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28TH ANNUAL LGBTQ-FRIENDLY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS DIRECTORY

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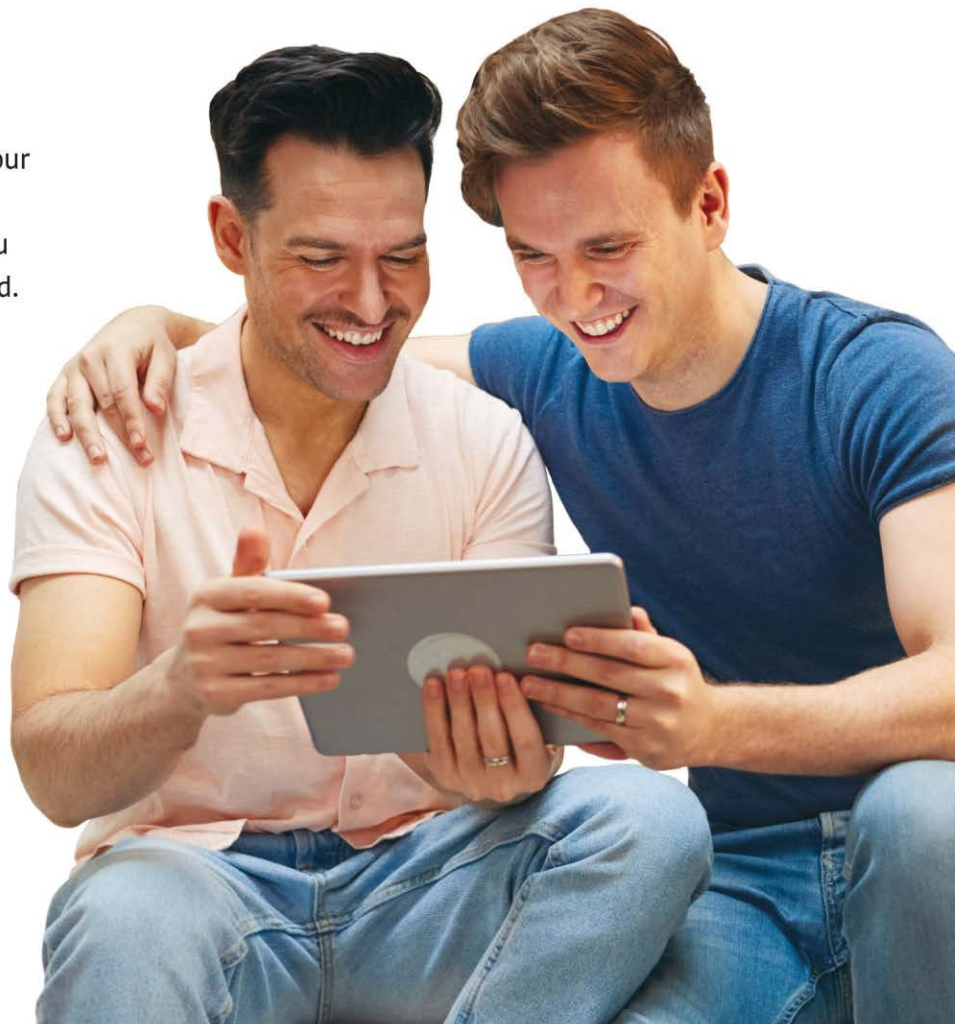
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HOMOLOGATION
du ministère français
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p parents league
of new york

N A I S
National Association
of Independent Schools

FISNA

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ASSOCIATION OF FRENCH SCHOOLS IN NORTH AMERICA

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Saturday, October 17, 2026

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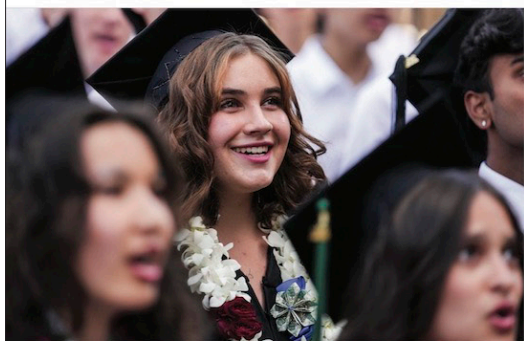
📍 FOREST HILLS, NEW YORK

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MAGIC

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Harker is a welcoming, supportive, fun and close-knit community of students, parents, faculty and alumni that shares a love of learning and making the world a better place.

