



Arkansas Children's Week 2020 Planning Toolkit

Everyday Explorers
April 13 – 17, 2020

Toolkit Contents:

- Planning an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event
- Contacting Local Media
- Social Media
- Supporting Families in Encouraging their Explorer Everyday
- T-Shirt design and T-Shirt day
- "Tell Us!" Link

Welcome to the Arkansas Children's Week Planning Toolkit! This toolkit was developed to help children's programs across the state celebrate Arkansas Children's Week.

Use the materials in this booklet to guide your planning and to inform your families, the media, and community about your events and the value of supporting children as they explore everyday. You will find explanations and samples that you can either copy or customize to fit your needs.

Let us know about the special events you conduct during Arkansas Children's Week and any additional events you plan that was inspired by Arkansas Children's Week! A link to an electronic form is available at the end of this toolkit. Use it to share with us the amazing events you hosted for your program, your families, and community!

Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event

- Each county/community in our state is unique. The celebration of Arkansas Children's Week will differ from community to community. In some areas there will be big events hosted by a collaboration of organizations. In some parts of our state, the celebration will be in an individual child care program, family child care home, or school. No matter the size of the celebration, **we are celebrating our children!**
- Be sure to congratulate and to celebrate those who work with children in your area – give them a bonus, send flowers, order lunch, have a surprise party including your families, do something special and fun for your program staff!
- Reach out to colleagues and others in your community and encourage them to become part of Arkansas Children's Week!

Everyday Explorers



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Who?

How to pull together collaborative groups within your region or community

- Identify several key people in your region or community with contacts/influence; people that you know will support the project; and people who are in-the-know about what's going on in your community.
- Include representation from a variety of early education programs: private, Head Start, ABC, faith-based, school-age, family child care, public school, etc.
- Schedule an initial planning meeting with only a few key people (6 to 10 at the most)
 - Develop an outline for the event
 - Brainstorm ideas for partners – individuals, agencies, organizations, groups
 - Brainstorm locations for the event
 - Identify possible dates
 - Develop a timeline of what needs to be done and by when
 - Develop a projected budget for the event
 - Decide on person(s) to coordinate the event



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Who?

How to pull together collaborative groups within your region or community

- Schedule an expanded meeting, inviting representatives from the identified partners. Be specific as to the purpose of the meeting. Ask for commitments from those who plan to attend and send them a reminder email.
- Have an agenda for the meeting, including the event outline, possible locations, dates, timeline, major tasks/sub-committees.
- Solicit additional ideas from those in attendance.
- Identify sources of support, financial and other, for the event.
- Identify persons who are willing to be responsible for each major task/sub-committee.
- Additional meetings will be necessary. However schedule only if there are specific things to discuss/decide. You may decide to have the leadership team meet and communicate with partners via email.



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Where? When?

Selecting a site and date

- Find out what is going on in your community that might conflict with the event.
- Explore planned events with which you might piggyback: kindergarten roundup, hospital health screenings, or a community festival, for example.
- Look at the spaces available in your community and consider the benefits or drawbacks of each. Consider the size of the space thinking of how many people it will accommodate. Consider the location – do people know how to get there? Think of the parking availability. Investigate the set-up and clean-up hours and what materials the site would provide.
- Be sure to ask about restrictions for the space you are considering, as in what can be displayed or sold/not sold, food allowed/not allowed, handicap accessibility, liability insurance.
- Some possible sites include: local parks, church hall/gym, school gym, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, shopping mall, community center, recreation or event center.



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event – Considerations

Insurance and Safety Precautions

- Find out from the event site who is the liable party. Is event insurance required and if so, who is the recommended carrier?
- Is there security at the site? Is your organization responsible for providing security and if so, what is required?
- Individuals from your group should be alert during the event and report concerns.
- On all information provided to families, clearly state: **KEEP YOUR CHILD WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES**. Stress to workers that they are not to allow families to leave their children with them while they shop, etc., and that they are to encourage family participation in the activities.

