

May 2022



A Note From Better Beginnings Program Administrator Kelli Hilburn



School is almost out, which means summer is on its way. Although Arkansas summers are hot and bright, kids tend to not notice when they're having so much fun. That's why sunburns are a big issue.

So, before the kids go outside 1.) apply sunscreen, 2.) have them wear a hat, and 3.) make sure they drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

This applies at home *and* on vacation. I know your summer care provider would appreciate it if your child arrived at summer care with a hat and a bottle of sunscreen.

Now, when it comes to sunscreen - one size doesn't fit all. Here are some tips for choosing the best sunscreen and how to use it:

- Use sunscreen that includes UVA *and* UVB protection.
- Choose sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher.
- Apply sunscreen early and liberally.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours.

Outdoor play keeps children healthy and is a positive use of extra energy, of which they seem to have an unlimited supply. Protecting them now from the summer sun will keep them healthy and teach them good sun-health habits for adulthood.

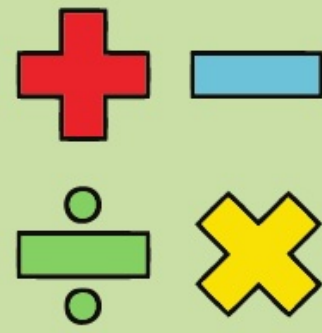
Learn more about sun safety in this [resource](#) from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

Kelli Hilburn

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



MATH RESOURCES



Here are great resources for math fun next month! You can find more low cost resources on a variety of topics in our [Family Resource Library](#).

BUILD IT.

Building with blocks leads to strong math skills. It is also a fun way to bond with your child. Let your child lead the play. Your job is to ask questions and help if you are asked. Let your imaginations work. Are you building a zoo or a spaceship? How high can you build it?

What does this have to do with math? Your child is learning math concepts while she plays. These skills will serve her well when it comes time for geometry and algebra.

Blocks are not just for boys. Girls benefit just as much as boys from building blocks.

BAKE IT.

Is there a more fun way to learn math than baking cookies? Think of all the tools that need names. Think of all the measuring and counting. The sifting and rolling of dough are divided.

Don't think about the mess. The experience is worth it. Count out loud as you scoop and pour together. How many eggs? How many cups of flour? Your child is learning about measurements and weights. He learns about leaving time when you set the oven timer.

Children naturally want to help and cooking sounds so grown-up. And the payoff - cooked!

book it.

Make a weekly calendar with your child. Give her the help she needs, but let her do as much as possible. Ask your child to show pictures that indicate each activity of the week on small pieces of paper. Ask her to tape the pictures on the right day on the calendar.

Not enough pictures? Book some. Plan a tea party or indoor "camp out." She is learning the days of the week. She understands "yesterday," "today" and "tomorrow." She won't forget the date you booked.

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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.
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Sorting Sacks and Similar Stuff

Sorting shapes and colors helps children learn to organize by "same" and "different." Organizing is a skill that is basic to learning math. It also helps children understand how objects in their own world relate to each other.

Sorting can be a fun activity to do together. Use sacks, baskets or boxes with colorful shapes to indicate how to sort.

Your child learns about colors as you take turns putting "the blue toys in the sack with the blue circle." Using the words helps your child learn while you play.

When you share sorting activities, your child learns:

- colors, numbers and shapes
- new words while you sort toys and talk about them
- hand-eye coordination
- fine motor skills
- problem-solving when deciding which container to use

By sharing activities with your child, you show how important he or she is to you. You share a conversation. You are building your relationship.

Ask your child to sort clothes into their containers. How many do you think will fit?

Learn more about the importance of play.
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Simon Says ROLL

How to Make your Big Die Simon Says Game

You will need:

- 1 empty tissue box
- clear tape
- black marker or dark crayon
- rough paper to wrap the box
- paper for numbers and action cards

How to Make Your Big Die

Cover the hole of an empty tissue box and wrap it like a gift with rough paper, such as a grocery sack.

Use a black marker or dark crayon to add the pips (dots) as shown below. Tip: Start with six pips on one of the longer sides of the box.

Number Cards and Action Cards

Use whatever paper is available at home - the backs of junk mail envelopes, grocery bags and paper plates will work.

Write numbers 1 through six on individual pieces of paper as large as your paper will allow.

Have fun with your child as you make the action cards. Use your imaginations to make up funny actions. Children might like to add drawings to these cards.

What is learned from playing the game?

Children practice counting as they play. Players learn to recognize numbers and groups of objects (the dots called pips). All these are important skills for kindergarten.

What is learned from making the game pieces?

Children learn how words such as pips, pips are the dots on dice and pin dominoes. They also learn to make toys from household items.

Extend the experience

For toddlers: Talk about shapes. The tissue box is not square like dice. Talk about shapes that roll.

For preschoolers: Measure the box. Measure other things around the house.

For older children: Work together to make up new action cards or game rules.

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Math is more than just adding and subtracting. Using this resource as a guide, children will learn math skills while building with blocks, baking cookies, or creating a weekly calendar.

Sorting shapes and colors helps children learn to organize by "same" and "different." Organizing is a skill that is basic to learning math.

Children practice counting as they play this game. Players learn to recognize and group objects as well, all of which are important skills children will need for Kindergarten.

3 Paths to Math

Sorting Sacks and Similar
Stuff

Simon Says Roll

CAR SAFETY TIPS



It's getting warmer outside, which means car interiors are getting hot, too. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has some car safety tips for the upcoming summer months including:

- Make sure all children are out of the car before locking it and walking away.
- Always lock your car.
- Make sure children don't have easy access to car keys.
- Teach children that cars aren't safe places to play.
- Keep rear fold-down seats closed to prevent a child from crawling into the trunk from inside the car.

Find the complete list of car safety tips from the AAP [here](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



10 Family Rules for Safety

Summer can be hectic for adults and exciting for children. Better Beginnings has a resource that can help families navigate the times when safety and play clash during the summer holiday.

The **Family Rules for Safety** resource provides families with ways to help children develop good

judgment, which is the best way to keep children safe while giving them some independence.

Find and download this resource on the Better Beginnings [website](#).



Summer Child Care Checklist



The Better Beginnings Summer Child Care Checklist can help in your search for summer care. This resource is a guide you can use to decide what program is best for you and your child.

You'll find questions that you can ask yourself, your child, and any potential providers you visit in your search for quality summer care.

This [resource](#) is available for download on the Better Beginnings website.

Sign up Today for FREE Books from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Children birth to five in all of Arkansas' 75 counties are now eligible to receive a free book each month from the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to age five, no matter their family's income.



Each book is age appropriate and chosen by a group of early childhood literacy experts.

Families can sign up on the Imagination Library's [website](#).



The Fatherhood and Family Initiative is proud to announce their second online segment for **Powerful Conversations with Fathers** on fatherhood coming up June 13, 2022 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. All fathers in Arkansas are invited to listen to NBA Hall of Fame player **Sidney A. Moncrief** speak on the positives and challenges of being a father raising four young men. Those in attendance will have an opportunity to ask Moncrief questions about fatherhood.

For more information or to register, contact Jackie Govan at 501-371-0740 or via email at jackie.govan@arheadstart.org.

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.

