



On The Mark

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www.stmarksns.com

Director's Message

Dear Parents,

Now that we are in “full swing” you will see the children busily working in the classrooms. I see happy smiling faces!! Keep a positive attitude. Your child will relax if you are relaxed. We will contact you if there is a problem. Bring them in with a smile!

I'd like to thank Nicole and John Conneally, our Participating Couple, and all of the people that helped with our Fall Clean Up... They were terrific! Our playground needed quite a bit of cleaning up. It was quite hot and sticky too. The classrooms all got a good cleaning thanks to Jill Oswald and her Classroom Maintenance Committee. They washed and cleaned all the toys, tables, chairs and manipulatives in every classroom. The committee members that came worked long and hard and did a wonderful job! We, the staff and the children appreciate all your hard work. These jobs are not very glamorous, but are so important to the health and safety of our children. Thank you very much.

The trees have already started to change and the temperatures are dropping. Fall is here! The children will be very busy in the classrooms reading and experiencing firsthand this new season. It's a terrific time of the year – enjoy! Please dress your children appropriately. If it is cool send them in a jacket. Remember we go out unless it is lower than 32 degrees.

October brings Halloween, a very fun and exciting time for children. Please be aware of our policy - **We do not allow costumes or masks in the classrooms.**

Please don't forget to check your child's backpack. We send home important information, flyers and notices. Be sure to check your class bulletin board and read your Newsletter too. We want to keep our communication lines open between home and school. The Newsletter is a great resource -thank you to Francesca Baker.

Alison Henry and Katie Preston, the Presidents of our governing Board, have been working tirelessly for our school. In the short amount of time that they have been in office, they have been able to make several huge steps to better our school. They have put so much time and effort into St. Mark's Nursery School, we all appreciate it very much.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call or stop in. My door is always open.

Sincerely,
 Shirley

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President's Letter

Dear St. Mark's Nursery School Families,

Happy Fall!! It's hard to believe the cooler, crisper and busier days of autumn have already replaced the long and lazy summer days. Our school year is off to a wonderful start, the children's laughter, songs and sweet smiles fill the hallways, classrooms and playground areas. Colorful and creative projects are starting to fill the bulletin boards and classroom walls. It's always such a joy to see the children entering the building with such excitement to start their days. We are grateful for all of the support your families have given our school and our staff especially at this time of the school year.

The first few weeks are filled with many new beginnings. All of our classes are in full swing and the children and teachers are settling into their routines. We are grateful for **our wonderful teachers** and **Shirley Perri** for their hard work in getting the classrooms ready for our families and for working to make our school the special place that it is.

Janet Schwartz keeps us all organized and is always two steps ahead of us, she knows the answer to most of our questions! Thank you to our membership chairs, **Jackie Cahalan**, **Danielle Falanga** and **Christine Bingham**, for working all spring and summer to tour new families and register our students. Thank you to **Pam Cliszis** and the Hospitality crew for a delightful Back to School event...and thank you to **Deirdre O'Neill** and the **class representatives** for keeping track of important paperwork and classroom announcements. Participation days have also begun – we are now using SignUpGenius.com, which allows families to pick participation days that will fit their schedules. It's also easy to switch days in the event you are unable to participate.

Thank you to **Serena Masterson** for assigning and maintaining the committees that provide invaluable support to our school. Thank you **Tricia Ingigneri** for compiling and checking the HUGE snack list that keeps ALL our children safe! Please remember to bring a healthy fruit or vegetable as well as an item from our Approved Snack List. And last but not least, thank you, **Francesca Baker** for putting together this newsletter!

As you can see, it really takes a small village to run our school. Each and every volunteer adds to the inner workings of our school and keeps the wheels running smoothly. Our school is a unique and special place...we are **one of a few licensed and registered preschools in Rockville Centre and this is an important distinction for us!** This means we have small teacher to student ratios, licensed and screened teachers and administrators, a safe and secure facility, strict protocols and routines, ongoing teacher education and monitoring as well as current and up to date curriculums.

It is a lot of time and energy to gain and maintain this important licensing (not all preschools have this certification) yet it is one we feel is so important for our families and our community. **Shirley Perri** and **Alicia Todaro** work tirelessly to keep our credentials up to date.

FALL EVENTS : The Back to School Playdate was a fun day for all who attended. The children and parents had a chance to reconnect with old friends and meet some new classmates as well. It was a beautiful and active day – thanks to **SportSet** for providing some (free) entertainment for our students. The children left

with bubbles and smiles – what better way to start the school year! Thank you to our Fundraising Team for organizing and planning this inaugural event.

