

# Get going with Better Beginnings

## What is Better Beginnings?

Better Beginnings is Arkansas' quality rating and improvement system for all licensed child care programs in our state. High-quality child care and early childhood education build the foundation for how well our children learn, their self-esteem and how they interact with their world. As parents, child care providers, educators and citizens, we have a responsibility to make sure all of our children have the very best experiences they can. Better Beginnings, Arkansas' quality rating improvement system, does just that!



### Better Beginnings:

- emphasizes the value of quality child care
- empowers parents by providing an online tool that identifies and locates quality child care providers in their communities
- gives child care providers valuable tools for improving the quality of their programs
- establishes standards of excellence
- provides a path for providers to meet or exceed these standards

As a result, the quality of child care in our state will continually improve. And, our children will get the start they need to be happy, healthy and productive citizens.



**better beginnings**

EVERY CHILD DESERVES OUR BEST

[ARBetterBeginnings.com](http://ARBetterBeginnings.com)

1-800-445-3316



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[arkansas.gov/childcare](http://arkansas.gov/childcare)



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**Every Child Deserves  
Our Best**



**Provider Information**

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## Quality ratings by design

When child care providers successfully complete the Better Beginnings certification process, their child care facility will receive a one, two or three-star rating. This Better Beginnings rating will be



posted on the Better Beginnings Web site for parents and others to use when making important child care decisions. Those licensed

providers who choose not to be formally evaluated will be listed on the Web site but will not receive a Better Beginnings star rating.

## Who can participate?

### Parents

Parents benefit from Better Beginnings resources such as our online Checklist for Parents. This checklist helps determine what to look for in a child care provider. Parents can then check our indexed map of all licensed child care providers

and select a Better Beginnings certified, licensed provider that most closely meets their family's needs. Simply visit **ARBetterBeginnings.com**.

### Providers

Every child care provider who is in good standing with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and holds a regular child care license, new provisional license or registration issued by the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Education is eligible to apply for Better Beginnings certification. Go to **ARBetterBeginnings.com** for complete details on how you can begin the certification process.

## How does the Better Beginnings certification process work?

Better Beginnings is a voluntary multi-step certification process that begins with completion of the Better Beginnings Application Checklist available at **ARBetterBeginnings.com**. Providers can use this online, self-assessment checklist to identify requirements they are already meeting and those additional requirements they need to meet to receive certification. On the Web site, providers



can also access tools to help address areas they need to improve. For complete details on required documentation, application submission and requesting a formal evaluation, go to **ARBetterBeginnings.com**. The Web site also includes a Frequently Asked Questions section to help providers with the Better Beginnings rating system.

Better Beginnings is a "building block" approach. This means that all requirements at Level One must be met before moving on to Levels Two and Three. At Level One the director or primary caregiver starts the process for quality improvement through self-assessments. In Levels Two and Three, Better Beginnings staff conduct an Environmental Rating Evaluation, a Program Administration Scale and assist the staff in the process of meeting higher requirements in all component areas. The Better Beginnings certification is good for three years.