

UPTOWN VS. DOWNTOWN * THE BIG NURSERY SCHOOL MYTH

New York • family

April 2007
Established 1986

Love & Kisses

OUR
SPECIAL
(Pre-Natal
To Pre-K)
GUIDE
for NEW
FAMILIES

*Dr. Kelly Posner
Gerstenhaber,
with her sons
Joshua and
Alexander*

FAMILY GOLF RESORTS | CITY PETS | TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

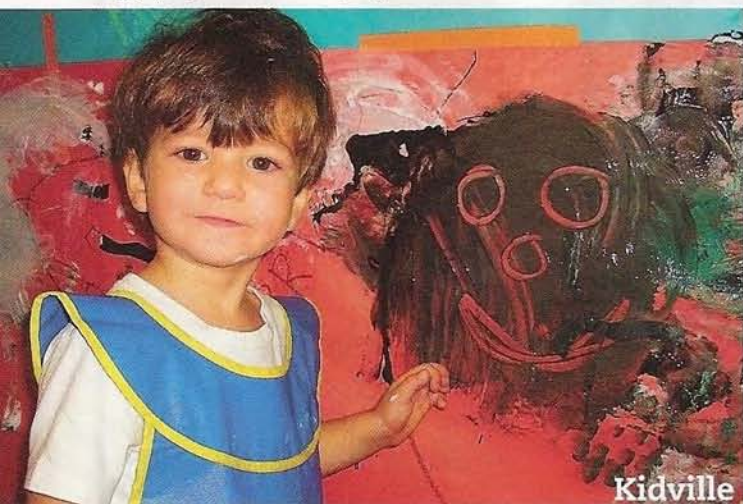
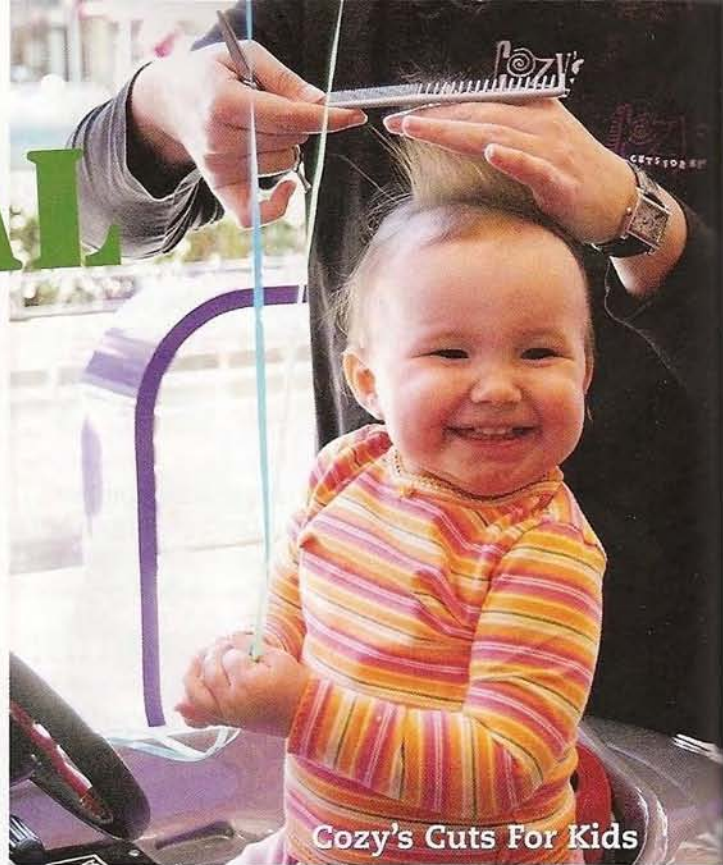
SURVIVAL Guide

7 THINGS EVERY NEW PARENT SHOULD KNOW HOW TO DO

Have a Happy First Haircut

A child's first haircut can be a scary experience – or a delightful, treasured one. Parents have a lot to do with how their child feels. “Sometimes parents are emotional because their child looks a bit older,” says Cozy Friedman, founder of Cozy's Cuts for Kids, a salon-cum-toy-store. “Kids pick up on parents' anxiety.” Celebrating the haircut puts little ones at ease: take pictures and videos, keep a lock of hair in a scrapbook, and give your child a small treat at the end. Thoughtful planning helps: schedule the haircut at a good time for your child (e.g., not during nap time), request a stylist who enjoys working with kids, take your child to see you get a haircut the week before, and bring a spare T-shirt in case your child is averse to the cape. Another tip is, interestingly, not to call it a “haircut.” “Every time kids are exposed to the word ‘cut,’ it's in a negative light,” Friedman notes. Fun distractions like a book or toy are key. And, at Cozy's, stylists use kid-friendly terms, including “Mr. Wind” for the hairdryer and saying “Here comes the rain” when applying water or hairspray.