Movie Night at the Village Green was unfortunately rained out...stay tuned for a Spring date. **Dina Testa** and **Megan Ross**, Chairs of Fundraising and honorable mention to **Michelle Creegan**, along with their committee, coordinate this fun event and it's sure to be a night to remember. Our **Back to School Social at Radigans** was organized by the **Ladies Night Out** Committee headed by **Maggie McKeever, Colleen Cameron and Jennifer Smith**. It was certainly a fun adult night! We as parents rarely get time to ourselves and it's important that our families get to know each other better!

Adventure Land outing was October 12th; everyone had a great time. Our very own **Halloween Party** on October 28th and a very exciting bowling event at **RVC Lanes** is in the works for November 11th. Our school depends on these Fundraising Events and they are great opportunities for families to spend quality time together with other St. Mark's families as well.

Our **Enrichment** Co-chairs have been busy organizing and planning Field trips to Grossman's Crossroads Farm in Malverne in order to give children the chance to learn and explore outside of the classroom. A special thanks to **Brie Ellwood** and **Cara St. John** for coordinating this wonderful trip for our classes.

A LOOK AHEAD: An exciting addition for many of our students has been the Enrichment program. **Mrs. Mara's Young Explorers, Mrs. Lombardi's Kindergarten Readiness, Mrs. Bonacker's Pre-Literacy and Mrs. Rissland's Music** classes all provide extended day opportunities for our 3s and 4s students. If you missed the chance to sign up or you are interested in other enrichment options such as Spanish and Reading Rainbow, look out for more information on the new sessions starting in January.

Parents Manual: You should expect to receive the Parents Manual in your child's backpack in the near future. This manual has contact information for your child's class as well as references to policies and procedures for our school. Thank you to **Alicia Todaro** for her hard work in coordinating the Parent Manual. It is a huge undertaking to spend the summer selling ads for the manual. The advertisements in the manual are comprised of local businesses. If you happen to frequent any of these businesses, please mention that you saw their ad in the St. Mark's Nursery School Parent Manual.

All families are invited to attend our **Governing Board meetings**. The meetings take place once a month, rotating between mornings and evenings. Our next Governing Board meeting will be on November 14th at 9:15 am. We are confident that coming to these meetings will help you better understand what is going on in the school, and will give you a forum to raise any issues, concerns or ideas. Please feel free to come and introduce yourself!

We will be hosting an **Open House on November 13th**. Our enrollment is healthy, yet we do have a few remaining spots in some classes. If you know of any neighbors who are new to town or prospective families who are looking into nursery schools for this year or 2017-2018, please invite them to check out our website, visit us or call 516-536-6295 to inquire! We currently have openings in our 2s, 3s and select 4s classes. KinderPrep is filled! We are also launching a new 2s Separation class on Mondays and Thursdays beginning January 19th, please note students must be 30 months old to enroll in any Separation class. Our Cooperative is a unique and special experience which provides for lasting memories with your child and a unique lens into the first school experience.

REMINDERS AND REQUESTS

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE: For everyone's safety, all vehicles should exit the parking lot onto Irving Place. Please do not use the driveway behind the building. Our students and families enter and exit the building through the door in the rear driveway, and the temple does not want vehicles using it during school hours. Please let grandparents and caregivers know. Thank you for your cooperation!

If you are an Amazon.com shopper, please consider joining the Amazon Smile program, which will benefit our school!

Please take photos in the classroom during your special days! Photos can be uploaded to the SmugMug link provided by your class representative. SmugMug is password protected, so photos are only available to be viewed by your specific class. We ask that you refrain from sharing anyone else's photos and photos of other children on any social media site.

In closing, thank you for choosing our school. We hope you are enjoying your St. Mark's experience. We think we have the best teachers and families around! We want to know what you think! Use any method of communication to let us know...there is a suggestion box in the office and our Board members are available to discuss any comments, questions or concerns.

Best Wishes,

Alison Henry and Katie Preston

Co-Presidents

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Follow us!



Teachers Reports



2's

Our adorable “two’s” are busy exploring and enjoying their new school and classrooms. It is wonderful to see such enthusiastic smiles from children and parents alike!

