

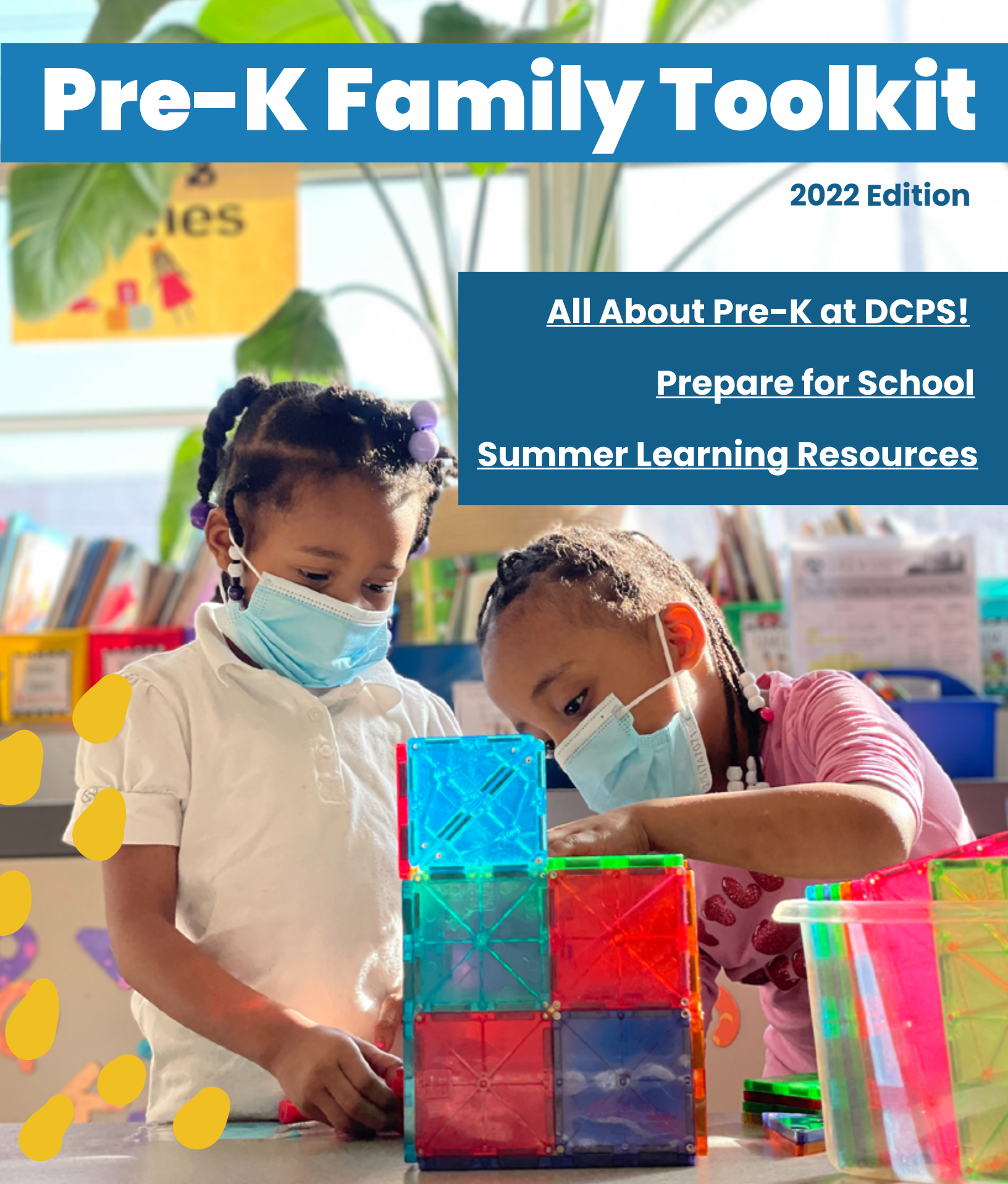
Pre-K Family Toolkit

2022 Edition

All About Pre-K at DCPS!

Prepare for School

Summer Learning Resources



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ready for
Pre-K!



Dear DCPS Pre-K Families,



We are excited about the start of the new school year and look forward to welcoming our youngest learners to school this fall! At DC Public Schools, we are so proud of our joyful and high-quality Pre-K program.

DCPS is a national leader in early childhood education with skilled teachers who are early learning experts and who foster engaging and welcoming Pre-K classroom environments. DCPS implements a curriculum that focuses on active, project-based learning. We can't wait to welcome you and your child to our early learning community.

