



Literacy



Math



Science



**better beginnings**

EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST



**A NOTE FROM  
KELLI HILBURN**

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR**

Every moment is an opportunity for the young children in your care to learn and explore something new. As a brain builder, you facilitate these moments daily by creating intentional connections and opportunities for play. This work, while often overlooked, is vital to ensuring a thriving future for the children and our communities. We're proud of your


continued commitment and to be your partner as you continue [reaching for the stars](#).

We've included some fun [science](#) resources that you can use as a catalyst for more learning. While you're reading, be sure to check out the [provider tools](#) information and a [survey](#) to provide information about the revisions happening with the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards (CDELS). Then, check out the latest round of star approvals.

Don't forget that we'll be at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Early Childhood Association [conference](#) later this month. Come visit our booth and chat with us about all things Better Beginnings. We can't wait to see you again and learn alongside you how to better connect with children and families.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work to provide the best for the children of Arkansas.

Until next time,



**Kelli Hilburn**  
BETTER BEGINNINGS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR  
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



JOIN US IN OUR GOAL THIS YEAR TO  
**REACH FOR THE STARS**  
CLICK TO LEARN MORE



**VIDEO  
CORNER**

**WATCH NOW** 🎥

Play-based learning activities help children to grasp important concepts, such as how rain works! Watch this video below to see how you can recreate the Rainstorm in a Jar resource in your [classroom](#).



**LEARNING RESOURCES**

PLAY, LEARN, EXPLORE

### Rainstorm in a Jar

Many children can be being for young children. Entertain them with this easy, 3-ingredient experiment. Show them how to make it rain!

**Materials:**  
 Child-safe shaving cream  
 Food coloring  
 Play-doh

**Directions:**  
 1. Cut an jar or plastic container in half and use the top as a lid.  
 2. Fill the jar with shaving cream.  
 3. Add a few drops of food coloring to the shaving cream.  
 4. Roll a small piece of play-doh into a ball and push it into the center of the shaving cream.  
 5. Push the lid on the jar and watch the rain fall!

**Parental Supervision is Essential!**

**STEM:**  
 1. Prepare your child. Add several drops of food coloring to about an ounce of water in a small container. Use one color at a time. There is no need to mix colors. It's more fun to watch them mix when they come out of the food!

**THE SCIENCE OF RAIN**  
 1. Fill your glass jar or bottle to the top with tap water.  
 2. Make a good top rim of shaving cream on top of the water.  
 3. Dip the diluted food coloring onto your cloud and watch the rain fall.  
 4. Push the lid on the jar and watch the rain fall through your cloud. But when it starts, it's magical!

**Handwashing will Save You!**  
 We want to keep you safe before beginning. The colorful shaving cream cloud looks like a delicious treat. This is not a healthy recipe.

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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### Play, Explore, Learn Outdoors

Playing with sticks and stones outdoors is not only fun, it's beneficial for both children and parents. Check out these simple ways to interact with your children with sticks and stones and see how many additional ways you can think up to help your child learn from the great outdoors.

**Stick Activities:**  
 1. **Stick Hunt:** Find sticks of different sizes and shapes in your neighborhood or yard.  
 2. **Stick Sort:** Sort sticks by color, length, or texture.  
 3. **Stick Art:** Use sticks to create art or puppets.  
 4. **Stick Games:** Use sticks for simple games like hopscotch or tag.

**Stone Activities:
 1. **Stone Hunt:** Find smooth, flat stones in your neighborhood or yard.  
 2. **Stone Sort:** Sort stones by color, size, or texture.  
 3. **Stone Art:** Use stones to create art or puppets.  
 4. **Stone Games:** Use stones for simple games like hopscotch or tag.**

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### Sticks and Stones Creativity

There is a world of natural resources outdoors. Playing with these resources - from the smooth, flat stones to the sticks of various sizes - helps children appreciate the beauty of nature. They become creative as they explore the outdoors.

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 1. **Stick Hunt:** Find sticks of different sizes and shapes in your neighborhood or yard.  
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## Rainstorm in a Jar

Make rainy days fun and educational with this resource! With only three ingredients, you can show the children in your room how to make it rain.

[View Resource](#)

## Play, Explore, Learn Outdoors

Exploration is fun and beneficial to everyone as it cultivates a child's natural curiosity and promotes physical activity. Check out this resource for ideas.

[View Resource](#)

## Sticks & Stones Creativity

The world around us is full of natural resources. Creating nature scenes with these resources can help children develop a love of nature. Download this guide to make this happen.

