



**A NOTE FROM  
KELLI HILBURN**

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR**

We're thrilled to reflect on this year's 62nd annual [Arkansas Early Childhood Association](#) conference. It was a pleasure to connect with you and learn together about the importance of building connections with families and children. Attending the conference helped you discover new ways to help the children in your care build a strong foundation for future learning. Whether through discussions, workshops, or networking

opportunities, what you take away can make an impact.

Thank you for your passion, dedication, and continued commitment to excellence. We hope the insights and connections gained at the conference will empower you to continue pursuing high-quality early care and education to benefit the children, families, and communities you serve. Better Beginnings is proud to be your partner on that journey. Check out some of our favorite moments from this year's conference below and see the resources we shared with those in attendance.

Until next time,

*Kelli Hilburn*

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



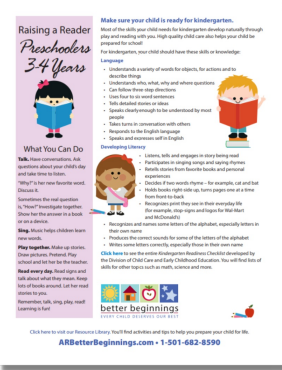
JOIN US IN OUR GOAL THIS YEAR TO  
**REACH FOR THE STARS**  
CLICK TO LEARN MORE



A large yellow banner with a rounded top-left corner. On the left, there is a circular inset image of a young child with curly hair, wearing a striped shirt and overalls, sitting at a table and reading a book. To the right of the image, the words "LEARNING RESOURCES" are written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below the main text, there are two smaller circular inset images: the first shows two children playing with colorful toys on a table, and the second shows a child playing with blocks.

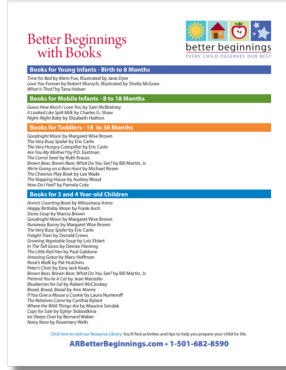
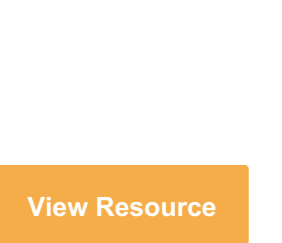
PLAY,  
LEARN,  
EXPLORE





## Raising a Reader - Preschoolers

This resource is full of fun activities you can do to help children fall in love with books and reading. Check it out today!



## Better Beginnings With Books

Looking for a list of book recommendations to share with your client-families? Check out this resource!



## Sunflower in a Jar

Are the children in your care asking questions about how things grow? This resource can help you show them, not just tell them.



**1. Engaging Workshops:** Participants explored key topics such as child development, family engagement, and social-emotional learning, gaining valuable insights to enhance their programs.

**2. Meaningful Discussions:** Attendees engaged in thoughtful discussions on the importance of early childhood interactions.

**3. Networking Opportunities:** The conference provided a platform for professionals to connect, exchange ideas, and collaborate, fostering a stronger early childhood education community.

**4. Inspiring Keynotes:** Expert speakers DJ Pryor and Hilary Trudell shared their knowledge and passion, motivating participants to continue their commitment to excellence in early childhood care.



We're reflecting on the powerful connections made at this year's conference. We're excited to see how you implement what you learned.



This year's conference theme reminds us of the strength found in our community. Let's continue building the vital connections that shape the future of Arkansas's children, families, and communities.



A heartfelt THANK YOU to all who visited our booth! It was great chatting with you. Together we can make a difference!

# 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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RESOURCES**



Better Beginnings is Arkansas's tiered quality rating and 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 Education of Office of Early Childhood.



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