



# HomeschoolNYC Newsletter

## *Celebrating Child-led Learning*

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Welcome back to another Not School year of child-led learning! In NYC the fall term begins with an annual Not-Back-to-School picnic organized by [NYCHEA](#). Families share food and stories of the summer, children greet friends from last year and find new ones, parents organize classes and cooperatives, and new homeschoolers realize that they are not alone. When planning the year we are faced with so many choices, more than ever before. You can never learn or do everything! Why not choose what your child is already interested in? Place your child at the center of the plan instead of putting a standardized curriculum at the center. With your children's curiosity and interests in the lead you can almost sit back and watch them go while you join them for the ride!



*[Laurie Block Spiegel](#)*

### **Not Back to School**

#### **Getting Ready for the School Year**

#### **Interview on Child-led Learning**

#### **Autumn Apple Activities**

#### **Life Without Instructions Conference**

#### **Hands-On Art History**

#### **Quote by Joseph Campbell**

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Send your comments to [Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com](mailto:Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com).

## **Getting Ready for the School Year**

What does your first day of school look like? How do you get ready for the year? Even if you are homeschooling year-round, some activities probably begin in the fall, perhaps a sport, dance class or music chorus. Preparations are made and

schedules change. Before homeschooling, we followed the same routine every year, shopping for clothes and school supplies just in the nick of time. Once we started homeschooling, we could avoid the crowds. Family vacations happened off-season, while everyone else was starting school. Shopping for supplies meant browsing shelves in libraries and bookstores. Meeting new friends could happen at a picnic in the park. The start of each year was a gentle transition, with freedom of choice as our guide. If something didn't work, we could change it, with thoughtful consideration but without hesitation. Our goal was to have fun! A happy child is a learning child!



Here is some help when planning your year:

[Creating a Student-led Environment](#)

[The Myth of Grade Level Standards](#)

[Magazines for Kids](#) (offering a range of curriculum)

## See Laurie's Interview on Homeschooling and Child-led Learning

Check out this interview that aired last June on a local cable TV show, recently posted on youtube. If enough folks post comments on the youtube page, maybe they will have me back, as well as other speakers on this important topic. Please post a comment!



"Joy in Our Town" features Laurie Block Spigel of HomeschoolNYC



## Autumn Apple Activities

Autumn is the perfect season for outdoor learning. Take a brisk walk in the fallen leaves. Go apple picking, a delightful event for the entire family. Bring home enough for pies and apple butter to last all winter long. I like to visit the local cider mill, take a walk, and bring home a basket full of colorful leaves to decorate the

table.

[Here are books, crafts, local u-pick farms and cider mills, and recipes.](#)

[Family hikes and leaf-peeping trips.](#)

### **ALMOST HERE!!!**

New Conference for Homeschoolers and Self-Directed Learners!

Check out the [exciting schedule](#), full of fascinating talks and activities for children and teens!



### **Life Without Instructions Conference**

Hear from "experts and speakers on unschooling, peaceful parenting and other relevant topics to today's life-learning families" at the first annual [Life Without Instructions Conference](#), Oct 5 - 8 in East Rutherford, NJ (six miles from Manhattan). Featured speakers include Peter Gray (*Freedom to Learn*). I will talk about homeschoolers taking a self-directed path towards college. Join us!



### **Hands-On Art History of the Ancient World**

For ages 11 and up

Day and Time: Fridays 1 pm - 3 pm, Oct. 9-Dec. 18

Location: Riverdale (Bronx), NY

Instructor: Laurie Block Spigel

There is still room in this course!

For information [e-mail Laurie](#).

[See photos of student work.](#)

### **Quote by Joseph Campbell**

*"Follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be."*

~ Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), American author, educator, and mythologist

## ***Education Uncensored***

**Here's what people are saying about Laurie's book:**

"I would like to tell the parents reading this who haven't yet read your book, *Education Uncensored: 'Please Do!'* I finished reading it a few weeks ago but haven't been able to put it away in my library, nor have I been willing to lend it out. For those of you haven't read it yet, it is part memoir, part education book, part homeschooling primer, all wonderful."

~Mary O'Riordan, Ed.D, educator and homeschooling parent

"You made me laugh, you made me cry, and you inspired me. I can literally hear your voice, and love your storytelling and your wisdom and just the whole package. I'm stimulated and filled with ideas for my own teaching."

~ Dr. Bonnie Shulman, professor of mathematics, Bates College

"I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciated meeting you and reading your book. It is terrific, and for me, the best part was its New York perspective. I know no other book available to homeschoolers that so overtly references an urban perspective."

~ David Albert, author of *And the Skylark Sings with Me* and other books

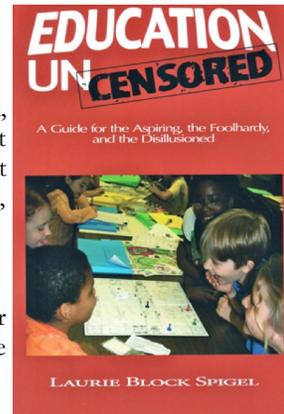
"Laurie's evolution as a teacher and life-long involvement in the world of education has given her a profound understanding of the problems that plague today's schools. This book offers an insightful look at how an increasingly standardized system is robbing our children of their individuality and passion for learning. Additionally, it provides innovative how-to curriculums for anyone involved or interested in educating children."

~ Ellen Labiner, homeschooling parent and special educator

[Read excerpts here.](#)

Available now at [HomeschoolNYC.com](http://HomeschoolNYC.com)

Price: \$12.95 plus shipping & handling



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*Send your comments and suggestions to [Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com](mailto:Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com).*