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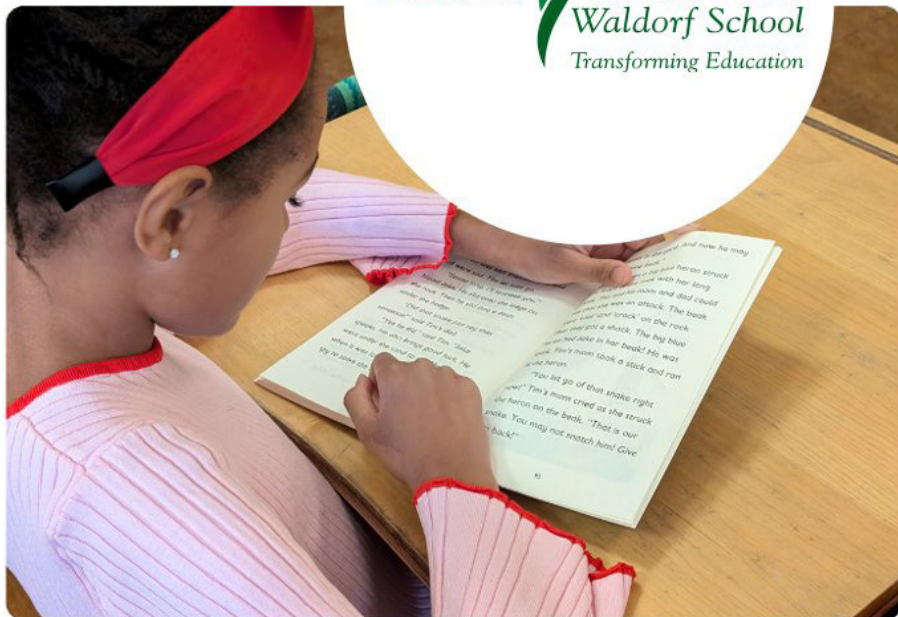
Sure, we have amazing academics and brilliant teachers who absolutely love what they do (and they are a big part of our secret sauce). But wait until you see the choices outside the classroom. Athletics, performing arts, clubs, business and entrepreneurship, debate ... the list goes on and on. And when kids try something new and a passion is ignited, that is where the magic happens.

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GRACE CHURCH SCHOOL

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212-475-5609

ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL

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212-924-5960

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www.vcsnyc.org

212-691-5146





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CONTENT

FROM OUR ARCHIVE - Halloween photos from previously featured families. - page 12



28th Annual Gay Parent Magazine LGBTQ Friendly Independent Schools Directory - Included are over 150 schools, ranging from nursery to college and after school. Listed by state, the list includes schools for students with learning differences, bilingual schools, all girls or all boys, boarding, and religious schools. - page 15

ADVERTISER SPOTLIGHT - Miracle Surrogacy - Miracle Surrogacy supports intended parents from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and many other countries. More babies are born through Miracle Surrogacy's programs each year than through all other Mexico-based surrogacy agencies combined, reflecting the trust families place in the organization and its proven processes. - page 31



ADVERTISER SPOTLIGHT - Garden School, New York City - "We believe every family should feel welcomed, respected, and reflected in the life of the school. At Garden, students are known, supported, and encouraged to be themselves, while families become active members of a close-knit community." - page 35

ADVERTISER SPOTLIGHT - Brilliant and Kind Montessori, Atlanta - Brilliant and Kind Montessori offers a food program created by Chef B. Viictoria. - page 40



When your kids are college bound - Renée Lukas gives advice and shares her story about college move-in day. - page 43

Family follow up - GPM first featured the family of Brian Rosenberg and Ferd van Gameren in 2019. Brian is the founder of Gays With Kids, now GWK Academy. - page 55



We took our 6-month-old to Spain - Brittney and Simone Sims talk about traveling to Barcelona for their first trip with their baby. - page 65

Ad Index - page 69

Cover photo courtesy of Brittney and Simone Sims. Photos this page, top to bottom, photo courtesy of Jameel Mayers, Mark O'Looney, Renée Lukas, and Brian Rosenberg.

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HALLOWEEN FAMILY PHOTOS FROM OUR ARCHIVE



Jameel Mayers and his family were featured in our November-December 2025 issue #163. Read their story on our website: <https://bit.ly/4psljcN>

Photo courtesy of Jameel Mayers

The family of Mark O'Looney and Eoin Cannon were featured in our January-February 2025 issue #158.
Photo courtesy of Mark O'Looney



The family of Tariem Burroughs and Nick Wood were featured in our January-February 2026 issue #164.
Photo courtesy of Tariem Burroughs

Read available past issues posted on our social media. Follow our new Facebook page, [Gay Parent Magazine-original](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [Tumblr](#), [Bluesky](#), and [X](#). Send us your family photos, comments, and requests to be featured. Email us at gayparentmag@gmail.com. ▼

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A photograph of two young boys in a library. One boy is sitting at a table and the other is standing next to him.

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A photograph of several children in a library, with their hands raised in the air.

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28th Annual Gay Parent Magazine Independent Schools Directory

Welcome to our 28th Annual Private Schools Directory where we highlight our advertising independent schools ranging from preschool to college. Most are co-ed but a few schools are all girls or all boys. Most are day schools but also include boarding. Some schools indicated are for students with learning differences, teach language immersion, or are religious.

The schools are located in California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington. Contact information for each school is listed alphabetically by state. Links listed are for reference only, please click on the link located below their display ads. Visit our web site at www.gayparentmag.com to read short descriptions of some of the schools.

