

JULY 2020

SUMMER FUN

A NOTE FROM BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM MANAGER DAWN JEFFREY



Providers,

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, as child care providers, "inside" is probably one of your least favorite words. I mean, you're

probably already feeling a little tired from **adjusting to our new normal, monitoring class groups and caring for your own families**. But this heat gives a brand new meaning to **tired**.

Good news, though. **Better Beginnings** has tons of **tools** and **curriculum** supplements to help you keep your kids learning AND entertained while inside.

Remember, no matter how brutal that summer heat gets out there, **providing quality care** must remain our top priority.

Check out some of these classroom tools that will help you beat the heat:

- Dream of **cooler weather** with [Snowy Day](#), a lesson from our Story-A-Month collection.
- Summertime **fishing** is the best. Grab these cutouts and [Let's go Fishing](#) (Focus Area #8).
- **Get out of town!** Discuss each child's dream [vacation](#) (Focus Area #9).
- Bring the **beach** to you with this [Tubs of Fun with Water and Sand](#) curriculum (Focus Area #3).

Remember, always wear your **mask** and wash, wash, **WASH your hands**. Your kids will learn from you. It's up to you to set a responsible and safe example. As always, **thank you for all you do**.

All the best,

Dawn Jeffrey

Dawn Jeffrey M.S. E.
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Program Manager for Better Beginnings

MY TEACHER WEARS A MASK



We know the masks are obnoxious and HOT, but **THANK YOU for putting the safety and health of your kids and families first**. Your kids are probably still having a hard time adjusting to seeing you wear one every day, though. Don't forget about this [My Teacher Wears a Mask](#) booklet from **ASU** and **UAMS**. It's full of graphics that will help you remind your kids masks are only to **protect them from germs**.

It's also got a DIY **cut-out mask** resource at the end!



Find more *My Teacher Wears a Mask* resources [here](#). You can even find a cut-out mask activity to do with your kiddos!

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT | PLAY IS LEARNING

10

**Things Every Parent
Should Know about Play**



better beginnings
EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST

- 1. Playing is learning.**
Children are born learning. 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 relieves 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.

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Share this resource with client families to educate and encourage [learning through play](#).

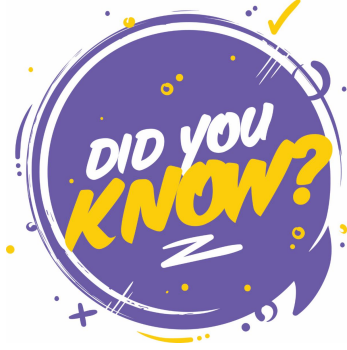
The heat can really put a damper on summer, [limiting many outdoor activities](#).

This might help inspire some ideas for [indoor activities that are still fun and educational!](#)

Find more Learning through Play resources here.

Supplemental Funds for Open Providers

Providers, did you know that in addition to economic relief funds from the CARES Act, the DCCECE's Family Support and Child Care Development Fund departments have worked together to make supplemental funds available to you. This is regardless of



your quality level or previous receipt of CCDF assistance.

Learn more here.

THANK YOU BETTER BEGINNINGS QUALITY COMMUNITY

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

- **PINE BLUFF**: Precious Memories Learning Academy

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

- **WEST HELENA**: Over the Rainbow Family Child Care
- **HEBER SPRINGS**: Incredible Kidz 3
- **WEST MEMPHIS**: Creative Minds Child Care
- **BROOKLAND**: Look What I Can Do Learning Center LLC
- **GARFIELD**: In His Care Children's Center

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

- **HIGHLAND**: Highland Early Head Start
- **STUTTGART**: CAPCA Head Start Stuttgart
- **BENTONVILLE**: AEL Bentonville 14th Street EHS
- **ROGERS**: AEL Rogers Lilac Center
- **FAYETTEVILLE**: EOA North Street Head Start
- **FAYETTEVILLE**: EOA Old Farmington Road Head Start

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

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHT
FAMILIES ARE DIFFERENT



[Families are Different](#) (#14) is about a **multicultural mix of both traditional and nontraditional families**. Consider using this curriculum guide as a supplement to the [Adventures in Learning Focus Area #3 - Families](#), for additional activities.

A few things to be mindful of:

- Be familiar with the **family composition of each child** in your group
- **Be sensitive** to each child's family situation as you are reading and discussing the book with the children.
- Become **familiar with the book**.

Written and illustrated by Nina Pellegrini who has an adopted Korean daughter.

CHILD CARE PANDEMIC PROCEDURES TO KEEP IN MIND



Implement **social distancing** guidelines in existing routines. For example, move drop-off and pickup outside and limit group sizes to 10 people or less.



Have a **screening process** in place for those allowed to enter the facility. This includes staff, persons with legal authority, therapists, parents and legal guardians, etc.



Post **informational graphics** on hand-washing in all bathrooms. **Please follow Section 1100 regarding health and hand washing in the Minimum Licensing Requirements.**

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND



Sunscreen must have **UVA & UVB protection and at least 15 SPF to ensure appropriate protection.**



Never let your children swim **without an on-duty life-guard or an adult around.**



A parked car will warm up 20 degrees from the outside temperature in just ten minutes. **Never leave children in a car, van or bus.**

Drinking Water Awareness and Safety

Exposure to lead can affect a child's brain and nervous system. This means it can create serious learning disabilities and health issues.

Does your water have lead in it?

The Arkansas Department of Education and Arkansas Department of Health are offering schools and child care centers a chance to find out. The testing is free. [Apply here.](#)



Learn more about **Better Beginnings!**

Visit our website.

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.

