

better
beginnings



for Providers
buzz

Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

DECEMBER 2020



A SPECIAL NOTE FROM DAWN JEFFREY



Providers,

While we don't want to wish *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year* away, we can't help but feel a little excited to be so close to a **new year**.

We're also proud. **2020 has been a year we will never forget.** We have worked hard and we know the new year is going to bring **JOY to the World!**

As we approach the end of the year, the saying "work hard, play harder" comes to mind. **Better Beginnings** has a similar saying, but we

say **"Play hard, learn MORE!"**

It's true, for the kids at least. We've said it before and we will say it again, because we are that passionate about it. **The best way to teach our kids is through play.**

Playing leads our kids to **ask questions and solve problems**. It helps them discover the world around them. **Learning through play** teaches valuable skills they will carry through life.

The best part about learning through play? Young children can play with anything and in any setting.

So, to remind you to **keep the next few weeks fun** at home and with your client families, we present to you, the **12 Days of PLAY-List**. Try doing one of these every other day.

That should keep you and your kids busy through the new year!

Thank you for providing Arkansas kids with the **VERY BEST**, always. **Happy holidays to you all!**

Dawn Jeffrey

Dawn Jeffrey M.S.E.

Division of Early Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Program Manager for Better Beginnings

THE 12 DAYS OF PLAYLIST

1 SCIENCE PLAY

[Rainstorm in a Jar](#)

Save this Rainstorm in a Jar resource for a real rainy day and play as you listen to the sounds of rain ***Up on the Housetop***



2 MATH PLAY

[Math Resources](#)

Practice counting by singing the **12 Days of Christmas!** *Note, do this at your own risk, or you might catch yourself singing about seven lords-a-leaping all the way into 2021.*

3 READING PLAY

[Bring Books to Life](#)

Check out one of our favorite literacy resources, ***Bring Books to Life***. *Frosty the Snowman* is a great story to try it with! Ask your child to bring Frosty to life, just like the children did in the holiday classic.



4 OUTSIDE PLAY

[Outdoor Play Resources](#)

Get outside and talk about the weather! Tell your child about different seasons and teach her why it snows more in the mountains than it does in Arkansas.

5 MEMORY PLAY

[Simon Says ROLL](#)

Understanding and remembering short commands is something your child should practice before entering Kindergarten. This *Simon Says ROLL* resource helps your child practice memory and math skills at the same time! Try it today!



6 MUSIC PLAY

[Let's Make Music](#)

Make your own instruments at home! Just grab some paper towel rolls, a bucket, a kazoo and even some ***Jingle Bells***. We can hear your ***Little Drummer Boy*** already!

7 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PLAY

[Get Outside and Explore](#)

Kids need exercise. They have endless energy, and allowing them an outlet to let some of it loose will improve their health, emotional well-being and even sleep habits! Yes, sleep. It's a favorite word around here too. So what are you waiting for? ***Run, Run Rudolph!*** (***Momma's gotta make it to town!***)



8 WINTER PLAY

[5 Activities for a Wonderful Winter](#)

We know. We aren't exactly ***Walkin' in a Winter-Wonderland***, so we're not suggesting you build a snowman or go sledding. BUT, you can try making bird feeders or just pretending you're in the Winter Olympics!



9 SENSORY PLAY

[Sensory Play](#)

Sensory play can be messy, but it's so educational for your little one. Grab a plastic bin and create your own Winter Wonderland with shaving cream, rice or marshmallows. Then, watch as she discovers a new world through seeing and feeling.

10 ARTS AND CRAFTS

[Playdough Power](#)

Maybe your child loves to create masterpieces. Great! She's learning fine motor skills and using her imagination. Get creative with our Playdough Power resource today.

11 SMALL GROUP PLAY

[Paper Playground for Learning](#)

Playing together helps your child develop mentally, emotionally and socially. It encourages him to hold meaningful conversations. Remind him that ***Santa Clause is Coming to Town*** when you talk about why sharing is important. Our newest resource, *Paper Playground for Learning*, teaches how to take turns during a fun family game night.



12 SELF-LED PLAY

[Play is a Child's Work](#)

It's okay to allow your child some alone time to play. Self-led play helps him develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Check out our *Play is a Child's Work* resource to learn more.



LEARN MORE ABOUT LEARNING THROUGH PLAY HERE

THANK YOU PROVIDERS!

We had several providers help us make our anniversary celebration extra magical by submitting countdown videos.

Check out this special message from Early Horizons Child Development Center.



STAY TUNED! Over the next year, we will be featuring all of our provider countdown videos in our Provider Buzz Newsletters.

[SEE MORE PROVIDER COUNTDOWN VIDEOS HERE.](#)

BETTER BEGINNINGS STAR APPROVALS

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

- **PINE BLUFF** - ABC Learning Academy
- **PINE BLUFF** - ABC Learning Academy 2
- **LITTLE ROCK** - Archild Preschool, Inc.
- **LITTLE ROCK** - Kidd Kave Learning Center
- **BENTONVILLE** - Wild About Learning Academy
- **OSCEOLA** - Broadway Community Learning Center
- **BLYTHEVILLE** - Hooray It's Time to Play Learning Center
- **JONESBORO** - The Kidsney Zone Early Learning Academy
- **PARAGOULD** - Tiny Toes Daycare
- **MARION** - Countryview Preschool
- **BEEBE** - Apple Blossom Child Development Center
- **BENTONVILLE** - Trucks and Tiaras Learning Center
- **SEARCY** - Cradle to Crayons
- **SEARCY** - Sheila Baumann Home Day Care
- **BLYTHEVILLE** - Ida's Daycare
- **HIGHLAND** - All About Kids Family Child Care

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

- **AUSTIN** - Early Impressions Childcare Center, LLC

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

LEVEL UP IN 2021!

2021 is a fresh start and boy are we ready!

What are your goals for the year? Make 2021 about **GROWTH** by becoming a Better Beginnings provider or by **upgrading your center's star level**.

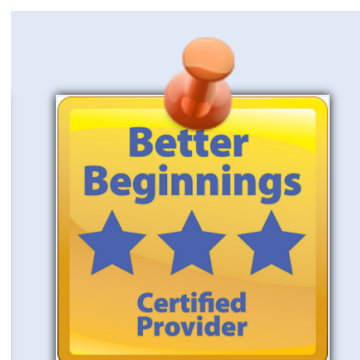
We even have these special **starkits** to help you teach your client families about your quality level rating and what it means to be a [Better Beginnings](#) provider.



LEVEL 1 TOOLKIT



LEVEL 2 TOOLKIT



LEVEL 3 TOOLKIT

FIND MORE PROVIDER TOOLS HERE

PANDEMIC PROCEDURES



Remember, **you can always find the most recently updated pandemic procedures on our website.**

Just click [Provider Tools](#) under the [Providers and Teachers tab](#). From there, click on the [Rules and Regulations](#) button.

FIND THE PANDEMIC PROCEDURES AND MORE HERE

WHAT IS BETTER BEGINNINGS?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT

OR, check us out on **social media.**



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