CALIFORNIA

Alta Vista School

450 Somerset St.
San Francisco, CA 94134
415-467-3700
Middle School
2558 Mission St.
San Francisco, CA 94110
Junior K - 8th grade
www.altavistaschool.org
See ad on page 60

Bentley School

K - 8th grade Campus
1 Hiller Dr.
Oakland, CA 94618
510-843-2512
9 - 12th grade Campus
1000 Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Lafayette, CA 94549
925-283-2101
www.bentleyschool.org
See ad on page 37

Brentwood School

K - 6th grade
12001 Sunset Blvd.
310-471-1041
7th - 12th grade
100 S. Barrington Pl.
Los Angeles, CA 90049
www.bwscampus.com
See ad on page 34

The Carey School

One Carey School Lane
San Mateo, CA 94403
650-345-8205
www.careyschool.org
Preschool - 5th grade
See ad on page 38

Cathedral School for Boys

1275 Sacramento St.
San Francisco, CA 94108
415-771-6600
www.cathedralschool.net

K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 48

The Center for Early Education

563 N. Alfred st.
West Hollywood, CA 90048
323-651-0707
www.centerforearlyeducation.org
Toddler - 6th grade
See ad on page 44

The Country School

5243 Laurel Canyon Blvd.
Valley Village, CA 91607
818-769-2473
www.country-school.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 58

Crestview Preparatory School

140 Foothill Blvd.
La Canada, CA 91011
818-952-0925

www.crestviewprep.org

K - 6th grade
See ad on page 21

Echo Horizon School

3430 McManus Ave.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-838-2442
www.echohorizon.org
Pre-K - 6th grade
See ad on page 25

Ecole Bilingue de Berkeley

Elementary Campus
1009 Heinz Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-549-3867
Middle School Campus
901 Grayson St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-549-2851
www.eb.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 12

Escuela Bilingue Internacional

PreK - 1st grade
410 Alcatraz Ave.
Oakland, CA 94609
510-653-3324
2nd - 8th grade
4550 San Pablo Ave.
Emeryville, CA 94608
510-652-7094
www.ebinternacional.org
See ad on page 64

The Harker School

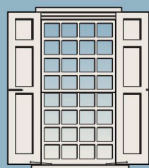
500 Saratoga Ave.
San Jose, CA 95129
408-249-2510
www.harker.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 5

Hollywood Schoolhouse

1233 N. McCadden Pl.
Hollywood, CA 90038
323-465-1320
www.hshla.org
Preschool - 6th grade
See ad on page 42

International School of Los Angeles

1105 W. Riverside Dr.
Burbank, CA 91506
818-994-2961
www.internationalschool.la
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 16



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San Francisco, CA 94102
415-558-2000
Maternelle
1155 Page St.
San Francisco, CA 94117
415-231-5733
www.internationalst.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 33

Julia Morgan School for Girls
5000 MacArthur Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94613
510-632-6000
www.juliamorganschool.org
6th - 8th grade, girls school
See ad on page 18

Lycée Français de San Francisco
Ashbury Campus
Preschool - 5th grade
755 Ashbury St.
San Francisco, CA 94117
Sausalito Campus
610 Coloma St.
Sausalito, CA 94965
Ortega Campus
Middle + High School
1201 Ortega St.
San Francisco, CA 94122
415-661-5232
www.lelycee.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 54

Marin Montessori School
5200 Paradise Dr.
Corte Madera, CA 94925
415-924-5388
www.marinmontessori.org
age 18 months - 9th grade
See ad on page 51

Millennium School
888 Turk St.
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-992-8520
www.millenniumschool.org
6th - 8th grade
See ad on page 38

The Oaks School
6817 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90028
323-850-4755
www.oaksschool.org
TK - 6th grade
See ad on page 56

Presidio Knolls School
250 10th St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-202-0770
www.presidioknolls.org
Preschool - 8th grade, Mandarin immersion school.
See ad on page 29

Prospect Sierra
Elementary
2060 Tapscott Ave.
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-809-9036

Middle School
960 Avis Dr.
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-809-9000
www.prospectsierra.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

PS1 Pluralistic School One
1225 Broadway
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-394-1313 x107
www.psone.org
K - 6th grade
See ad on page 23

The Riviera Ridge School
2130 Mission Ridge Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805-569-1811
www.rivieraridge.org
Junior K - 8th grade
See ad on page 48

Sonoma Country Day School
4400 Day School Pl.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
707-284-3200
www.scds.org
TK - 8th grade
See ad on page 48

Sterne School
838 Kearny St.
San Francisco, CA 94108
415-922-6081
www.sterneschool.org
4th - 12th grade
See ad on page 59

Town School for Boys
2750 Jackson St.
San Francisco, CA 94115
415-921-3747
www.townschool.com
K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 13

Trinity School
2650 Sandhill Rd.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
650-854-0288
www.trinity-mp.org
age 2 - 5th grade
See ad on page 62

Valley Montessori School
1273 N. Livermore Ave.
Livermore, CA 94551
925-455-8021
www.vmschool.org
age 18 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 32

West Hollywood Children's Academy
1030 N Vista St.
West Hollywood, CA 90046
310-748-1656
www.wehchildrensacademy.com
Toddler-Preschool-TK
See ad on page 51



continued on page 18



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Schools continued from page 16

Westridge School

324 Madeline Dr.
Pasadena, CA 91105
626-799-1053 x256
www.westridge.org
4th - 8th grade, girls school
See ad on page 57

The Willows

Community School
8509 Higuera St.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-815-0411
www.thewillows.org
DK - 8th grade
See ad on page 61

Winston Preparatory School

Marin County:
1 Saint Vincent Dr.
San Rafael, CA 94903
415-993-5533
Transitions SF:
360 9th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94118

415-766-2395

www.winstonprep.edu
4th - 12th grade, for students
with learning differences
See ad on page 17

CONNECTICUT

Winston Preparatory School

57 West Rocks Rd.
Norwalk, CT 06851
203-229-0465
www.winstonprep.edu
4th - 12th grade, for students
with learning differences
See ad on page 17

