



Let's Talk About Fall, Y'all!



Is it fall or autumn?

Both! "Fall" is a more common name and "Autumn" is a more formal term and can be used interchangeably.

Why do leaves change colors?

The concept of trees changing colors involves understanding that leaves change from green to reds, oranges, and yellows as a tree prepares for winter, revealing hidden pigments when green chlorophyll fades due to less sunlight and colder weather. This natural process, or fall foliage, involves trees absorbing useful parts of the leaves to store for winter, leading to them eventually falling .

Why do animals hibernate?

Animals hibernate to survive the winter when there is not enough food and it is very cold. They go into a deep, slow sleep to conserve energy by slowing down their breathing, heartbeat, and body temperature. Before hibernating, they eat a lot to build up body fat, which gives them energy while they sleep.

What is harvest time?

Harvest time is the season, usually in the fall, when farmers and gardeners pick ripe fruits, vegetables, and grains like apples, corn, and pumpkins from the fields. It's a celebration of all the hard work it took to grow the food and a time to give thanks for the bounty before winter comes.



Co-Parenting - Being on the Same Page is Important

Most of our young children have more than one person who acts in the role of parent. We often hear the term "co-parenting" when families divorce or separate. However, it is really more about the process of partnering around parenting. Whether it is Mom, Dad, Grandma, an Aunt, a babysitter, or even a foster family in the mix, consistency across caregivers is essential for our little ones. When expectations are the same in those different "homes" it will help you to grow healthy, confident and productive little people! What are some things to consider when you are sharing the all-important job of raising children together?

Open communication is key between all caregivers. Children are having to adjust between different places and expectations. Work with all the people caring for your child to decide how you will all co-parent them. A meeting between the caregivers to decide on the big stuff helps to keep the best interest of your child in the forefront of everyone's mind.

- What are the basic rules? Examples:
 - ♦ When is bedtime?
 - ♦ What time do we eat meals-what food does the child eat, how much are they fed?
 - ♦ What are the child's chores?
 - ♦ How much tv/game time is allowed?
 - ♦ How are we going to potty train?
- What are consequences when a child pushes the boundaries? When it becomes necessary to discipline a child the adults who are sharing the responsibility of caring for them must be on the same page. Limits and consequences must be the same across caregivers.
 - ♦ Agree on what strategies might be used when and stick to it!
 - ♦ Discuss all perspectives on discipline
- Have one another's back! Don't let the child manipulate or play caregivers against one another. No means no and help the little one understand that this is not ok and the decision stands. This also goes to reason that all caregivers should be supporting the decisions of you as their parents! Ultimately you are guiding this process for your child.
- Have it all written down. Whether it is a paper calendar, or an app, keep track of where kids are and who they are with, including who is going to get them there. Also, all the decisions about the shared expectations - write them down and share with everyone!
- Effective communication can take many forms but use the same one consistently. Texts, instant messaging, an electronic or paper notebook - whatever you choose, make sure that it goes back and forth between "homes" and ensure that everyone knows what they need to be sharing with the other caregivers. This should include important care activities (i.e., how many bottles today, when they were last fed, how long was their nap?) and a way of sharing pictures and those sweet stories of what happens during the day.

Continued on the next page...



"Co-parenting is the skill of managing our differences and crafting a well-balanced life for our children."



Handle disagreements with maturity - When there are adults trying to agree on what's best, there will be disagreements! Keep baby in mind and be respectful of the idea's others have. Come to an agreement everyone can live with and support. It's important for the child to see their adults in a unified front. Don't throw their other folks under the bus - that frustration will impact the child's feelings about the other person.

Express gratitude, always! Say thank you and remember that you have an amazing group of people coming together to love your little one. Being a parent involves countless decisions and is exhausting! Having a group of caregivers to have your back and your baby's can make all the difference.

References

Boy's Town (n.d.). Co-Parenting: two different households, one parenting approach. Retrieved from: <https://www.parenting.org/article/Pages/co-parenting-two-different-households-one-parenting-approach.aspx>

Daughtry, T (n.d.). How to raise children between two homes. Retrieved from <https://www.imom.com/how-to-raise-children-between-two-homes/>

Kinsner, K. (August 14, 2019). Coparenting: are you on the same page? Retrieved from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/coparenting-are-you-on-the-same-page/>

Parlakian, R. (August 19, 2019). Coparenting tips when you're no longer together. Retrieved from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/coparenting-tips-when-youre-no-longer-together/>.

Smolarski, A. (January 27, 2024). Two homes, two sets of rules. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/cooperative-co-parenting-for-secure-kids/202401/two-homes-two-sets-of-rules>



"Co-parenting is our way of conveying to our children, 'Though we may not be together, we are forever here for you.'"



"Life may have directed us along separate paths, but we made the conscious choice to walk them together for the sake of our precious creations."

What is My Baby Feeling?

Helping Babies Grow Socially and Emotionally

Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers need help learning how to get along with others, manage their feelings, and build friendships. These skills help them feel good about themselves, do well in school later, and grow into happy, healthy adults.

From the time they are born, babies learn who they are by how people treat them. Loving care makes babies feel safe, happy, and confident. It teaches them how to make friends, share, and handle hard times. When babies have strong, loving relationships, they also learn to trust others, care about people, and understand right from wrong.

Everyday moments help babies feel good about themselves. When parents or caregivers say things like, "You're so smart!" or "I love being with you," babies learn they are special and loved.

