









Children are born learning. As your child's first teacher, you have a unique opportunity to help your child gain the foundational skills and knowledge for future educational success. And you don't have to go out of your way to do it. One simple way to help your child learn key math concepts is at the grocery store! Ask your child to help you count the number of items you put in your cart, point out the color of foods, and say the prices you see.

You'll find more fun ways to make <u>math</u> fun with the resources included in this month's *Buzz*. As you keep reading, you'll also find:

- Tips for choosing the right child care provider for your family with this checklist.
- This month's kindergarten readiness tip.
- The latest news from the Office of Early Childhood.
- Ways to teach your kids how to wash their hands properly to stay healthy.

It doesn't have to take a lot of time to help your child to <u>reach for the stars</u> and be ready for kindergarten. Every day moments can turn into learning opportunities. You just have to keep an eye out for them.

Until next time,

Keei Hisburn

Kelli HilburnEARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM SUPERVISOR OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD







Music can be a great way for kids to learn their math basics. While playing, they can count the beat. By building instruments, they can create music on their own. Check out this video on how to create these easy-to-make instruments.





LEARNING RESOURCES







Play the Way to Math Skills

Children learn best through play. In this resource, these games and activities encourage using imagination and creativity to build math skills.

View Resource



Simon Says Roll

You've played Simon Says before. We created a new version with a math twist. Check out this resource that combines the traditional game of Simon Says with numbers to help children learn to count.

View Resource



Paper Playground

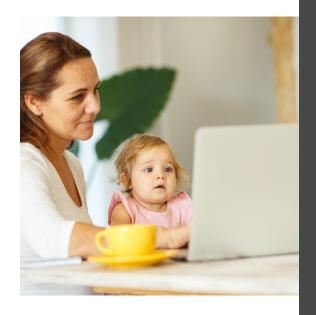
Who says playgrounds can only be outside? With this resource, you can help children create an indoor playground with things around your home to play golf and croquet. Building and measuring can help children understand the math concepts they need for kindergarten and beyond.

View Resource



Child Care Checklist

Choosing child care can be a difficult task. There are several factors you have to consider to make sure the provider you choose aligns with your family's needs. Our Choosing Child Care Checklist can help. It's mobile-friendly, so you can use it while touring a facility to document what you learn. Check it out on the Better Beginnings website today.



Learn More



September Kindergarten Readiness Tip

This month, encourage your child to create, explore, and pretend as they get ready for kindergarten. The Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar offers weekly activities that spark their creativity and inspire them to use their imagination. There is also a list of recommended books to read with your child. Learn more on our webiste today.

Learn More

Tonya Williams Announces Retirement

Tonya Williams, Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood, is retiring after more than 30 years of dedicated service to Arkansas children, families, and educators. Under her leadership, she guided the state through the implementation of the early childhood requirements in the LEARNS Act and:

- The transition of hundreds of staff from DHS to ADE.
- The statewide rollout of the CLASS observation tool in early childhood classrooms.
- The launch of the Local Leads program.



A Note from Tonya:

"It has been an incredible honor to serve alongside OEC staff and early childhood programs. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities I've had to contribute to meaningful work alongside such dedicated colleagues. The mission we share - to improve lives through education and service - has been a source of pride and purpose throughout my career."

 The modernization of licensing regulations.

The early childhood field and the State of Arkansas are grateful for Tonya's leadership and her lifelong commitment to building a strong, more equitable early childhood system.

In light of OEC transitions, the upcoming fall town halls are canceled. ADE will host a virtual update later this month to cover all early childhood priorities for the 2025-2026 school year. The date and webinar link will be announced soon.

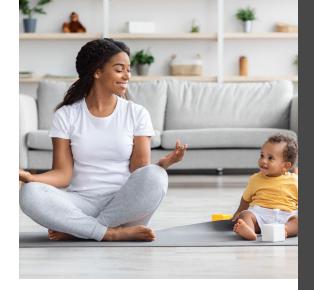


<u>Training to Integrate Mindfulness into Daily Activities</u>

Learn how to help young children slow down and

focus on balance. This training will show you what mindfulness is, why it's helpful, and how you can make changes into your routine to make everyday challenges more manageable. The training is Thursday, September 25 at noon. Click the link to register.

Learn More





Health and Safety Tips

Teaching kids to properly wash their hands is crucial to help prevent the spread of germs and keep children healthy. Make hand washing a family activity and encourage good hygiene from everyone, so you can limit missing school, work, or other activities because of sickness.

Here are the 5 steps to effective hand-washing:

- 1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- 2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with soap. Make sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- 3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. If you need a timer, you can hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

- 4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- 5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or an air dryer.

When you and your kids are healthy and happy, you can bond more and have fun! Learn more proper hand-washing techniques from the <u>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</u>.



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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