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Aidan Montessori School

2700 27th St. NW
Washington DC 20008
202-387-2700
www.aidanschool.org
age 18 months - 6th grade
See ad on page 31

Beauvoir, the National Cathedral Elementary School

3500 Woodley Rd. NW
Washington DC 20016
202-537-6493
www.beauvoirschool.org
Pre-K - 3rd grade
See ad on page 50



The Lab School of Washington

4759 Reservoir Rd. NW
Washington DC 20007
202-965-6600
www.labschool.org
1st - 12th grade, for
students with dyslexia and
other language based learning
differences.
See ad on page 43

National Presbyterian School

4121 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20016
202-537-7500
www.nps-dc.org

age 3 - 6th grade
See ad on page 29

St. Albans School

Mount St. Alban
Washington DC 20016
202-537-6435
www.stalbansschool.org
4th - 12th grade, boys school
See ad on page 48

St. John's Preschool

3240 O Street NW
Washington DC 20007
202-338-2574
www.stjohnsdc.org
ages 2.5 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 56

St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School

Whitehaven Campus
4700 Whitehaven Parkway NW
Washington DC 20007
202-342-2805
MacArthur Campus

4590 MacArthur Blvd. NW
Washington DC 20007
202-650-5324
www.stpatdsc.org
PK3 - 8th grade
See ad on page 38

GEORGIA

Brilliant and Kind Montessori

1954 Airport Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30341
844-740-4500
www.brilliantandkind.com
ages 5 - 12 yrs.
See ad on page 36

The Paideia School

1509 S. Ponce de Leon Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-377-3491
www.paideiaschool.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 60

ILLINOIS

Akiba-Schechter Jewish Day School

5235 S. Cornell Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615
773-493-8880
www.akibaschechter.org
Early childhood - 8th grade
See ad on page 56

The Ancona School

4770 S. Dorchester Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615
773-924-2356
www.anconaschool.org
Primary - 8th grade
See ad on page 61

Baker Demonstration School

201 Sheridan Rd.
Wilmette, IL 60091
847-425-5800
www.bakerdemschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 54



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Beacon Academy
1574 Sherman Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
224-999-1177
www.beaconacademy.org
9th - 12th grade
See ad on page 30

Bennett Day School
955 W. Grand Ave.
Chicago, IL 60642
312-236-6388
www.bennettday.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 16

Chiaravalle Montessori
425 Dempster St.
Evanston, IL 60201
847-864-2190
www.chiaravalle.org
age 16 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 51

Chicago Waldorf School
5200 N. Ashland Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
773-465-2662
www.chicagowaldorf.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 53

The Children's School
820 Ontario St.
Oak Park, IL 60302
708-484-8033
www.thechildrensschool.info
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 57

Francis W. Parker School
330 West Webster Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614
773-797-5107
www.fwparker.org
Junior K - 12th grade
See ad on page 61

Lake Forest Country Day School
145 S. Green Bay Rd.
Lake Forest, IL 60045
847-234-2350
www.lfcds.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 24

Lycée Français de Chicago
1929 W. Wilson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
773-665-0066
www.lfc.world
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 21

Near North Montessori School
1434 West Division St.
Chicago, IL 60642
773-269-6230
www.nnms.org
age 6 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 16

MARYLAND

The GreenMount School
501 W. 30th St.
Baltimore, MD 21211
410-235-6295
www.greenmountschool.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 41

The Nora School
955 Sligo Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-495-6672
www.noraschool.org
9th - 12th grade
See ad on page 15

MASSACHUSETTS

Bay Farm Montessori Academy
145 Loring St.
Duxbury, MA 02332
781-934-7101
www.bfarm.org

age 12 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 51

Brookwood School
One Brookwood Rd.
Manchester, MA 01944
978-526-4500
www.brookwood.edu
age 3 - 8th grade
See ad on page 31

Charles River School
6 Old Meadow Rd.
Dover, MA 02030
508-785-0068
www.charlesriverschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 51

Derby Academy
56 Burditt Ave.
Hingham, MA 02043
781-749-0746
www.derbyacademy.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

German International School Boston
Upper Campus
57 Holton St.
Boston, MA 02134
617-783-2600
Lower Campus
387 Western Ave.
Boston, MA 02135
617-779-7393
www.gisbos.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 35

Milton Academy
170 Centre St.
Milton, MA 02186
617-898-1798
www.milton.edu
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 36





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www.summitmontessori.org
ages 18 months - 12 yrs.
See ad on page 51

Tenacre Country Day School
78 Benvenue St.
Wellesley, MA 02482
781-235-2282
www.tenacreeds.org
Pre-K - 6th grade
See ad on page 13

Wellan Montessori School
80 Crescent Ave.
Newton Centre, MA 02459
617-969-4488
www.wellan.org
Toddler - 8th grade
See ad on page 19

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor Academy
1153 Oak Valley Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-747-6641
www.annarboracademy.org
K - 13th grade, for students with learning differences and disabilities.
See ad on page 44

NEW JERSEY

The Craig School
Lower/Middle School
10 Tower Hill Rd.
Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046
High School
25 Changebridge Rd.
Montville, NJ 07045
973-334-1234
www.craigschool.org
2nd - 12th grade, for students who learn differently.
See ad on page 45

The Elisabeth Morrow School
435 Lydecker St.
Englewood, NJ 07631
201-568-5566
www.elisabethmorrow.org
age 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 37