What You Can Do

1. **Take care of your baby in a way that fits their needs.** This is called "responsive care." It means paying attention to what your baby is telling you and helping in a way that makes sense.
Example: If your 10-month-old grabs at a spoon during meals, let him hold one while you feed him. This shows you understand what he wants and that you respect him.
2. **Get to know your baby.** What makes your baby smile? What upsets them? What toys do they like? What daily schedule works best?
3. **Talk to your child's caregiver.** Tell them what your baby likes, what calms her down, and what makes her upset. Share your baby's routine. When caregivers know more about your baby, they can help your child feel safe and happy.

Help Babies Learn New Skills - Babies learn through play and exploring. They grow best when they get a little help with new things, but not so much that they get frustrated. Example: If a baby is trying to roll over, hold a toy nearby to help them reach for it.

- Celebrate your baby's discoveries. Say things like, "You found me!" when playing peek-a-boo.
- Help your baby grow skills. If your baby stacks two blocks, add a third, then hand them another.

Show Love and Comfort - Hugging, rocking, singing, and talking all help babies feel loved. It's easy to do this when they're happy—but it's also very important when they are fussy or upset. This helps babies learn they are loved no matter what.

- Give hugs and kisses often.

Be patient when your baby cries or is cranky. When you stay calm and loving, your baby learns they can count on you. This builds trust and helps them feel safe.

Help Your Baby Feel Safe - Babies feel safe when you answer their needs. If your baby lifts her arms, pick her up. If she cries, comfort her. When the day follows a regular routine, babies know what to expect—and that makes them feel more secure.

- Be a safe place for your baby to return to when exploring.

Keep a steady daily routine (e.g., morning walk, then diaper change, bottle, and story). Routines help babies feel in control of their world.

Include Your Family's Culture - Culture is a big part of who your baby is. Staying connected to your family's traditions helps your child feel proud and strong.

- Teach caregivers the words your family uses for people and things (like "mama," "blankie," or "baba").

Read books and play music from your culture. Libraries often have these for free. Use them during bath time, bedtime, or car rides.



Let's have a campfire and make some s'mores!
It's the simple things in life that children remember.



Let's carve a pumpkin!



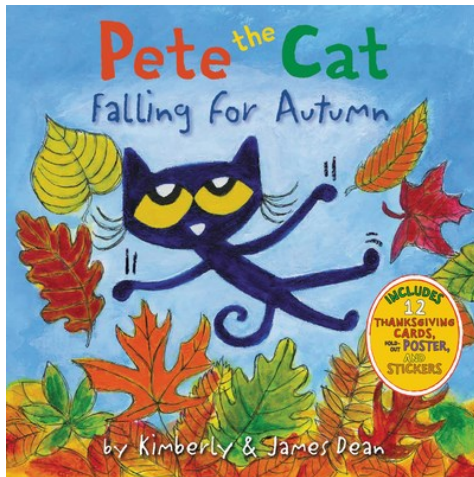
Let's go apple picking. We can
make apple pies, apple cobbler,
apple cookies...yummy!



Let's go on a hike!

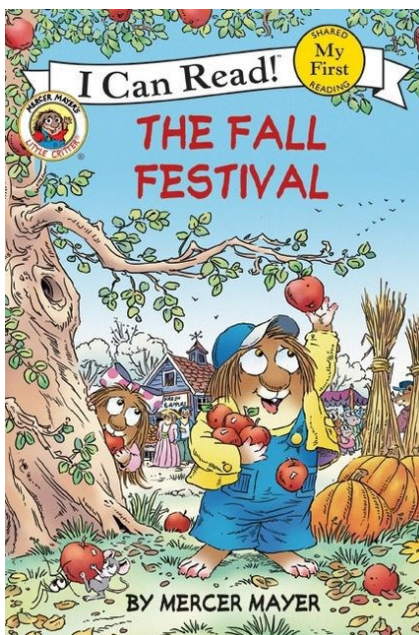


Let's go to the pumpkin patch!



Pete the Cat Falling for Autumn: A Fall Book for Kids
 By James Dean and Kimberly Dean

Pete the Cat isn't sure about the changing of the seasons from summer to autumn. But when he discovers corn mazes, hay rides, and apple picking, Pete realizes there's so much to enjoy and be thankful for about autumn.

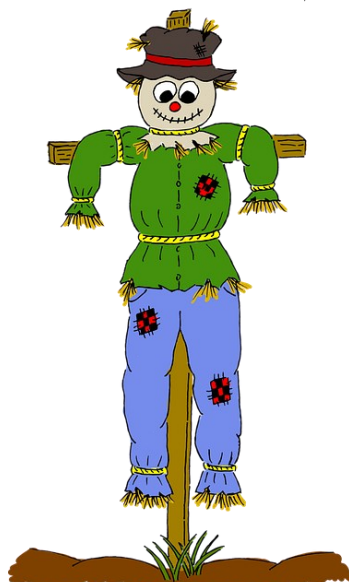


Little Critter: The Fall Festival
 by Mercer Mayer, Mercer Mayer
 (Illustrator)

Every year, Little Critter® and his family take a trip to one of the most beloved events in Critterville—the Fall Festival. From picking apples and taking hayrides to choosing the perfect pumpkin, no wonder everyone loves



WV Birth to Three/RAU 7
 1411 North Walker Street
 Princeton, WV 24740
 1-866-207-6198



MOUNTAINHEART
 Community Services, Inc.
 "Together We Can"

Dreama Padgett, Chief Executive Officer
 Melissa Saddler, Program Director
 Jason Gibson, Interim Service Coordinator
 Vicky Hodges, Interim Service Coordinator
 Morgan Lambert, Interim Service Coordinator
 Stacy Anderson, Interim Service Coordinator
 Jaimie Turner, Interim Service Coordinator
 Tammy Fleshman, Parent Partner/Editor