We're excited to share with you this Pre-K Family Toolkit for returning and new DCPS Pre-K families. In this toolkit, you'll find vital information to help both you and your child feel prepared for Pre-K. This includes information about the Pre-K classroom experience, key dates, helpful links, answers to commonly asked questions, and ideas for supporting your child's learning over the summer as they transition into school.

May you have a safe and joyful summer, and I look forward to seeing you in our Pre-K classrooms soon. **Don't forget the first day of Pre-K for the upcoming school year is Thursday, September 1!**

In partnership,

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.
Chancellor

P.S. I recently spent some time with my friend, Scribbles, visiting one of our awesome Pre-K classrooms — [check out our video](#).



Ready for
Pre-K!

Learn & Play at DCPS!



Enroll
Here!



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All About Pre-K at DCPS

Our Pre-K Program



and/or advanced degrees in early education, as well as ongoing training and instructional coaching. All DCPS Pre-K classrooms are staffed with two adults: A lead teacher and an instructional assistant.

Classroom Sizes

Our class sizes remain small with no more than 16 (Pre-K3) to 20 students (Pre-K4).

Our Curriculum

DCPS' early childhood classrooms utilize The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool. This curriculum is a comprehensive, research-based, STEM-focused curriculum that promotes exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. Using the curriculum as a framework, teachers follow the children's lead to create learning experiences that are interesting and exciting to the children in their classroom. Each day, children participate in teacher-led instruction and purposeful play, supporting relationship building, problem-solving, critical thinking, and skill development.

Our Philosophy

At DCPS, we believe that all young children are capable and competent learners, and their voices and ideas are welcomed and valued in our classrooms.

In DCPS' early childhood classrooms, children learn through a combination of play, well-planned teacher-led lessons, and engaging project-based learning experiences. Classrooms are designed to promote children's active engagement with the environment, and teachers design learning experiences to promote children's language development, critical thinking skills, creativity, and early academic skills in order to ensure that children are well prepared for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Our Teachers

DCPS Pre-K classrooms are led by highly skilled and trained teachers who are early learning experts. All DCPS Pre-K teachers have received specialized training in early childhood development and learning, including Bachelors'





Our Child-Friendly Assessment

DCPS' early childhood classrooms use the GOLD® Assessment system. GOLD® is a research-based assessment system that is specifically designed for young children and measures children's development in language, literacy, math, science, social-emotional skills, and other areas of development. Unlike other assessment systems that require children to be pulled away from learning to be tested, GOLD allows teachers to continually assess children's learning and development during their everyday activities. Teachers use the information gathered from GOLD to plan individualized learning experiences for children.

Specialized Programming

In addition to its core Pre-K program, DCPS offers specialized early childhood programming, including:

- Early Childhood Special Education Programming. These services are designed to provide specialized and individualized instructional support for children with developmental delays or disabilities.

- Montessori programming in select schools.
- Dual Language programming in select schools.
- Head Start programming at six schools in Wards 7 and 8. Head Start services include parent engagement activities, parent education opportunities, case management, mental health services, field trips, health services, and other resources for children and families. ★

Save the Date!

August 2022

Look out for an invitation from your child's teacher for a family visit.