The Hudson School
601 Park Ave.
Hoboken, NJ 07030
422 Willow Ave.
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201-659-8335
www.thehudsonschool.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 57

Montclair Cooperative School
65 Chestnut St.
Montclair, NJ 07044

973-783-4955
www.montclaircoop.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 14

Moorestown Friends School
110 E. Main St.
Moorestown, NJ 08057
856-914-4426
www.mfriends.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 47

Tessa International School
720 Monroe St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201-755-5585
www.tessais.org
Elementary & Early Childhood
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See ad on page 55

Westfield Friends School
2201 Riverton Rd.
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077
856-829-0895
www.westfieldfriends.org
Preschool 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 34

Winston Preparatory School
901 Route 10 East
Whippany, NJ 07981
973-500-6480

4th - 12th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 17



NEW YORK

The Allen-Stevenson School
132 E. 78th St.
New York, NY 10075
212-288-6710
www.allen-stevenson.org
K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 61

Bank Street School for Children
610 W. 112th St.
New York, NY 10025
212-875-4433
school.bankstreet.edu
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 12

Simon's Rock at Bard College
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Bard Academy
https://simons-rock.edu/
bard-academy/
30 Seminary Dr.
Barrytown, NY 12507
845-752-5600
residential college for 11th or 12th graders
See ad on page 26

Barrow Street Nursery School
27 Barrow St.
New York, NY 10014
212-242-4140
www.barrowstreetnursery-school.org
ages 19 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 35

Beansprouts Nursery School
453 6th Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11215
718-965-8573
www.beansproutsnurseryschool.com
ages 16 months - 4 yrs.
See ad on page 56

Blue Rock School
110 Demarest Mill Rd.
West Nyack, NY 10994
845-535-3353
www.bluerockschool.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 66

The Brick Church School
62 E. 92nd St.
New York, NY 10128
212-289-5683
www.brickchurchschool.org
ages 2 - 6 yrs.
See ad on page 23

Brooklyn Heights Synagogue Preschool
131 Remsen St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-522-2070 x131
www.bhsbrooklyn.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 26

The Cathedral School of St. John the Divine
1047 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10025
212-316-7500
www.cathedralnyc.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 49

Central Park Montessori School
1 W. 91st St.
New York, NY 10024
212-595-2000
www.twinparks.org
ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 22

The Chapin School
100 East End Ave.
New York, NY 10028
212-744-2335
www.chapin.edu
K - 12th grade, girls school
See ad on page 52

continued on page 22

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Schools continued from page 20

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212-242-7802
www.cityandcountry.org
age 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 9 & 43

Corlears School

324 W. 15th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-741-2800
www.corlearsschool.org
Toddler-Nursery-PreK
See ad on page 32

The Dalton School

K - 3rd grade
53 E. 91st St.
New York, NY 10128
4th - Dalton E. & PE Center
200 E. 87th St.
New York, NY 10128
4th - 12th grade
108 E. 89th St.
New York, NY 10128
212-423-5200
www.dalton.org
See ad on page 17

The École

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Building
115 E. 22nd St.
New York, NY 10010

Maternelle Building
206 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10010
646-410-2238
www.theecole.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 3

The First Presbyterian Church Nursery School

12 W. 12th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-691-3432
www.fpcns.org
ages 2 - 5.3 yrs.
See ad on page 23

French-American School of New York

Pre & Lower School
111 Larchmont Ave.
Larchmont, NY 10538
Middle School
145 New St.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
High School
320 East Boston Post Rd.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
914-240-0401
www.fasnny.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 18

Friends Seminary

222 E. 16th St.
New York, NY 10003
212-979-5030
www.friendsseminary.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 9

Garden School

33-16 79th St.
Jackson Heights, NY 11372
718-335-6363
www.gardenschool.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 45

Grace Church School

86 Fourth Ave.
New York, NY 10003
212-475-5609
www.gcschool.org
JK - 8th grade
See ad on page 9

Green Meadow Waldorf School

307 Hungry Hollow Rd.
Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977
845-356-2514
www.gmws.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 6

The Hewitt School

45 E. 75th St.
New York, NY 10021
212-288-1919
www.hewittschool.org
K - 12th grade, girls school
See ad on page 55

The International Preschools

345 E. 86th St.
New York, NY 10028
212-371-8604
www.ipsnyc.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 21

The Kew-Forest School

119-17 Union Turnpike
Forest Hills, NY 11375
718-268-4667
www.kewforest.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 4

The Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church Day School

921 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10021
212-288-9638
www.mapcds.org
ages 4 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 32

Mary McDowell Friends School

Elementary School
20 Bergen St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-625-3939
Middle School
133-135 Summit St.
Brooklyn, NY 11231
718-625-3939
Upper School
23 Sidney Pl.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-855-0141
www.marymcdowell.org
K - 12th grade, school for students with learning challenges.
See ad on page 11

The Masters School

49 Clinton Ave.
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-479-6420
www.mastersny.org
5th - 12th grade, day and boarding school.
See ad on page 16

Montclare Children's School

747 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10025
212-865-4020
www.montclareschool.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 33

The Montessori Schools

Flatiron & Soho
Flatiron Campus
5 W. 22nd St.
New York, NY 10010
212-633-0600
SoHo Campus
75 Sullivan St.
New York, NY 10012
212-226-3800
www.themontessorischools.org
ages 2 yrs. - 6 yrs. Flatiron
ages 18 months - 6 yrs. SoHo
See ad on page 8