Fall colors, Halloween and Thanksgiving holidays are dominant themes for our October and November Stories, projects and songs. Some of our favorite stories are ‘Spots First Day of School’, ‘The Big Red Apple’, ‘Mouse’s First Fall’, ‘Snappy Little Halloween’ and ‘Corduroy’s Thanksgiving’. Songs that always seem to delight are ‘Itsy Bitsy Spider’, ‘Grey Squirrel’, ‘I’m a nut’, ‘Five Little Pumpkins’ and ‘Gobble ,Gobble, Gobble’. Perennial favorites of course are ‘Old Mc Donald’ and ‘The Wheels on the Bus’.

The children are also having such fun exploring and learning from the vast array of educational ‘toys’ the rooms provide. Puzzles, cars and trucks, painting easels, housekeeping, blocks and small manipulatives all help enlighten the mind of a growing child. And, our ever-favorite indoor and outdoor playgrounds help to develop the growing child’s body.

We thank you for sharing your bright, beautiful and inquisitive children with us this year, and we hope all your days at St. Mark’s will be eagerly anticipated and pleasantly surprising and fulfilling!

2’s Pam Morreale, Erin Stevenson, Dina Testa and Kristina Johnson

2’s Separation Terry Mara , Jennifer Bee



3's

Welcome to our three year olds! The children are busy playing with the new toys in the their classrooms and meeting new friends. They are adjusting and settling into their new classrooms.

In September we made projects using the colors yellow and red. In October, the children will mix yellow and red and magically make orange! These colors will not only be used in projects but also in their paintings and playdoh.

During the months of October and November , the children will learn about apples, pumpkins and changing leaves, Thanksgiving and Halloween will be discussed along with books being read for each of these holidays.

The children are enjoying music with Mrs. Rissland. The songs, stories, and musical instruments are great learning experiences for them.

We look forward to a wonderful year with your children!

Sharon Batkin, Terry Mara, Linda Spessot, “ Miss Alison,” Miss Kristina Johnson, and “ Miss Erin” Stevenson.

4's

We have been having a wonderful time getting to know all of the four year olds in our classes. The children are making new friends and renewing old friendships. Our classroom routines are falling into place and the children have adjusted very well. We are looking forward to a year filled with many special activities and experiences.

Autumn brings cooler weather and many delightful projects. Our fours will learn all about apples and pumpkins both inside and out. Owls, black cats and five little pumpkins sitting on a gate will all be part of our busy month. Of course Halloween is always a favorite with many projects, songs and stories.

November is a month when the children will see their world changing. The days become colder and the leaves will begin to change from green to beautiful colors of red, yellow, orange and brown. The children will explore these changes and discover what people and animals do to prepare for winter. November is also a time of Thanksgiving. The children will learn about the first Thanksgiving and how the Native Americans and Pilgrims celebrated it. We will prepare our own Thanksgiving feast of Stone Soup based on the story by the same name.

Thank you parents for your wonderful enthusiasm and interest as we begin this school year!

Mrs. Bonacker, Miss Pam, Mrs Lombardi, Mrs. Petrone, Mrs. Hellige & Mrs. Finnerty



KinderPrep

The KinderPrep students are off to a great start! Our class started the school year with an All About Me unit. The children have enjoyed listening to read alouds by Kevin Henkes, such as Wembley Worried, Owen and Chrysanthemum. They loved trying to count out the letters and syllables in Chrysanthemum's name. Then, they counted and graphed the letters in their own names. The students have been excited to practice their Kindergarten readiness skills during math activities and journal writing. They have also learned through play in classroom learning centers. In October, KinderPrep will be studying Fall Harvest, sorting Apples and Pumpkins and learning about Christopher Columbus.

Mrs Cameron and Mrs Ferro



MUSIC NOTES

Fran Rissland

Welcome to the St. Mark's music program. Each week your child will come to the music room with the whole class and have lots of fun singing songs, moving and playing rhythm instruments. Sometimes we will use the parachute and have music stories that they will participate in. I use music as an opportunity to sing about topics that relate to the children's lives and to support the learning that is happening in the classroom.

All children are born with music ability and you and I together can nurture it. Early childhood is the best time to make sure your child is exposed to a rich musical environment. Singing, moving to beats and rhythms and creating songs about what your child is doing is a great beginning. This will not only help develop your child emotionally and artistically but will also enhance the development of brain growth for future critical thinking and problem solving.

You can follow the progression of songs sung in school by following our school CD "COME ALONG AND SING A SONG." If you don't have it yet copies are sold in the office.

During the fall we will move and sing songs about squirrels, leaves, pretend witches and pumpkins.