Monday, August 29

DCPS First Day of School

★ Thursday, September 1

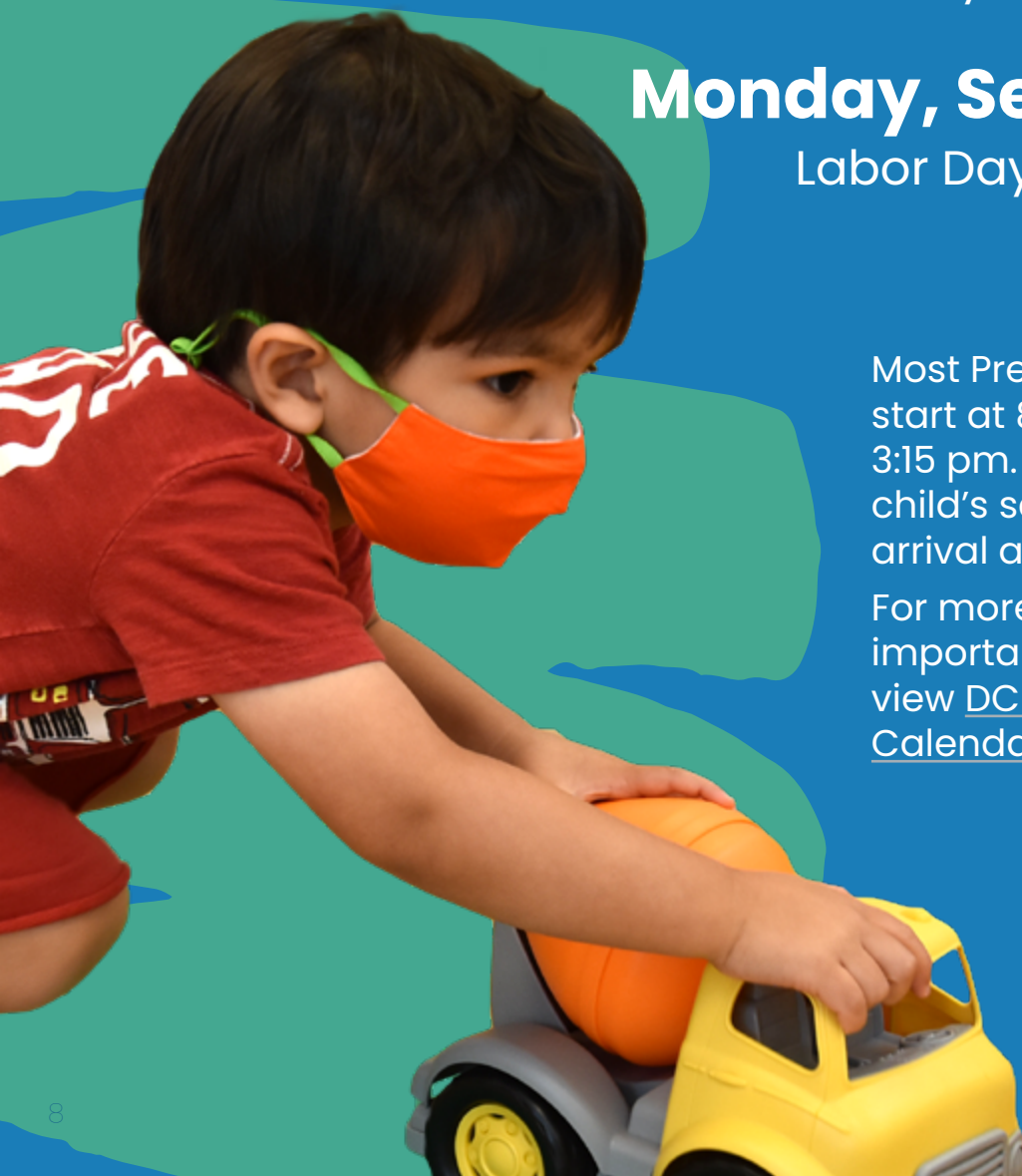
Pre-K First Day

Monday, September 5

Labor Day, No school

Most Pre-K school programs start at 8:30 am and dismiss at 3:15 pm. Please reach out to your child's school to learn about their arrival and dismissal procedures.

For more information about important dates for SY 22-23, view [DC Public Schools Academic Calendar for SY 2022-23](#).



Top 5 Pre-K Parent FAQs



Q: What if my child is not potty trained?

A: Pre-K students do not need to be potty trained to start school. However, we encourage you to partner with your child's teacher to create a plan prior to the first day of school. Check out this resource for tips on potty training.

[Potty Training: Learning to the Use the Toilet • ZERO TO THREE](#)

Q: What do I need to send with my child on the first day of school?

A: A backpack, change of clothes (seasonally appropriate) and socks labeled with their name in case of accidents, and a small blanket for naptime. You may send a comfort item, like a small stuffed animal, to help ease Pre-K jitters. Please check with your child's school for more details about their uniform policy. Alert the school ahead of time if your child needs any daily medication or has allergies.

Q: What do I need to know about lunch?

A: In Pre-K, lunch is served in the classroom. DCPS provides a nutritious lunch and milk daily for every student. However, you may send a

packed lunch if you choose. If your child has allergies or dietary restrictions, please be sure to communicate these to your child's teacher and visit this link: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/dietary-accommodations>

Q: Is there naptime in Pre-K?

A: Yes. Pre-K 3 classrooms nap for 90 minutes; Mixed-aged (classrooms with 3 & 4 year olds) and Pre-K 4 classrooms nap for 60 minutes. Children who do not nap can engage in quiet activities.