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170 Joralemon St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-250-0200
www.packer.edu
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 7

Park West

Montessori School
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ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 22



continued on page 24

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Schools continued from page 22

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www.playgroup.org
age 4 - teen, theatre for children
and teens
See ad on page 29

Plymouth Church School

75 Hicks St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-624-9385
www.plymouthchurchschool.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 29

Poly Prep

Lower School
Park Slope Campus
50 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, NY 11215
718-768-1103
Middle/Upper Schools
Dyker Heights Campus

1 Poly Prep Dr.
Brooklyn, NY 11228
718-836-9800
www.polyprep.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 30

Professional Children's School

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and dancers.
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Pustebblume International Preschool

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ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 34

Riverside Montessori School

202 Riverside Dr.
New York, NY 10025
212-665-1600
www.twinparks.org
ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 22

Rye Country Day School

Cedar St.
Rye, NY 10580
914-925-4513
www.ryecountryday.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 16

Saint Ann's School

129 Pierrepont St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-522-1660
www.saintannsny.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 65

The Speyer Legacy School

925 Ninth Ave.
New York, NY 10019
212-581-4000
www.speyerschool.org
K - 8th grade, for gifted learners
See ad on page 42

St. Hilda's & St. Hugh's School

619 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10025
212-932-1980
www.sthildas.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

St. Luke's School

487 Hudson St.
New York, NY 10014
212-924-5960
www.stlukeschool.org
JK - 8th grade
See ad on page 9

Village Community School

272 W. 10th St.
New York, NY 10014
212-691-5146
www.vcsnyc.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 9 & 30

The Washington Market School

55 Hudson St.
New York, NY 10013
212-233-2176
134 Duane St.
New York, NY 10013
212-406-7271
www.washingtonmarketschool.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 53



The Williamsburg Neighborhood Nursery School

54 South Second St.
Brooklyn, NY 11249
718-782-4181
www.wnns.org
ages 2 - 4 yrs.
See ad on page 44

Winston Preparatory School

126 W. 17th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-496-8400
Transitions:
240 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016
646-869-4600
Long Island:
30 Deforest Rd.
Dix Hills, NY 11746
631-779-2400
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with learning differences
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continued on page 27



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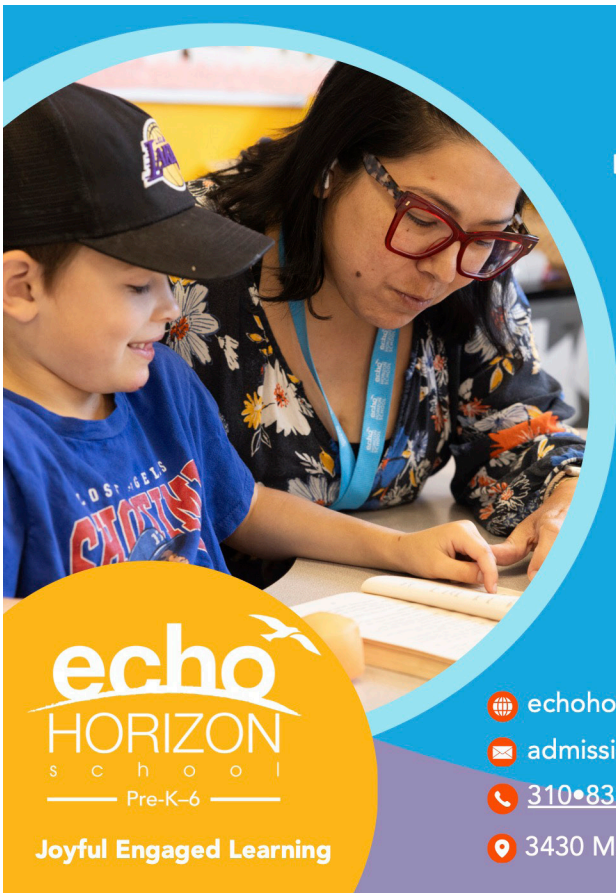
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See ad on page 41

Benchmark School

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Media, PA 19063
610-565-3741
www.benchmarkschool.org
1st - 8th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 14

Buckingham Friends School

5684 York Rd.
PO Box 159
Lahaska, PA 18931
215-794-7491
www.bfs.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 59

The Crefeld School

8836 Crefeld St.
Philadelphia, PA 19119
215-242-5545
www.crefeld.org
7th - 12th grade
See ad on page 64

Delaware Valley

Friends School

19 E. Central Ave.
Paoli, PA 19301
610-640-4150
www.dvfriends.org
1st - 12th grade
See ad on page 28

Friends' Central School

1101 City Ave.
Wynnewood, PA 19096
610-649-7440
www.friendscentral.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 11

Germantown Academy

340 Morris Rd.
Fort Washington, PA 19034
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www.germantownacademy.net
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 47

Greene Towne

Montessori School

55 N. 22nd St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-563-6368
https://gtms.org/
age 18 months - 3rd grade
See ad on page 63

The Haverford School

450 Lancaster Ave.
Haverford, PA 19041
610-642-3020
www.haverford.org
Pre-K - 12th grade, boys school
See ad on page 39

Media-Providence School

125 W. 3rd St.
Media, PA 19063
610-565-1960
www.mps.org
age 3 - 8th grade
See ad on page 15

Plymouth Meeting

Friends School

2150 Butler Pike
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
610-828-2288
www.pmfst1780.org
age 3 - 6th grade
See ad on page 64