GRAY SQUIRREL

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel swish your bushy tail.
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel swish your bushy tail.
Wrinkle up your tiny nose, hold the nut between your toes
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel swish your bushy tail.



Fundraising

- ★ Halloween Party School Play Ground October 28 th
- ★ Family Fun Bowling Day RVC Lanes November 11 th
- ★ Please consider Joining Amazon Smile program, to support St. Mark's
- ★ **Ladies Night Out** is the flagship fundraising event for St. Mark's

The Raffle Prizes are as follows:

1st Prize: 2 tickets -NY Giants vs Chicago Bears Sunday November 20th

2nd Prize: Coach Wristlet Handbag

3rd Prize: Free ticket to Ladies night Out



Raffle tickets will go home in the kids' backpacks this week . Each child will be given 20 tickets to sell. If more are needed, please contact Maggie McKeever, Colleen Cameron or Jennifer Smith.



Health Corner



As flu season approaches we would like to encourage everyone to be extra diligent about hand washing before entering class in the morning. Also, if your child is not feeling well or is showing any symptoms that might indicate impending illness please do not hesitate to keep them home. These simple precautions will help keep everyone healthy and happy.

Tricia Inigneri



Approved Snack list (link on the St. Mark's website)

http://media.wix.com/ugd/0822ae_67efdeffc2934c04b19e3ac09880809e.pdf





October 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---|---|---|----------|--|----------|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 Rosh Hashanah (NO School) | 4 Rosh Hashanah (NO School) Adventure Land | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 Columbus Day (No School) | 11 | 12 Yom Kippur (No School) Adventure Land | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 Board Meeting 730 pm | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 Shemini Atzeret (No School) Crossroad Farm Field Trip | 25 No School Crossroad Farm FieldTrip | 26 | 27 | 28 Halloween Party  | 29 |



November

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|----------------------------|---|-----------------|---|--|----------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 ELECTION DAY (No School) | 9 | 10 | 11 VETERANS DAY Family fun Bowling | 12 |
| 13 OPEN HOUSE  | 14 BOARD MTG @9:15am | 15 Late arrival 9:30 am (Staff Meeting) | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 No School | 24 THANKSGIVING No School  | 25 No School | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

We Asked the Question: What do you wish your teacher knew about you?

Expert Opinions



I wish we could have two playtimes outside or in the big playroom everyday.
- Kitt O'Neill

I wish Mrs. Hellige knew I am really good at soccer but lost my game yesterday
-Charlie Henry

I wish mrs. Finnerty knew I was practicing my soccer. I'm also practicing my letters.
-Ryan Henry

I used to live in Manhattan.
- Olivia Dwyer

I am so smart.
-Roy Creegan

I'm smart.
-Lorenzo Baker

I wish Mrs. Lombardi knew how much I love Halloween.
- Luc

I have a yellow belt and sparkly nails.
-Mollie Creegan

Look in Expert Opinions section for reponses from St. Mark's students, our little "experts".

Parents we need your assistance. Please ask your child the question posted in the preceding newsletter for each upcoming newsletter. Email them to babycesca@gmail.com. For the upcoming Expert Opinions in the December/January 2016/2017 issue. Please submit by Dec 5.

What do you Love the most about School?

A GOOD START IN SCHOOL

Your child's first years can set the tone for future ones. So how can you start her off on the right foot? Here are answers to common questions parents ask.

You can use these tips to establish regular routines, build relationships with teachers, and work on skills to help pave the way for learning.



Q *How can I keep our mornings calm and help my child get to school on time?*

A A successful school morning begins with a good school night. After dinner, ask your child to set the table for breakfast and perhaps pick out his cereal. Also, check the weather forecast together so he can choose tomorrow's outfit. Every morning, have him do tasks in the same order so his routine becomes automatic. Example: Eat breakfast, brush teeth, wash hands and face, get dressed, put on shoes and coat, and take backpack. You might give him a heads-up five minutes before it's time to leave.



Q *How can I teach my youngster to take turns and share?*

A Help her practice these skills at home when you play together. Call her attention to turn taking: "Let's take

turns brushing the pony's hair. You go first, and I'll go second." When you see her sharing without being asked, point out how it makes others feel: "Look how happy you made your sister when you let her play with the ball." Tip: If your child has a special toy that is hard to share, suggest that she play with it in her room.