Q: Is there an opportunity to visit schools before the first day?

A: Yes. DCPS offers playdates where Pre-K children and families can get to know each other throughout the summer at various schools. Please reach out to your child's school for more details or to schedule a tour. Additionally, your child's teacher will reach out to you about scheduling a family visit to meet you at a location of your choosing or to schedule a visit to the school. ★



Prepare for School



Curious about the Pre-K Daily Schedule?



Here's a snapshot:

Arrival/Breakfast in the Classroom

Morning Meeting

Center Time/Small Group

Specials (music, visual arts, and physical education)

Read Aloud

Recess

Lunch/Bathroom

Nap

Center Time

Closing Circle



My Pre-K Day!

A Social Story about the Pre-K Day at DCPS



My Pre-K Day!

A Social Story about the Pre-K Day at DCPS

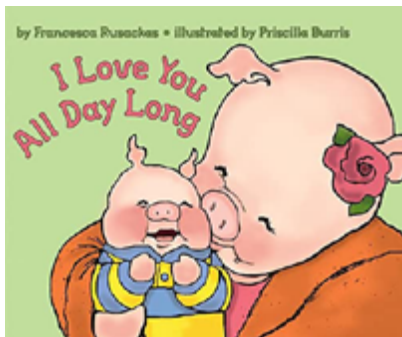


[Download the My Pre-K Day! Book](#)

Books that Support: Getting Ready for School

The first day of preschool can be both overwhelming and exciting! Help your child get ready for their big day by talking about their school, fun things they will do, and reassuring them that you'll see each other when the day is done.

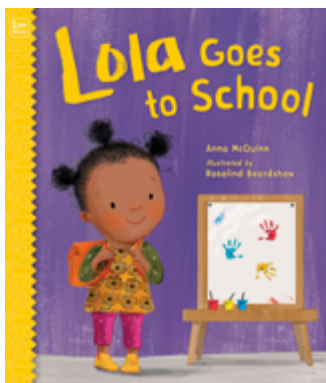
Check out these books for young children that support getting ready for school.



I Love You All Day Long
by Francesca Rusackas



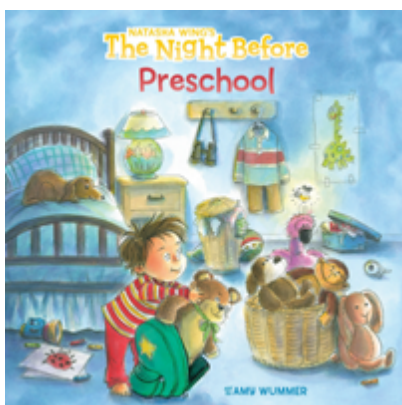
The Kissing Hand
by Audrey Penn



Lola Goes to School
by Anna McQuin



School's First Day of School
by Adam Rex



The Night Before Preschool
by Amy Wummer

As you read...

- Ask your child how they are feeling about starting school. What are they excited or nervous about?
- Compare what will be the same and what will be different from their current care setting.
- Create routines for how you will say goodbye on the first day and practice them over the summer.
- Encourage your child to help you make a list of questions to ask their new teacher.
- Reassure your child that this can be a new and exciting experience.



Tips For Entering Pre-K

01 Make a list of questions with your child. Then reach out to your school or the Early Childhood Division for answers! You can also ask your child's teacher during a home visit or arrange a classroom visit.

02 Read stories about starting school! You can find a list of recommended books and recorded stories to listen to in [our Pre-K Library](#).

03 Attend a playdate at your school over the summer! Ask your school for details about opportunities to visit the building and get to know other families!

04 Show your child pictures of their new school or better yet, stop by! Take some pictures of the front entrance and check out the playground.

05 Create a special goodbye ritual with your child. Practice it prior to their first day of school so they know what they expect. (ex: We'll do one big bear hug, 2 butterfly kisses and then we'll walk you to your classroom. I'll be here at the end of the day to pick you up!)



You can find a list of recommended books on [page 12](#) and watch recorded stories on our [DCPS Ready for Pre-K! YouTube Playlist](#).



