



## Back to School

From Executive Director Jeanne Alter

The excitement of these three words relays the anticipation of being around friends, getting to know new teachers, and the joy of learning new ideas. It also means **Back to Routines** and **Back to Schedules**- the two things many adults will miss most about the lazy days of summer.

The good news is that preschoolers, especially our young children with special needs, LOVE routines! Routines are predictable and calming to a young child. A daily schedule with predictable meal times, bath time, and bed time, helps young children make sense of time. Each child is different in their likes and dislikes, but all children benefit when routines and **FIRST/THEN** activities are reinforced. It is reassuring to a child to know when they get to participate in activities they love (like mealtime or bath time), and helps them get through the activities that they don't love (like mealtime or bath time!)

Our teachers and therapists focus on school routines during these first weeks of school. From the moment children arrive at school, they begin to understand what to expect during the morning (toilet, playtime, breakfast, circle time, center time) and what the afternoon feels like (lunch, story time, center time, toilet, circle time and time to go home). We use picture schedules to help children "see" their day in action. Anxiety decreases when children know what to expect.

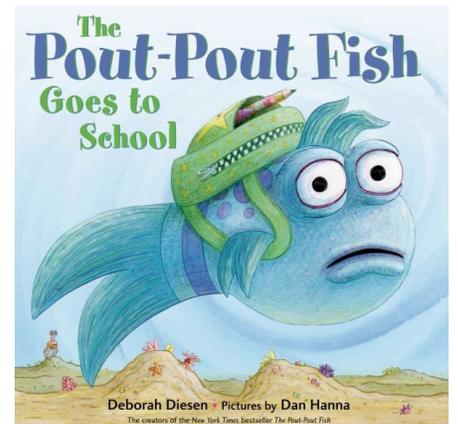
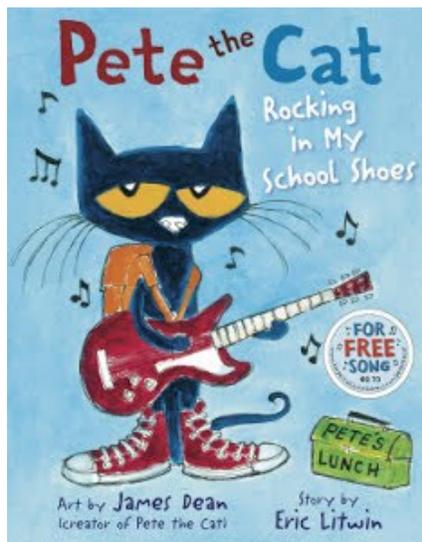
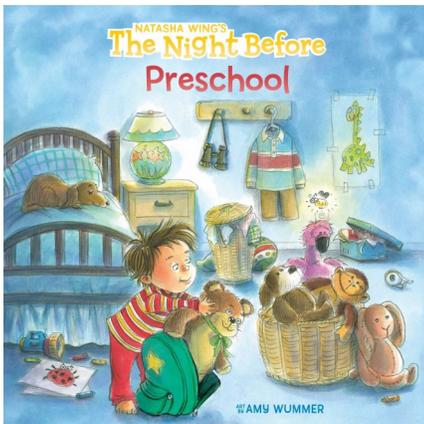
Helping young children understand routines through the concept of "**FIRST** we do this and **THEN** we do that" is a formula for success, and can be used successfully in the classroom and at home. Happy Back to School!



Use **FIRST/THEN** sentences to help your child understand routines. "**FIRST** you take a bath, **THEN** you get to snuggle with Daddy."

## Our Favorite Books for Back to School

Help your child transition back into their school day routines with some of our favorite books about preschool. Working reading into your nightly routine is a great way to spend time with your child while preparing them for the day ahead.



# Celebrate Fall in New York City!

There are family-friendly, fall-themed festivals and activities all over New York City this month. Visit <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/fall-festivals> for a full list of what's going on. Here is a sample below!

## Saturday, October 13

**Maze By Moonlight** at Queens County Farm Museum (in Queens Farm Park), Queens, **4:30PM—9PM**  
Navigate The Amazing Maize Maze by starry night sky (or flashlight)! Open October 13 and October 20.

## Sunday, October 14

**Harvest Festival** at Urban Farm (in Randall's Island Park), Manhattan, **12PM—4PM**  
Featuring pumpkin decorating, face painting, kite flying, live musical performances, and more. **Free!**

**Harvest Fest & Pumpkin Patch** at Queens Botanical Garden, Queens, **11AM—5PM**  
Gardening activities and crafts, inflatables, face painting, a petting zoo, and more!

## Saturday, October 27

**Halloween Festival** at Harlem Grown 131st Street Farm, Manhattan, **11AM—3PM**  
Face painting, spooky arts and crafts, cooking demo, a haunted hoop house, and healthy treats. **Free!**



## Fall Art Project: Handprint Leaves

A fun and simple project for an inside day.



### Ingredients:

- Washable, nontoxic paint
- Paper or paper plate
- Marker or pen (for drawing the leaf veins)

### Directions:

- Show the children how to dip their hands lightly into a shallow tray of paint and then press their hands on the paper.
- Repeat over and over for a beautiful foliage collage of handprint leaves!

## Fall Recipe: Candy Corn Parfait



Give your child all the colorful fun of candy corn with this bright, healthy snack. It's simple enough to make that they can help you with many of the steps.

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup pineapple chunks
- 1/2 cup orange slices, cut into chunks
- 1/4 cup unsweetened yogurt
- 1 Tbsp raw honey
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

### Directions:

- In a clear glass tumbler, layer the pineapple chunks and then the orange chunks.
- Mix the yogurt, vanilla extract and honey thoroughly together.
- Spoon the yogurt mixture on top of the fruit.

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