Possible Community Support and Services Stations at Event

- Educational programs from local museums, galleries, or parks
- Volunteers from a local band, orchestra, or musical group
- Health Department or educational outreach from local hospital
- Police/Sheriff/Fire Department/Ambulance
- Screenings – Developmental, Vision, Hearing
- Public Library
- Area State Park



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Door Prizes and/or Goodie Bags

Everyone loves free stuff and door prizes and goodie bags can be a great way to get people to attend! However if you choose to distribute goodie bags and/or have door prizes, here are some things to consider:

- Make sure door prizes are appropriate for children and families.
- Avoid having door prizes become the focal point of the event. Focus on having children and families playing and learning together.
- Establish in advance how door prizes are to be awarded and share the door prize rules.

Ideas for Door Prizes during the event:

- Gift certificates/passes for a nearby community pool or aquatic center
- Gift certificates from local merchants
- Age appropriate games
- Bubble solution with interesting bubble-blowers
- Gift cards for downloadable music
- Playdough ingredients with instructions

Ideas for Goodie Bags distributed at the event:

- Information about local happenings for families and children
- Brochures from your local public library
- Brochures from your local nature or garden center
- Health and safety information for families
- Information from your area state park
- Little "explorer kits" with small unbreakable magnifying glasses, notebooks, and pencils

Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event – Community Partners

Collaborating with Local Partners

When collaborating with local partners, a partnership agreement can be helpful to clarify expectations and to avoid miscommunication.

The partnership agreement should include the name, date, and site of the event, as well as the sponsoring group and the name of the partner.

The agreement should list out what the partner will contribute to the event, such as money, volunteer service, product donation, sponsor a station, etc.

The agreement should also list out the responsibility of the sponsoring group to the partner, such as listing partner's name in the publicity and acknowledging partnership during the event. Be sure to include a timeline if applicable.

The agreement should state the address, phone number, and email address for both partners.

Give a copy to each partner so everyone is on the same page as to what is expected.



Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event – Suggested Timeline

Suggested Timeline

It is suggested that you begin making contacts and planning your events for Arkansas Children's Week well in advance.

Brainstorm everything that you would like to happen during the week and set a schedule of events. Include a back-up plan for events – have a substitute in mind in case a special guest cannot make the date or has to cancel. And don't forget back-up locations for events in case of inclement weather.

To insure a successful event, give adequate notice to special guests, businesses, media, and families of your plans. Check the suggested sample timeline and adjust it to your own events.

2020 JANUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

2020 FEBRUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

2020 MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

2020 APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Suggested Timeline

January

- Enlist a planning team
- Set a time for the first meeting of the planning team

February

- Meet with the planning team to brainstorm ideas for Arkansas Children's Week
- Determine responsibilities of team members
- Determine budget or funding source
- Keep a record of assignments that team members volunteer to do
- Confirm location for event
- Contact individuals or groups whom you are inviting to speak or do special presentations
- Register to attend one of the Arkansas Children's Week workshops offered in various locations around the state
- Keep others at your program informed
- Check community calendar to avoid schedule conflicts

March

- Attend an Arkansas Children's Week workshop
- Send out initial communication with families
- Contact local officials regarding proclamations
- Contact local businesses and organizations regarding their involvement
- Meet with planning team for updates on team member responsibilities and additional tasks
- Contact the media regarding publicity
- Send letter to the editor regarding awareness issues
- Send reminders to staff and parents
- Meet with planning team to refine final details for events or projects
- Continue publicity, especially with signs and banners, and social media advertisements