Tips For Going From Pre-K to K

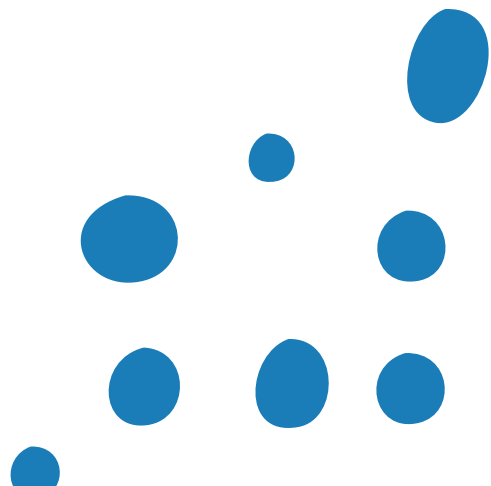
01 Speak with your child's Pre-K teacher. Ask about your child's strengths and any areas they may need to improve.

02 Get to know the Kindergarten teachers and classrooms. Contact the school to see if they have any upcoming events where incoming K students can visit their fall classrooms.

03 Familiarize yourself with the [DC Early Learning Standards](#). If your child has difficulty with any skills, practice over the summer.

04 Acknowledge your child's feelings. Going to Kindergarten is a big event even if they already attend the same school. There are many books that can help children address their feelings as they transition from Pre-K to K.

05 Know who to contact. In addition to the K teachers, each school has a family service team worker who can assist families. Going from Pre-K to K is a big transition for children AND families. Ask for support if you need it!



Summer Learning Resources



Choose fun learning activities and free field trips to do with your child throughout July & August. Repeat any activity they enjoy or need more practice with. Each activity supports an area of development or learning your child will practice and build upon in Pre-K!

Ready For Pre-K! Is A DC Public Schools (DCPS) initiative designed to support families and caregivers of toddlers and two-year-olds through monthly, virtual learning sessions. Each session provides information about growth and development, shares ways to support your child's learning at home, and helps you to feel confident that your child is ready for Pre-K!

Join for a Session!

- ✓ Curious about your child's development?
- ✓ Wondering how to support your child's learning at home?
- ✓ Want to learn more about what to expect in PK3?

Visit our website at
ReadyForPreK.org

Scribbles
Friend of
Ready for Pre-K!



Explore Early Learning Skills with Scribbles

Scribbles and friends practice important early learning skills we also work on in school. Try these out at home to get your little one Ready for Pre-K!



Mr. Kyle and Scribbles practice matching as they fold the laundry!



Dana and Scribbles count out what they need for an iced tea party with friends!



Justine, Scribbles, and Doodlebug go on a shape hunt with everyday objects!



Florence helps Scribbles find the right words to describe how they feel!



Visit our [YouTube channel](#) to learn more.

Summer Learning Activities – July

Choose learning activities to do with your child throughout the month. Repeat any activity that your child seems to really enjoy or that they may need additional practice doing.

Read Aloud

Choose a story from one of the recommended booklists in the Pre-K Family Toolkit or listen to one of the pre-recorded social stories. Encourage your child to draw and/or write about it.



Numbers

Write numbers 0-10 on index cards, sticky notes, or small pieces of paper. See how many your child can put in correct order to create a number line. Increase to higher numbers as your child is able.

Sorting

Sort items around your home by color, size or texture (laundry, coins, toys, shoes). Which groups have the most? The least? The same? Make more complex groups (example- red with stripes) as your child is able.



Scavenger Hunt

Find 5 items that are red. Find 4 items that are blue. Find 3 items that are black. Find 2 items that are white. Find 1 item that is yellow.



ABC Song

Sing the ABC Song while pointing to each letter on an alphabet poster or letter cards. Highlight letters in children's names and/or family members names.

School Time

Either in person or online, check out your child's school. What does the building look like? Draw a picture of the school or what your child might hope to see in their new classroom.



Label My Home

Pick a letter sound to focus on and find objects around your home that start with that letter. For example, for the /p/ sound, a pair of pajamas! Encourage your child to write down or draw a picture of the objects they found.

Who am I?

Choose different animals and pretend to move like them. Take turns guessing what animal the other person is mimicking. Try suggesting different categories to make it more challenging, such as animals that jump, fly or run.

Talk About Feelings

Show your child pictures (on phone, in books/magazines) of different emotions. Ask your child what emotion they see in each picture and how they know it's that emotion. Ask your child about times they might feel those emotions at school or home.

Clap a Friend's Name

To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," clap the syllables of each family member's name! Clap a friend's name with me, Name with me, name with me. Clap a friend's name with me.

