



Exploring Plants: A Preschool Related Services Parent Resource

Dear Parent,

Thank you for taking the time to explore this NYC *Department of Education (DOE) Preschool Related Services Parent Resource*. This resource provides ways you can support and carryover what your child is working on in the classroom at home or in your community. Daily activities are provided within the five domains of child development:

- ***Approaches to Learning*** (curiosity, persistence, creativity, and imagination)
- ***Physical Development and Health*** (walking, climbing, dancing, coloring, cutting, and painting)
- ***Social and Emotional Development*** (getting along with others, expressing feelings, understanding, and following routines)
- ***Communication, Language & Literacy*** (speaking clearly, understanding stories, and asking questions)
- ***Cognition and Knowledge of the World*** (counting, understanding patterns, making predictions and observations, awareness of family and community)

This edition of the *NYC DOE Preschool Related Services Parent Resource* will focus on the topic of plants, which is a topic your child's pre-K classroom may explore. This topic provides an opportunity to support your child in exploring and observing the environment around them. This resource will help you use your home and community to work on specific skills with your child related to their understanding of plants and how they grow and change.

Best,

Preschool Related Services Team

The Preschool Related Services Team is part of the DOE's Special Education Office. The team is comprised of Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, and Speech-Language Therapists who are dedicated to promoting the educational readiness of students across the five boroughs. If you are interested in learning more about related services and the preschool special education process, please visit the DOE's website at schools.nyc.gov and click on "Special Education" and "Moving to Preschool"

Speech and Language Therapy focuses on ways to improve a child's listening, speaking, vocabulary, and understanding of language in school and social settings. The following activities can help support these areas:

- Help your child understand and ask questions using who, what, how, why, when, and where. For example: "How did the oranges get here in the store?" "What happens when the leaves fall from the tree?"
- Provide your child with different types of fruits and vegetables to eat. Talk about the way each item looks, smells, and tastes. Ask questions about how the items are the same or different.
- Play a guessing game with your child. Provide a description of items related to plants, fruits, or vegetables. For example: "It is orange, long, and rabbits like to eat them."
- Help your child make an art project that requires two or more steps. Have your child decide the order of the steps to complete the activity. For example, "First draw a flower, then cut it out."

Physical Therapy focuses on ways to improve a child's gross motor development, such as walking, running, and balance and coordination. The following activities can help support these areas:

- When outside, have your child march, jump, hop, or run while collecting different materials, such as leaves, branches, flowers or tree bark, to create an art project at home.
- At the store, have your child push a cart and pick fruits and vegetables to place in the cart.
- Go for a walk and have your child stomp on dried leaves or leaves that have just fallen from a tree. Talk about the different sounds the leaves make.
- Sing a song or read a book about how plants grow. Have your child move their body to show how a plant grows, like bending down and slowly standing up and reaching for the sky.

Occupational Therapy focuses on ways to help improve a child's independence during daily living and educational activities by working on fine motor, visual perception, organization, sensory processing, and attention skills. The following activities can help support these areas:

- Using their fingers, your child can draw pictures of plants and flowers in sand, dirt, mud, paint, and shaving cream or create plants and flowers with playdough.
- Draw pairs of different plants and flowers on index cards and play a memory matching game with your child. Help your child arrange the cards, face down in rows. Take turns flipping two cards over to find matching pictures.
- Provide your child with different sizes of beans and seeds. Store them in small bags and have your child remove the seeds and beans one at a time to create different patterns.