



June 2022



## A Letter from Kelli



Sometimes, summer days are too hot for children to spend a lot of time outside. Days like that are usually spent indoors and that leads to the potential for a lot of screen time.

Better Beginnings offers indoor, family friendly scientific experiments to keep the learning going at home. Most of the materials you need for these experiments are in your house already!

The [Oil & Water Experiment](#) resource, which is featured later, require a container, cooking oil and water. Children are fascinated when they discover oil and water don't mix no matter how much they stir.

The [science](#) section of the [Family Resource Library](#) offers even more fun and engaging experiments. Through these experiments, children are building a foundation for future scientific learning.

Adult supervision is always needed when conducting experiments. But why just supervise? Join in the fun and make memories that will last a lifetime. Children love seeing their parents act silly. It reminds them that their family is fun, too.

It's not all fun and games in the summer. That's why we've included summer safety tips for [outdoor play](#) and [driving kids from place to place](#). Also included in today's *Buzz* are resources that offer tips for dealing with [challenging behavior](#). Check that out, too!

Until next time,

Kelli Hilburn

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

# SCIENCE RESOURCES



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

**The Sunflower Jar**

The most important element of any experiment is a caring adult. This activity is appropriate for a child who has exchanged asking "why" for asking "how." How do plants grow? How do plants in the woods get started? How do the stores get all that food?

Place wet paper towels in a glass jar. Paper towel should be placed loosely, not packed down.

Position 4-6 seeds against the inside of the jar so they can be seen. The number of seeds depends on the size of your jar. The sprouts will need room for roots.

Place your sunflower jar in a window for light.

Water daily with a spray bottle or sprinkle water lightly with your hands. Keep the bowl's moist place for the seeds.

In a few days sprouts from the seeds will appear. Then come roots. When the sprouts have two leaves and are two inches tall, you can plant them in a pot.

**What do children learn from the activity?**

- How materials absorb water
- What plants need to grow
- Plants are delicate when they are young
- Measurement

**Materials:**

- Glass jar or smooth plastic container
- Paper towels
- Water
- Pocket of seeds

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**OIL AND WATER**  
EXPERIMENTS

**Some Liquids Are So Dense**

Why don't oil and water mix? The answer begins with "molecules." Molecules are the very tiny particles that make up everything. Some substances are made of a lot of molecules. They are heavier or more dense, than others. Think of paper cups with marbles in them. One cup has four marbles. The other cup is half filled with marbles. The marbles in the half filled cup are close together. They're called densely, and it's heavier.

Water molecules are only attracted to water molecules. Oil molecules are only attracted to other oil molecules.

Water is more dense (heavier) than oil so they can't mix. Oil floats above the water.

**See what that looks like in this easy experiment.**

**Four ingredients:**

- color
- food coloring
- cooking oil
- table salt

**Step 1:** Fill a glass about two-thirds full with tap water.

**Step 2:** Add a couple of drops of food coloring and stir.

**Step 3:** Add cooking oil to almost fill the glass. Watch carefully!

**How far the ready next part?**

**Step 4:** Use a salt shaker to pour salt over the mixture. Watch the oil fall and rise. Continue adding salt to keep the movement going.

**What is happening? Here's the science:**

Salt is more dense (heavier) than oil or water so it is going to sink. As the salt sinks it pulls blobs of oil down with it. When the salt starts to dissolve, it releases the oil. The oil rises back to the surface. You get dancing oil!

**Don't miss the fun!**  
Experiments should always have parental participation.

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Learn more about the density of oil in the next experiment. >>>

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**SENSORY PLAY**

All of the **SENSORY SANS** in these photos is non-toxic and made from whole wheat flour and vegetable oil.

**Double your baby's pleasure with a sensory ball and trays with sand.**

**Sensory sand looks and plays much like sand. It can be molded and crumbled easily.**

**Feeling hungry with our Shell Island? It's your chance for a good year. All. They can use the shells to decorate the "Beach."**

Play is a child's work. It is critical to their development. Play helps them develop new skills and explore their imagination.

Sensory play is often called messy play - for a good reason. There is so much to discover. One needs to spread out sometimes.

What parent hasn't seen their baby play with their food? It's usually not fun to spread all over the high chair table. Give a toddler a big bowl of spaghetti and the freedom to play. The pasta becomes an experiment in touch, texture and gravity. Touch is a fundamental sense, right up there with taste.

Taste is a major factor for babies and young toddlers. It's true that at this stage, almost everything goes into a child's mouth.

**Choose play things carefully.** Make sure anything you put in front of your baby is taste safe. Be aware of choking hazards. Always check the recommended age on purchased toys. Safety first!

**Shell Island is an activity for children over 3 years of age.**

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Get the recipe for sensory sand and more ideas for sensory play on the next page.

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Is your child asking you where plants come from and how they grow? This resource will help you answer those questions by helping them see for themselves how plants start and grow.

Oil and water don't mix. That isn't just a saying - it's a fact. Using products found in your home, show your kids how the molecules in water and oil refuse to mix together.