– Marisa Stuescu



Find The Perfect Kid's Class

The first thing to look for is a great instructor, says Natalie Cronin Reyes, childhood development director at Kidville. Classes for newborns to age six months require someone with a child development background familiar with how babies are changing physically and what positions

are safe to put them in. Older kids respond best to teachers with “an enticing voice” who are lively and engaging and adapt well to the flow of the class. There's no “right” class type: music, art, and gym, to name a few, are all excellent. “Every child is different and parents should look for something they enjoy doing together,” says Cronin Reyes. “If a parent plays an instrument, they may love taking a music class with their child.” Children under two need no more than one class a day; for older kids, families should consider their schedule and balance classes with play dates. Not all kids love a class off the bat. “Some kids are slow to warm up but by the third week they may be surprising you,” says Cronin Reyes. Whatever class you choose make sure it's in a facility that's clean and safe – especially when it comes to toddlers who love to crawl around and explore. Above all, “children deserve a beautiful place to play in.” – Leah Black

Pick The Right Stroller For You

Most parents buy at least two strollers, according to Ali Wing, CEO and founder of the children's store Giggle: one for everyday and another to accommodate

Editor's Pick:
Stokke Xplory

a specific need like traveling. If you keep this in mind, the pressure to find an all-around perfect stroller will diminish. One of the most important things to consider is your lifestyle: are you a runner? Do you use mass transit daily? Will you need cargo space for groceries? An umbrella stroller, for



example, is perfect for parents on the run, since it collapses into one piece and allows for single handed folding. Stroller criteria can be met at any price point, says Wing, so when deciding how much to spend, the real question is: how much does design matter to you? The snazzier the stroller, the more it will cost. Don't forget to look ahead, too. If you plan to be pregnant in another year or two, choose a stroller that offers a second child option, which will eventually save you space and money. Also, make sure the stroller's fabric is washable. By baby number three, Wing assures, it will need a good cleaning. Some of Wing's personal suggestions: Phil & Ted's E3, Maclaren Quest or Techno, and Stokke Xplory. — Jordana Jaffe

Teach Your Child a Sport

With limitless energy and rapidly growing bodies, toddlers are prime candidates for sports classes.

Editor's Pick:
SafeGuard

Jeffrey Bernstein, founder and director of Simply Sports, recommends soccer, tennis, baseball, and basketball as excellent options. But rather than having them focus on a single sport, Bernstein advocates multi-sport classes as the best route. This exposes children to the widest variety of basic sports skills possible — such as footwork, hand-eye coordination, throwing and catching — and helps them develop different muscle groups. When choosing a class Bernstein advises parents to look for ones which emphasize exercise and boast interactive coaches. Parents should talk with the director of the program and even sit in on a few classes to get a sense of the instruction offered. Parents also should keep their expectations realistic: don't expect very young children to learn all the intricacies of a full game. A toddler will not be shooting hoops after a few classes, but she may be able to catch a ball a few times, and that is an accomplishment to be proud of. — Meredith McGroarty



Install a Car Seat...Correctly

What seems like a simple task isn't so straightforward: 80 percent of car seats are installed improperly, according to Steve Wallen, a father of two and the general manager of the car seat manufacturer SafeGuard. He offers a few pointers to make sure your child is buckled in safe. First, infants should be in a rear facing car seat in the back seat until they are at least 1 year old or 22 pounds. Second, kids should stay in 5 point harness (2 shoulder straps, 2 lap straps, and a crotch strap) for as long as possible, up to 65 pounds. Parents shouldn't be able to slip more than two fingers between the harness and their child's



Simply Sports

body, and once in place, a car seat should move no more than an inch from side to side. Finally, the best car seats offer ease of use and function with the LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) system, which is present in most vehicles and allows one to adjust a car seat easily. Parents who would like additional guidance should seek out a certified child passenger technician (CPS), found at local police or fire stations. — Leah Black

Make Friends With Other Moms

The first few months of motherhood can be isolating, so many experts urge mothers to make a special effort to get out of the house and meet new people — preferably those with an average height above two feet. Risa Goldberg, cofounder of Big City Moms, says that the process of meeting other moms for the first time can be nerve-racking, not unlike dating. "You think, 'Will this person like me? Will I like her and her child?'" says Goldberg. But she assures new moms have a natural conversation topic: babies. Goldberg suggests a great way to meet other like-minded moms is to join a local group, take classes, go to moms' lunches, attend a support group at the hospital



Big City Moms