River Valley

Waldorf School

1395 Bridgeton Hill Rd.
Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972
610-982-5606
www.rivervalley.school.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 45

Westtown School

975 Westtown Rd.
West Chester, PA 19382
610-399-0123
www.westtown.edu
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 13

William Penn Charter School

3000 West School House Lane
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-844-3460
www.penncharter.com
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 36

Wolf Performing

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610-642-0233
www.wolfperformingartscenter.org
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45 Maxfield Ave.
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www.gordonschool.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 37

VIRGINIA

Burgundy Farm Country

Day School

3700 Burgundy Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22303
703-329-6968
www.burgundyfarm.org
JK - 8th grade
See ad on page 13

Congressional School

3229 Sleepy Hollow Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042
703-533-1064
www.congressionalschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 21

Montessori School

of Northern Virginia

Hillbrook Campus
6820 Pacific Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
703-256-9577
Valleybrook Campus

3433 Rose Lane
Falls Church, VA 22042
703-992-0255
Sleepy Hollow Campus
3435 Sleepy Hollow Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042
571-294-4769
www.msnv.org
ages 2 - 12 yrs.
See ad on page 41

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St. Agnes School

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400 Fontaine St.
Alexandria, VA 22302
Middle School
4401 W. Braddock Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22304
Upper School
1000 St. Stephen's Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22304
703-212-2705
www.tandemfs.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 27

Tandem Friends School

279 Tandem Lane
Charlottesville, VA 22902
434-951-9314
www.tandemfs.org
5th - 12th grade
See ad on page 40

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Pre-K - 5th grade
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www.bush.edu
K - 12th grade
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The Evergreen School

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www.evergreenschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
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www.thevilla.org
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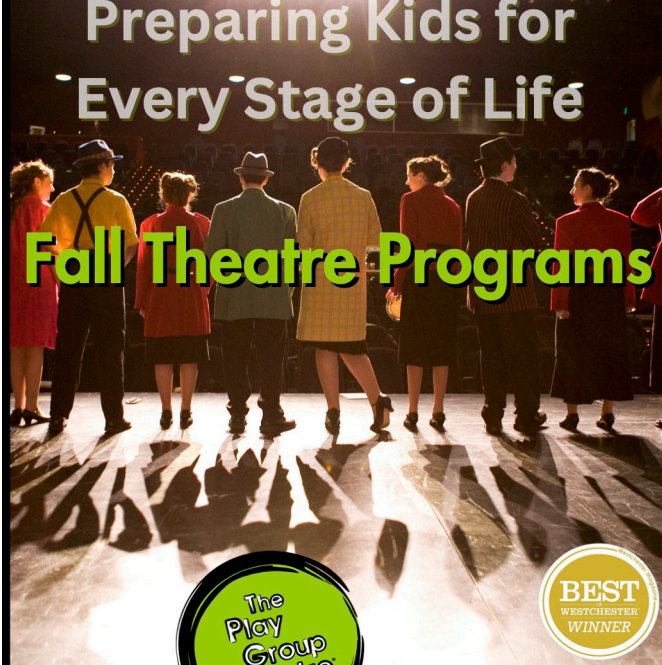


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As interest in surrogacy in Mexico continues to grow, intended parents are increasingly seeking experienced partners who can provide clear guidance and support throughout the process. This is especially true for international families navigating medical, legal, and logistical considerations across borders.

The journey typically begins with an initial consultation, where intended parents learn about available program options, timelines, costs, and legal considerations. This stage allows families to understand what to expect and determine which path best aligns with their goals. Whether they are single parents, heterosexual couples, or LGBTQ+ intended parents, Miracle Surrogacy is committed to ensuring every family begins their journey with a clear understanding of the process.

The next phase focuses on embryo creation. Depending on each

family's circumstances, this may involve using an egg donor, creating embryos through IVF, completing genetic testing, or arranging the shipment of existing embryos to Mexico. During this stage, Miracle Surrogacy coordinates closely with fertility clinics, laboratories, and medical providers to ensure a smooth process.

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matching processes, Miracle Surrogacy proactively identifies medically suitable candidates, helping intended parents move forward efficiently while maintaining the highest standards of care. This approach has helped make Miracle Surrogacy a leader in surrogacy in Mexico and international surrogacy.

Following embryo transfer, intended parents are guided through pregnancy milestones, including heartbeat confirmation, prenatal testing, ultrasounds, medical updates, and communication with the surrogate. Regular updates ensure that families remain informed and connected throughout the pregnancy.

As delivery approaches, Miracle Surrogacy assists with birth planning, hospital coordination, legal documentation, and travel preparation. Our team works closely with intended parents to help them understand what to expect during their stay in Mexico and the steps required following the birth.

The support does not end when the baby arrives. Miracle Surrogacy continues assisting families through the post-birth process, including birth certificate procedures, passport applications, citizenship documentation, and arrangements for returning home. For intended parents pursuing international surrogacy, this guidance can be invaluable.

Today, Miracle Surrogacy supports intended parents from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and many other countries. More babies are born through Miracle Surrogacy's programs each year than through all other Mexico-based surrogacy agencies combined, reflecting the trust families place in the organization and its proven processes.