Children use all of their senses to explore the world. This resource includes activities that will allow them to safely explore the different textures of their world through touch.

The Sunflower Jar

Oil & Water Experiments

Sensory Play

# SUMMER SAFETY



## Tips for Summer Safety

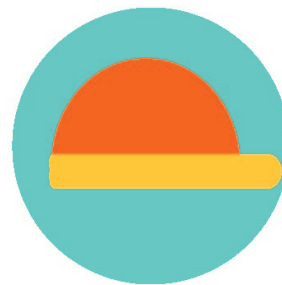
School is out, which means summer is here. Sun safety is important while children are outside in the bright, hot sun.

Here are four tips for keeping children safe under the hot sun:



### Use Sunscreen

Apply sunscreen to children before they head outside to play. Reapply it every two hours to keep them fully protected. Help your child care provider by supplying them a bottle of sunscreen for your little one.



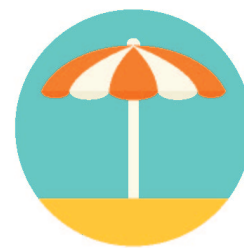
### Wear Hats

Hats are a great tool to provide children's vulnerable faces and necks with protection alongside the sunscreen. Send one with your child when you drop them off at child care for the day.



### Keep Water Available

It's very easy for children to get so busy playing they forget to drink water. Have some ready for them during and after their time outside.



### Provide Shade

A shady spot where children can play provides an additional level of protection against the sun. This spot can be made by a tent or can be found under a tree.

# Summer Safety Tips for the Car

We spend a lot of time during the summer in our vehicles. We're transporting children to summer practices, going on vacation, or taking them to summer care before heading to work. Here are some hot car safety tips to keep children safe this summer:

- Teach your children that cars are no place to play and always keep your doors locked.
- Never leave a child alone in a car. Put something, like a purse, in the back seat to remind you to check before leaving the car for good.
- The temperatures inside cars can increase by 20 degrees in only 10 minutes. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911 immediately.

Find more safety tips [here](#).



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



### 10 Tips for the Picky Eater

Is your child not eating as much as you'd like? Don't worry about it! Toddlers, for example, have a stomach the size of their fist. Therefore, they don't need as much food.

Check out the [Tips for the Picky Eater](#) resource to learn more and to find ways to work with the picky eater in your life.

Find and download more behavior and development resources on the Better Beginnings [website](#).

**10 tips for the "picky eater"**

Many parents worry about their toddler's health because they eat so little. Parents need to understand that a child's stomach is about the size of their fist. Parents need to look at their toddler's diet in terms of intake for the week, not by the meal or the day. In most cases, most parents can relax a bit. Parents who see weight loss or signs of illness should take their child to the doctor right away.

1. **Respect your child's appetite - or lack of one.**  
Never force or bribe your child to eat. Toddlers need to be aware of when they feel hungry and when they are full. Making mealtime unpleasant can create eating disorders later in life.
2. **Size matters.**  
Serve a variety of thumb-sized foods to give your child the chance to have more of the foods he likes. Cut big foods like sandwiches into small pieces.
3. **Stick to a schedule.**  
Eating meals and snacks at about the same times every day helps keep your child from getting hungry. Offer two to three healthy snacks daily.
4. **Be patient with new foods.**  
Serve new foods along with your child's favorite foods. Your child might need to be offered a new food several times before he or she takes the first bite.
5. **Fine dining comes later.**  
Let him feed himself even if he has to use his hands. Utensil skills can wait for fine motor skills to develop.
6. **Let them cook.**  
Ask your child to help you wash the veggies, stir batter or set the table. Toddlers are more likely to eat foods they "cooked" themselves.
7. **Focus on the meal.**  
Turn off the television and other distractions during meals.
  - Make sure your toddler sits at a table comfortably. He may need a booster chair or a child-size table and chair.
8. **Redefine dessert.**  
Healthy meals do not require dessert. Redefine dessert as fruit or yogurt. Treats like cake and cookies should be for special occasions only.
9. **Set a good example.**
  - Don't try to make your child eat a food you will not eat.
  - Don't react negatively when your child eats healthy foods you won't eat.
10. **Keep it together.**  
Encourage your child to stay at the table until the meal is over even if he or she doesn't eat. Mealtime is family time. It is a chance for members of the family to talk and share their day.

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# 7 Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

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Summer can throw off any established sleep schedule. If you're able to go on vacation, you're throwing any schedule you may have out the window.

Better Beginnings offers the [Tips for a Goodnight's Sleep](#) resource for moments like this. The tips included in this resource can help your kids get re-adjusted to a sleep schedule before school starts.

Find and download more behavior and development resources on the Better Beginnings [website](#).

## WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?

**Better Beginnings means better opportunities.** Investing in quality child care for all Arkansas children creates better opportunities for our children, families, workforce and communities.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



Better Beginnings is Arkansas's tiered 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.