Q *What can I do to help my son make friends at school?*

A Encourage him to spend time with classmates who share his interests. If he mentions a particular student several times, suggest inviting him over to play. Or you can ask the teacher who she thinks might get along well with your youngster. Then, call the child's parent to set up a playdate. Before the guest arrives, help your little one pick out a snack and plan two or three activities. For example, if they both enjoy music time at school, they might dance to CDs and play toy instruments in a pretend marching band. Encourage him to continue the friendship at school by playing with his classmate at recess and sitting beside him during lunch.



Q *My child talks a lot in class. How can I help her become a better listener?*

A Explain that listening quietly at school shows respect for the teacher and the other students. Your youngster can work on listening at home during family meals. Make a rule that only one person may talk at a time. If your child interrupts, gently remind her to wait until the speaker is finished. When it's her turn to talk, give her your full attention. Point out ways she can know you were listening. For example, perhaps

continued

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you commented on what she said or looked at her when she spoke. You might even have her record a family conversation and play it back to see how well everyone listened to each other.

Q How can I keep my youngster excited about school?

A You can keep your child motivated to learn by sharing your own enthusiasm. Show interest in projects he brings home ("You drew some really interesting patterns!"). Also, follow up on subjects he is studying. If his class is doing a unit on communities, you might go for a walk and point out buildings in your neighborhood. If he likes science, you might take a family field trip to a science museum.

Q I work full-time, but I would still like to volunteer at my youngster's school. How can I help?



A Volunteering is a great way to show your child that his education is important to you. Start by asking the teacher what you can do at home in the evenings or on weekends. Mention your skills and interests so she'll know what kinds of tasks you're comfortable with. For instance, if you use desktop publishing in your job, you might create a class newsletter.

If you're typically out running errands on the weekends, you might shop for supplies. Or maybe you can help with an early-morning event like a teacher appreciation coffee or an evening program such as a class play.

Q My daughter doesn't tell me much about what goes on at school. How can I find out more?

A Asking about school shows your youngster that you care. Try to figure out the best time to talk, perhaps before dinner or at bedtime rather than right after a busy day at school



when she would rather play.

Then, sit down together and go through her school bag. You can start a conversation by asking about work she brought home ("What color crayons did you use to make this picture?"). Also keep in mind that you're more likely to get specific answers when you ask specific questions. For example, try "What game did you play today?" or "Which story did your teacher read to the class?"

Q It's not always easy to get my youngster to follow directions. What can I do?

A Following directions is important at home and at school. Be sure to get your child's attention before you give an instruction. For instance, you might say her name or gently touch her shoulder. Wait until she looks at you, and then give simple, clear instructions ("Please pick up your toys and put them in the toy box"). You can encourage her to follow through by reminding her of what will happen next ("Once the dolls are put away, you can get out the play dough"). Also, work on two-step directions. She can remember these by repeating them aloud: "Okay. So I need to put my plate in the sink and then wipe off the table."



Q How can I stay in touch with my child's teacher and the school staff?

A Some teachers prefer to talk with parents on the phone while others like e-mail. You can ask your youngster's teacher for the best way to reach her. Post contact information for staff members near the phone, or enter their numbers into your cell phone. **Tip:** Keep in mind that contacting the school when things are going well will make it easier to communicate if a problem crops up. For instance, you might send a note to let the teacher know how much your youngster enjoyed a nature walk.

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Ready for School

Going to school is a big adjustment for the whole family, whether it will be your child's first time or he's returning for another year. Your daily schedule will change, and everyone will have new responsibilities. Preparing early—and involving your youngster—can make these changes go more smoothly. As you begin the countdown to a new year, try these ideas for building academic skills, creating routines, getting organized, and staying safe and healthy.



A is for Alphabet

Give your child fun opportunities to learn her ABCs and other skills. She can use a chalkboard or dry-erase board to write letters and numbers and draw basic shapes. Let her practice counting with coins or buttons, and teach her colors with crayons or beads.

B is for Behavior

Your youngster can learn good classroom behavior by playing school with you. When it's his turn to be the student, have him sit still and raise his hand before talking. And set a good example by following the rules when he's the teacher.

C is for Calendar

Look over the school calendar, which is usually mailed out or given to parents during registration. On your own calendar, pencil in holidays and special events so your child knows what to expect. Include teacher work days, back-to-school night, and picture day.

D is for Dress Rehearsal

Stage a morning "dress rehearsal." A few days before school begins, set the alarm, get dressed, and eat a healthy breakfast. Drive to school or, if your youngster will be riding the bus, time the walk to his stop. Tip: Some schools mail out bus schedules. If you don't receive one, check your local paper, or call the school.