Let's try Mommy.
[Mom-my] (clap-clap)

Self Portrait

Have your child draw a picture of themselves. Encourage them to add more detail to their picture by including all body parts or wearing a favorite outfit. Encourage them to share their picture with a loved one.



Rhyme Time

Depending on your child's level, practice rhyming by singing a favorite nursery rhyme, having them either give a thumbs up/down to rhyming words or give them a word and have them produce a word that rhymes.

Summer Learning Activities – August

Choose learning activities to do with your child throughout the month. Repeat any activity that your child seems to really enjoy or that they may need additional practice doing.

Read Aloud

Choose a story from one of the recommended booklists in the Pre-K Family Toolkit or listen to one of the pre-recorded social stories. Encourage your child to draw and/or write about it.

Important People

Help your child draw a picture of the people they consider family. Encourage them to count how many people there are and write the numeral.

School Time

Help your child make a list of things they are excited about for the upcoming school year. Make a list of questions they have and anything they'd like to share with their teacher. Share this list with your child's new teacher during your home visit.



Line it Up

Gather a collection of items from nature (pebbles, leaves, acorns, etc.). Have your child line them up and use their finger to point and count each item (count each item once). Ask: "How many did you count?" "How many items all together?"

ABC Song

Sing the ABC Song while pointing to each letter on an alphabet poster or letter cards. Highlight letters in children's names and/or family members names.



Drawing to Music

Invite your child to draw and listen to music with you. Play the music and as your child draws, encourage them to use the music as their inspiration. Describe your child's actions aloud as they draw. Example: "I see you're drawing fast to match the music."

Rhyme Time

Depending on your child's level, practice rhyming by singing a favorite nursery rhyme, having them either give a thumbs up/down to rhyming words or give them a word and have them produce a word that rhymes.

Feely Box

Place items into a bag or box. Invite your child to reach inside and feel the objects. Encourage them to use words to describe what they feel (Ex: cold, smooth). Invite them to guess what the object is and then reveal the object!



Shoe Ordering

Find various shoes around the house. Which shoe is the shortest? Which is the longest? Line shoes up in order from shortest to longest.

Rainbow Scavenger Hunt

Go on a walk around your neighborhood. Can you find something of each color of the rainbow?



Patterns

Invite your child to join you in making patterns using different items around the house. For example, fork, spoon, fork, spoon, fork, spoon, etc. Incorporate more items to create a more complex pattern as your child is able.

Breathing Activity

Invite your child to close their eyes and visualize themselves smelling a flower. Practice taking big breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth. Share with your child they can use this breathing technique when they feel upset to help calm their body and mind.

IS YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT ON TRACK?



Children grow in many areas during their **first five years.**

If you have concerns about your child's development, **Early Stages** can help. We provide free developmental evaluations for DC children ages 3 through 5.

EARLY
STAGES

COGNITIVE

Learning and problem solving

SPEECH/LANGUAGE

Speaking and understanding language

FINE MOTOR

Using small muscles in hands and fingers

GROSS MOTOR

Using large muscles to walk, jump, and throw

LIFE SKILLS

Taking care of themselves and following routines

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Interacting with others and building confidence

earlystagesdc.org | (202) 698-8037

Infant and Toddler Child Development Centers in DCPS



High quality early childhood education matters!

That's why DCPS partners with community-based organizations to operate several infant and toddler child development centers co-located within our schools.

The child development centers located in our elementary schools offer a coordinated and supported transition between infant and toddler programming and PK3.

With the support of Mayor Bowser, DCPS plans to greatly expand the number school-based child development centers across the District over the next several years.

For more information on enrollment as well as how to apply to be a provider, [visit dcps.dc.gov](https://dcps.dc.gov)

Participating Schools include:

UPO at C.W. Harris

UPO at Ketcham

UPO at Marie Reed

Centro Nia at Stevens Early Learning Center

UPO at Malcolm X

For a complete list, visit dcps.dc.gov



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click on these links to get answers to frequently asked questions about health and safety at DC Public Schools.

[School Health Forms](#)

[Medical Treatment At School](#)

[Food And Nutrition Partners](#)

[Recess Guidance](#)

[School Mental Health](#)

[Covid-19 Policy](#)





DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dcps.earlychildhood@k12.dc.gov

1720 First St NE

Washington, DC 20002

(202) 478-5738

*You may call the DCPS Enrollment Hotline above. Please note
you will receive a response within 2 business days.*