[View Resource](#)



**LEARNING IS FUN!**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



## Provider Tools

Ready to reach for the next star level? Start here with our Provider Tools! You'll find a checklist and all the

forms you need to get started.

[Learn More](#)



### [CDELS Revision Survey](#)

The Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards (CDELS), which provide a set of common expectations for what children typically know, understand, and are able to do at different ages in early childhood, are being revised and the workgroup wants your input! Fill out this 5-10 minute survey today! Your responses will be taken into consideration as the group works to enhance the CDELS to better meet the needs of children and educators.

[Learn More](#)



### **Provider Call**

*Zoom, October 1, Noon*

Zoom with representatives from the Office of Early Childhood and get the latest updates from the world of early care and education in Arkansas.

[Get the Link](#)

## Early Childhood Town Halls

See below for schedule

The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is back on the road this fall! Join us at the locations below from 10 a.m. to noon. You'll hear from OEC representatives about the current state of early childhood in Arkansas and have a chance to voice your wishes for the future. See you there!

### Town Halls

Date	Location	Venue	POC
10/02/24	NE - Jonesboro Area	Hames Meeting Room First National Bank Arena 217 Olympic Drive Jonesboro, AR 72401	Chrissy Sain
10/16/24	DeQueen Area	305 Hornberg Ave, Gillham, AR 71841	Karen Garner
10/23/24	Harrison Area	John Paul Hammerschmidt Conference Center North Arkansas College South Campus 1515 Pioneer Dr. Harrison, AR 72601	Anne Cowie
10/30/24	Pine Bluff	Big Rock Auditorium AR ESC 912 W 6th Ave Pine Bluff, AR 71601	Cathi Swan
11/06/24	Conway	Special Education Annex 1902 Hairston St. Conway, AR 72034	Keisha Jefferson

### AECA Conference

*Little Rock, October 9-12, 2024*

We can't wait to see everyone at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Arkansas Early Childhood Association Conference! It will be a great time as we learn how to better connect with children, their families, and each other. Get registered today!

[Register](#)

## Family Service Credential Provider Training

*Virtual, November 2024*

Over nine days in November, learn skills and strategies to support your client-families and children. After completing the training, participants will receive a nationally-recognized credential. The classes will take place virtually on November 5, 12, 19, and 26. Register today! Spots are limited.

Register



Congratulations to those that increased their start level! Share your achievement with your client-families and community with the items on our [Star Kit](#).



The following program is now a **6-star** Better Beginnings provider:

- Tonya's Tots, Mount Vernon



## FOUR STAR PROVIDERS

The following programs are now **4-star** Better Beginnings providers:

- Little Bitty City Enrichment Center Ashdown, Ashdown
- Little Bitty City Enrichment Center Nashville, Nashville



## THREE STAR PROVIDERS

The following program is now a **3-star** Better Beginnings provider:

- Friendship Pediatric Services, Russellville



## TWO STAR PROVIDERS

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

- Bright Beginnings Early Development Center, Batesville
- Care Rockefeller Elementary, Little Rock
- Crossett Pre-K, Crossett
- Earle School District Childcare, Earle
- Lil Mohawk Daycare, Piggott
- Southeast Arkansas Education Service Co-op - McGehee
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Mountain View



## ONE STAR PROVIDERS

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

- Ju Ju's House, Hazen



## Level Up Resource

Looking to increase your star level? Check out our [Provider Tools](#) to get started!

[Visit our Website](#)

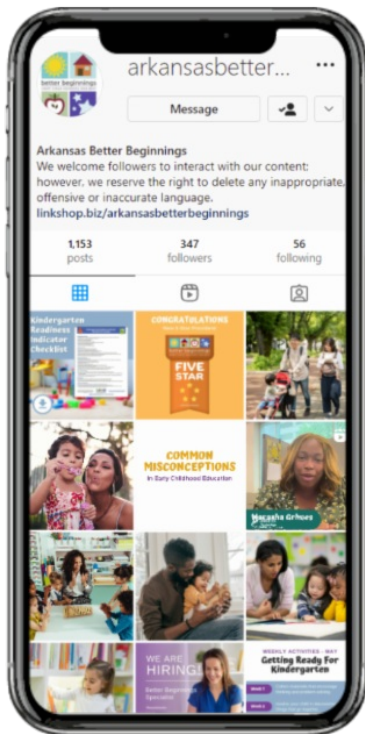


# WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?

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

[Visit our  
Website](#)





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FOR MORE  
RESOURCES**



Better Beginnings is Arkansas' 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.



Better Beginnings | OEC Attn: Better Beginnings PO Box 1437, Slot S150 | Little Rock, AR 72203-1437 US

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