E is for Early

Buy school supplies early—you'll have a larger selection and avoid last-minute crowds. Most teachers send a list of required items. Get your child excited about school by letting her choose which color folder and what kind of pencils to buy.

F is for Friendship

Help your youngster practice social skills with summer playdates. Start by inviting one child, and gradually increase the number. Be sure you stay nearby so you can step in to help them share toys and speak nicely to one another.

G is for Getting Dressed

Each week, help your youngster put together five outfits and hang them together in the closet. He can pick one each night, and this way he won't have too many choices. Don't forget to lay out socks and underwear the night before.

H is for Hand Washing

Keep your child healthy by reminding her to wash her hands after using the bathroom and before eating. If you've been helping her in the past, make sure she can do it on her own now.

I is for Independence

Besides washing his hands, your youngster will be expected to do other routines independently in school. For example, he will probably need to take care of himself in the bathroom and go to sleep on his own during naptime. Have him practice at home for several weeks before school starts.

J is for Joy

Put a little joy in your back-to-school preparations. Share happy memories of your own school days with your child. You might tell her about your favorite teacher, subjects you enjoyed, and friends you made.

K is for Keeping Safe

Go over safety rules like looking both ways before crossing the street, staying seated on the bus, and not talking to strangers. When you have a few extra minutes, such as while waiting in line at the store, help your youngster practice reciting his full name, address, and phone number.

L is for Lunch Box

Help your child choose a lunch box. When packing it, remember that cold foods should be kept cold and hot foods hot. You might use an insulated lunch box with an ice pack, or choose non-perishable lunches such as peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.



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continued

M is for Memento

Give your youngster a gift to celebrate the new year. Select something small that she can take to school, such as a package of fun erasers. Wrap it and have her open it before bed so she'll be excited about getting up for school in the morning.

N is for Note

Include a surprise note with your child's lunch. If he can't read, draw a picture (such as a heart) and sign your name. You might also include a photo of your family.

O is for Organization

As the school year gets under way, being organized will make life easier. Remind your youngster to always keep her backpack in the same place, perhaps on a peg by the door or in the hall closet. You might store pencils and other homework items in a basket on the kitchen counter.

P is for Prescription

Find out the school's policy on medication. If your child needs medicine during the day, you may be asked to leave it with the school.

Q is for Questions

Encourage your youngster to ask you questions about school. You'll find out what worries him ("What if I don't know how to do my work?"), and you'll be able to reassure him ("You can always ask your teacher for help").

R is for Reading

If you haven't already, set aside 15 minutes each day to read with your child. Consider choosing stories about going to school. *Idea: I Love You All*



and may just want to know you're still there. As she gets used to school, she should be back to her old self.

V is for Vision and Vaccinations

Schedule a checkup. Your child may need a vision test, a hearing

screening, and some vaccinations before starting school. Doctors can be very busy this time of year, so make your appointment early.

W is for Writing

Children write their names a lot in school. Give your youngster paper and pencil, and have him practice writing his name alongside you as you label his belongings. Put his name in permanent marker on everything you'll be sending to school, including his coat and pencil case.

X is for Xs and Os

Be sure to give your little one plenty of kisses and hugs as she starts school. Your loving reassurance will help her deal with her new experiences.

Y is for Yogurt

Involve your child in choosing healthy lunch-box treats, such as yogurt. Other ideas include apples, grapes, crackers, cheese, and carrot sticks. *Tip:* Save time by cutting up enough for several days and storing them in plastic bags.

Z is for Zippers

...and buttons and snaps. If she doesn't know how already, let your child start fastening and unfastening her own clothes and coat. You might also try teaching her to tie her shoes.

Day Long by Francesca Rusackas; *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* by Joseph Slate; *First Day, Hooray!* by Nancy Foydar.

S is for Sleep

During the summer, many children stay up later and sleep in the next morning. Start gradually moving your youngster's bedtime up, and begin waking her a little earlier. If she'll be giving up her nap, make it shorter and shorter until it's gone altogether.

T is for Teacher

Before the first day, visit your child's classroom and meet his teacher. Find out how to communicate with her: by phone, e-mail, or notes. Help your youngster become familiar with the school. You might stop by the office to say hello to the secretary, read some books in the library, or admire the art in the hallways.

U is for Understanding

Be understanding of changes in your youngster's behavior as she settles into her new routine. For example, she may wake in the night to ask for a drink of water—she's been separated from you all day



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