









Children are born learning. From the beginning, they're learning about the world around them and how they fit in it — every moment after brings more opportunities to learn and expand their knowledge. As your child's first teacher, you have the greatest impact on their lives. Better Beginnings is here to help you set your child up for success.

Children learn best through play so check out the <u>math</u> resources we've included below for fun activities to help your child learn the foundational skills to be ready for kindergarten. This month's kindergarten readiness <u>tip</u> is another great source of fun to help your child build their math skills. As you keep reading, you'll also find information about family assistance programs <u>Arkansas Career Pathways Institute</u> and <u>UAMS</u> <u>WOW</u> and an important <u>announcement</u> from the Arkansas Department of Education concerning the School Readiness Assistance program. Don't stop there, though. Check out the seven tips for helping your child (and you) get a good night's <u>sleep</u> and three tips to make your yard a <u>safe</u> place to play.

Children are naturally curious and want to know about everything. You can help them reach for the stars and gain the knowledge and skills needed for kindergarten in your own home.

Until next time,

Kuli Hilburn

Kelli Hilburn

BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD









Teaching your child math skills can be done anywhere, including the kitchen! Baking is a great opportunity for your child to count and measure. Watch this video to learn more.





LEARNING RESOURCES







Sorting Sacks & Similar Stuff

Sorting activities help your child learn colors and shapes while developing fine motor and problemsolving skills. See how you can bring these activities into your home with this resource.

Available in **Español**.

View Resource



Make it Math

Help your child learn numbers and develop their fine motor skills with the play-based activities in this resource. With this knowledge, they'll be better ready for kindergarten. Available in **Español**.

View Resource



Paper Playground

Children learn through play. On days when being outside isn't possible, build an indoor playground! Check out this resource for instructions to turn your home into a haven of fun and learning. Available in **Español**.

View Resource



Due to increased participation and high demand for the School Readiness Assistance (SRA) program, a waitlist has been implemented for eligible families who apply after February 15, 2025. This does NOT affect families currently participating in the program if redetermination documentation is received on time. Learn more about this announcement on the Arkansas Department of Education website.

Learn More



Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative

Eligible parents of children under 21 years old looking to further their job training or education can find support from the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI). Participants receive monetary assistance for tuition and other expenses incurred when pursuing higher education. Eighty-one percent of those who complete the program find employment within six months. Learn more about eligibility requirements and services available on the CPI website.

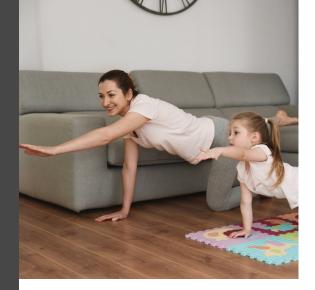
Learn More

Make Math Learning a Hands-on Activity

You can help children learn important math skills using things found in your home! Help them learn what big and small mean using shoes or toys you've already purchased. The simplest activities can lay a strong foundation for future learning. Find more activities on the Get Ready for Kindergarten Calendar on the Better Beginnings website.

Learn More





Taking care of yourself is key to taking care of your family. UAMS' WOW program is here to help. It offers free care management to help you find mental health support or basic needs so you can focus on what matters most. You can request help through the website linked below or by calling 800-482-9921.

Learn More

Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

Clocks are springing forward Sunday, March 9. Your child may not adjust to this change in their sleep schedule well. Check out this resource for seven tips to make bedtime easier on you and your child during this period.

Learn More





Family Café: For the Love of Reading

Thursday, March 6, Zoom

Enjoy lunch with our friends at Curricula Concepts for an online training focused on helping you understand relationships' role in language and literacy development. You'll walk way with strategies for incorporating language through reading and conversation into everyday routines. Register today!

Blue at the Zoo

Thursday, April 3, Little Rock

You're invited to "Blue at the Zoo" event at the Little Rock Zoo on Thursday, April 3 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This FREE event is hosted by the Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services and focuses on strengthening families and preventing child abuse.

You'll get to see the animals and ride the train and carousel while learning about the local services available to you. It's a great opportunity to learn, explore, and create lasting memories together. We can't wait to see you there!

Space is limited. Please, RSVP by Monday, March 24

Register Here



Health and SafetyTips

The weather is warming up, which means children will play outside more. Outdoor play is **important** to your child's healthy development. Here are three things you can do to help ensure your yard is a safe place for your child to play.

Actively supervise your child.

By actively supervising your child – or better yet joining in the play – you can keep your child from touching or tasting things they shouldn't or going into the street. Active supervision can also help reduce the chance of injuries.

Cover pools and hot tubs.

Children are naturally curious but can be unsteady on their feet. You can help prevent accidental drownings by covering a pool or placing a barrier around it. Don't forget to remind your child that it's unsafe to play around pools or hot tubs, covered or not.

· Anchor home playground equipment.

Playground equipment allows your child to exercise muscles by encouraging repeated climbing and free play. Anchor any equipment you get deep in the ground so it doesn't tip over, causing injuries.

Find more tips for making your yard a safe place for adventure and learning from the **American Academy of Pediatrics**.



Better Beginnings means better opportunities. Investing in quality care and education 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 and improvement system for child care, early education, and school-aged programs that have gone above and beyond the state minimum requirements. Better Beginnings is administered by the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Early Childhood.



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