April

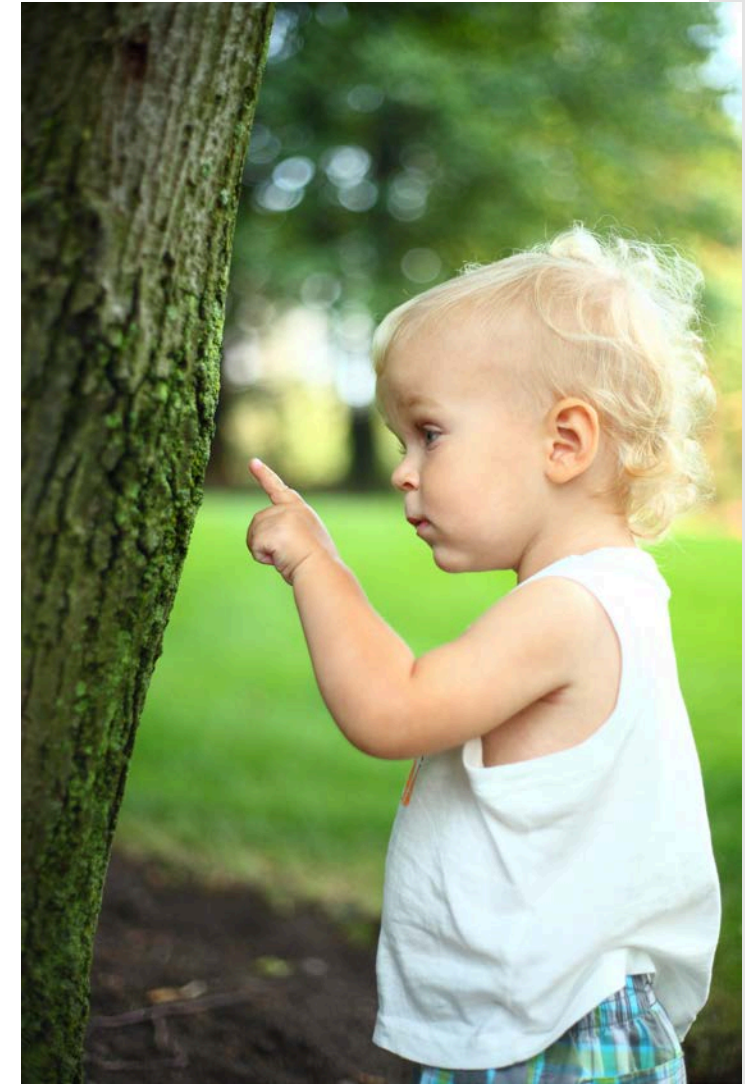
- Enjoy your event(s)! Remember we are celebrating children!
- Honor your teachers and parents as well!

Planning and Conducting an Arkansas Children's Week Family Event –

Suggested Timeline

The Week After Your Arkansas Children's Week Celebration:

- Have a get-together of the planning team to celebrate and to evaluate
- Send certificates to individuals and businesses who participated
- Pay bills
- Keep a file on 2020's activities for future reference
- Tell us how your event went! Type this link into your browser to access the form.



Contact Local Media

When you have a special event in your program or community, we suggest you contact the local media to advertise your event.

Send press releases to all local newspapers and invitations to radio stations and local television stations.

Check with local radio and television programs that will announce community events.

Be sure to contact them several weeks in advance.

If they ask for a guest to appear on-air, send someone knowledgeable about early childhood as well as the Arkansas Children's Week event to speak on the program.

Include special guest names, especially elected officials and sponsoring organizations or businesses.

Use the letter to the editor to announce community events and draw attention to Arkansas Children's Week.

Sample Media Invitation

(To send to your local news or cable television station to cover your Arkansas Children's Week event)

Arkansas Children's Week

[Name(s) of your Affiliate/Organization(s)] is celebrating Arkansas Children's Week, April 13 – 17, 2020! This is an opportunity to show what organizations in [your city] are doing to help young children here in our community.

[Describe your event, highlighting any visual opportunities the news station can video or the newspaper can photograph. This could include the reading of a proclamation by a local official or it could be something visually interesting at your event.]

[Name(s) and Title of your Affiliate/Organization's Leader(s)] will be on hand to discuss Arkansas Children's Week and the local impact of important early childhood education issues, including public child care subsidies and school readiness [or other issues important to your community].

For more information about covering Arkansas Children's Week events, please contact [Name(s) and Title of your Affiliate/Organization's Leader(s)] at [email address] or [phone number].

