#).
- Show your child that **science is cool** when you make your own [Rainstorm in a Jar](#).
- Bring the **beach** to you with this [Sensory Play](#) resource.

Keep **washing those hands**, wear a **mask** and take care of yourself. We hope you and your family are staying safe and **healthy**.

All the best,



Dawn Jeffrey M.S. E.  
Division of Early Child Care and Early Childhood Education  
Program Manager for Better Beginnings

## IMPORTANT SUMMER SAFETY REMINDER

*Never leave your child in a hot car, bus or van.*



Did you know a parked car will warm up **OVER 20 degrees** from the outside temperature in just **ten minutes**? This means, even at an outside temperature of just 60 degrees, **the inside of your car could reach a temperature of 110**. Consider keeping your child's favorite toy or school bag in the front seat as visual reminder that your child is in the back seat. Another option is to leave your purse or one of your shoes in the back seat, reminding you to **LOOK before you LOCK**. Find more tips [here](#), and remember, **never leave children in a car, van or bus**.

## LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

*10 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW*

**10 Things Every Parent Should Know about Play**

**1. Playing is learning.**  
Children are born learners. Every action and interaction is a lesson.

**2. Play benefits your child's development.**  
**Socially** – helps children develop relationships, teaches communication and experience trust.  
**Emotionally** – allows children to express their feelings and relieve stress.  
**Intellectually** – promotes curiosity and challenges them to develop problem solving skills.

**3. Play comes in many types.**  
**Solitary play**  
Babies spend a good deal of time in solitary play. Simple toys like balls or a mobile provide endless entertainment.  
Toddlers and preschoolers use time alone to create what only they can imagine.  
School age children may use playtime alone to develop ideas and make up their own stories.  
**Parallel play**  
Around age 2 to 3, toddlers begin to enjoy being around other children. They may play side by side and not actually interact with each other. Children at this age are usually not ready to share.  
**Group play**  
Children are ready to share ideas and toys at about kindergarten age. Group play helps children develop self control, empathy and problem solving skills.

**4. Children should be allowed to guide their own play.**  
By choosing their own method of play, children experience a sense of freedom. They develop decision making skills and self confidence.

**5. Parents need to set a special time every day to play with their children.**  
Playing with your child is a relationship building experience. It shows him he is important and his ideas matter to you.

**6. Just have fun.**  
When you play with your child, give him your full attention.

**7. Play promotes creativity.**  
Use simple toys like blocks to spark your child's imagination. A block can be a truck, but a truck will usually still be a truck.

**8. Play is healthy.**  
Play relieves stress and the physical activity helps prevent obesity.

**9. Play outside.**  
We all need fresh air and exercise. Outdoor play requires children to use their large muscles. It helps them develop muscle coordination, balance and strength.

**10. Play teaches through experience.**  
Measuring and pouring sand helps children learn about weights and measurements. They absorb what they learn through play.

Click here to visit our Resource Library. You'll find activities and tips to help you prepare your child for life.  
[www.ARBetterBeginnings.com](http://www.ARBetterBeginnings.com) • 1-800-445-3316

Did you know one of the best ways your child can learn is through **play**? It teaches **social skills**, promotes **creativity** and **empowers** your child.

You can play with him (he'll love it!) or let him play alone. Both are critical to your child's **education** and brain development.

This ***10 Things Every Parent Should Know about Play*** resource will teach you more about all of the benefits of **Learning through Play.**

Check it out today!

Find more Learning through Play resources here.

## ATTENTION PARENTS!



Parents, did you know you might qualify for child care financial assistance? If you are an essential worker, chances are you do, regardless of your income eligibility!

Submit your application here.

## MY TEACHER WEARS A MASK



Have you adjusted to wearing and seeing **masks** everywhere you go? Chances are, your little ones are having a hard time adjusting to that too, and Arkansas Department of Human Services **requires all teachers and staff to wear them at child care centers and homes**. Check out this [\*My Teacher Wears a Mask\*](#) booklet for some fun ideas. You'll learn how to show your child masks are only to **protect them from germs**, and you can even make a **cut-out mask!**

## COVID-19 ADVICE AND RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

### COVID-19 Advice & References for Families

#### REMINDER!

As child care centers and homes adjust to our new normal, be mindful of **new plans and policies**. Many things will look very different, but these changes will be put in place **with your child's safety and well-being in mind**.

Here are some changes you can expect to see:

- **Drop-off and pick-up** will take place outside the facility only.
- **Temperature screenings will be required** for anyone who enters the facility.
- Staff will wear **face masks**.
- Groups will be limited to **10 people or less**.
- Family-style meals will not be served, **children will receive individual snacks and meals**.

Learn more here.

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.