Social Media



- Sharing with others on Social Media is a great way to let the community know all of the fantastic things you are doing in your program!
- Some key considerations:
 - Make sure you have a media release signed for every child whose picture you would like to share. And make sure parents or guardians understand you could be using their child's photo for social media.
 - If you want to use a photo from a website, a blog, or the internet, ask for permission first. Just because it's on the internet, doesn't make it free to use.
- Follow and share from our social media accounts!
 - Our Facebook page can be found by searching for "Arkansas State University Childhood Services".
 - Our Instagram account can be found by searching for "astate.childhood.services".
 - We will be posting all week long – so look for our posts!

Making the Most of Moments of Wonder

(from the 2020 Arkansas Children's Week book, Everyday Explorers)

An infant bangs two metal bowls together with obvious delight.

A toddler flips a tricycle upside down to spin, spin, spin the wheels.

A preschooler lingers at the sink, wriggling his fingers through the flowing water.

A kindergartener gloops puddles of glue onto her marker drawing, noticing how the colors lift and swirl.

A first grader drops to the ground to examine earthworms that have come to the surface after last night's heavy rain.

In everyday moments like these, we catch a glimpse of the explorer's heart within each child. The world around them seems to fall away as curiosity intensifies. They've found some new surprise or sensation, or a new idea has come to light.

It can be easy for busy adults to miss these moments of discovery or even to become impatient with children. Perhaps they linger too long when we need them to keep up, or perhaps we're caught off guard by investigations that are noisy, messy, or unexpected. If we aren't mindful of moments of wonder, we can find ourselves hurrying or scolding children, dissuading their curious spirit.

Our responses to their moments of wonder can be encouraging, rather than discouraging, supportive rather than stifling. We can show children that we honor their roles as explorers of their world in these two, powerful ways:

1. Step Back, Give Space

We trust children's ability to tune in to – and benefit from – their innate curiosity. We respect the flow of the child's exploration and take care not to disrupt them. Rather than asking the child, "Why are you doing that?" we ask ourselves, "Why not?" This simple shift allows us to give children time and space to continue their self-directed investigation as long as they can safely do so.

2. Lean In, Encourage Investigation

If the child welcomes us in, we become partners in learning. We mirror their enthusiasm and listen closely to their ideas. We respond with curiosity of our own, asking, "What do you notice?" and "I wonder why..." We may offer resources to enrich their investigation or help them communicate their discoveries with peers. In responding this way, we assure children that their thoughts and ideas are important.

Ideas to share with your families to encourage everyday explorers!

- Take a walk outside
 - Bring along a notebook, pencil or markers, a container for collecting, and a camera
 - Encourage your child to discover things along the trail. This walk isn't about reaching your destination but rather an unrushed time to freely explore, to notice, and to marvel at your discoveries.
 - Share your observations with your child. Collect items of interest, if you are able. Take photos of things that interest your child to revisit later. Allow your child to sketch or draw their findings.
 - Ways to extend this experience:
 - Visit your local library to find books on your child's discovery.
 - Research online together photos or information about your child's interest.
 - Reach out to a local expert who can share more information with your child on their discovery.
- Other places that might spark your child's interest
 - Your local grocery store
 - A pet store
 - A second-hand store
 - A hardware store or building project in your community
 - A bakery

The 2020
Arkansas
Children's
Week T-Shirt
color is
"Pondering
Purple!"

T-Shirt Day April 16, 2020



Join with others across the state and
wear your ACW shirt with pride!

You may take this t-shirt design to any t-shirt vendor to have your ACW t-shirt made – or you could make it yourself!

Arkansas Children's Week 2020



Division of Child Care and
Early Childhood Education

Everyday Explorers

We want to
hear from you!

Tell us all
about your
Arkansas
Children's
Week event!

- Type the link below into your preferred internet browser. A form will appear where you can type in your answers.
- <https://forms.gle/DfDKpneY4Atowyir8>



Enjoy!

Arkansas Children's Week Events are a time to celebrate your families, to celebrate the children in your care, and to celebrate the amazing work you do each and every day!

So don't forget to have fun!