Surrogacy can feel overwhelming when viewed as a single event. In reality, it is a series of carefully coordinated steps, each requiring clear communication and informed decision-making. Having a knowledgeable team by your side can make all the difference.

At Miracle Surrogacy, we are committed to guiding intended parents through every phase of the journey. From the first consultation to the moment you hold your baby in your arms, our goal is simple: to ensure that no family ever feels like they are navigating the process alone while pursuing their dream of parenthood through surrogacy in Mexico.

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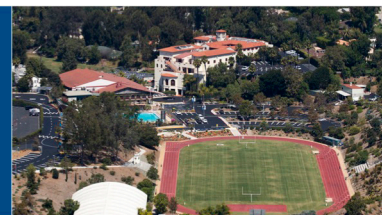
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Every day, students learn alongside classmates from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Those interactions help shape a community where students are encouraged to ask questions, appreciate different perspectives, and engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

Our community is strengthened by the many backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences that students and families bring to Garden. We believe every family should feel welcomed, respected, and *continued top of next page*





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Garden School continued from previous page

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While our history is an important part of who we are, Garden School has never stood still. We have evolved alongside the community we serve, embracing new per-

spectives while remaining grounded in the values of respect, inclusion, and belonging.

Today, we are proud to be a school that reflects the diversity and spirit of Jackson Heights. Just as importantly, we are proud to be a place where families can find a genuine sense of community and where every child feels they belong.

For more information visit www.gardenschool.org.



Images courtesy of Garden School



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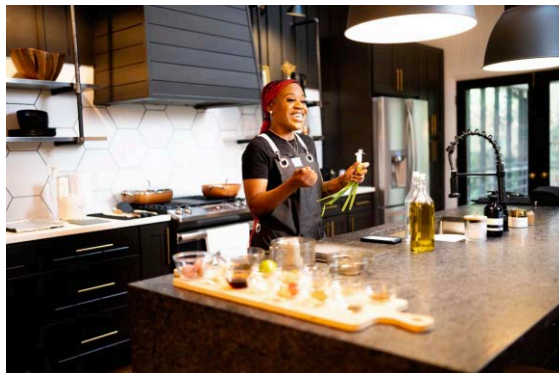
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Feeding Little Geniuses: An Interview with Chef B. Viictoria at Brilliant and Kind Montessori

By Petrina Barnett

If you ask anyone at Brilliant and Kind Montessori what makes our school different, food is never far from the answer. We are an inclusive Montessori school blending accelerated reading, math, chess, tennis, and four world languages for whole-child development, and our bustling food program simply would not exist without one woman: Chef B. Viictoria.

I could not think of a better way to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community than to sit down with the celebrity chef who somehow still finds time between world travels and private dinner parties to feed our scholars like they are her own. Grab a snack (preferably one made by Chef B) and enjoy our conversation.



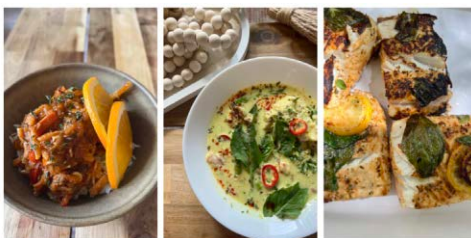
Top left photo of Chef B. Viictoria. Bottom photo of a few of Chef B's delicious meals.

Petrina Barnett: Chef B, thank you for doing this. Let's start at the beginning. How did you become, well, you?

Chef B Viictoria: Honestly, it started with heartbreak turned into purpose. A very close family member had an autoimmune disease, and watching how food either helped or hurt her body completely rewired how I thought about cooking. It definitely shaped me into the culinary creative I am today. I stopped seeing food as just flavor and started seeing it as medicine, as love, as information.

Petrina: That is powerful. Where did that take you, career-wise?

Chef B: I grew up in California and ended up in New York at the Natural Gourmet *continued next page*



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Brilliant and Kind Montessori continued from previous page

Institute in the Flatiron District, learning the science behind healing food alongside the art of making it taste incredible. From there, one thing led to another and suddenly I was traveling the world, hosting dinner parties for people I used to only see on television.

Petrina: And now you are hosting dinner parties for four-year-olds at a Montessori school. Quite the range.

Chef B: *laughs* Truly! But scholars deserve the same care as anyone else at my table. Between the international dinners and meal prep services I offer busy families and special occasions, cooking for Brilliant and Kind keeps me grounded. Little critics do not hold back, trust me.

Petrina: What do you want parents to know about the food their children are eating at our school?

Chef B: If there's one thing I hope people take away from my journey is that food is a way to care for people, to tell stories, to preserve culture, and to create moments that remind us to slow down and be present with one another.

Every plate I create carries intention. It carries the people who taught me, the places that have inspired me, and the belief that hospitality can be an act of love. Success, to me, is measured by how people feel when they leave my table.

Petrina: Chef B, we are endlessly grateful for you. Any final words?

Chef B: Just that community and good food go hand in hand. Thank you for having me.

We could not agree more. Chef B, our scholars and our entire community thank you.

Connect with Chef B. Viictoria:

<https://bit.ly/hirechefb>
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Petrina Barnett is the Founder of Brilliant and Kind Montessori.

Photos courtesy of Petrina Barnett



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When Your Kids are College Bound: A Survival Guide

by Renée J. Lukas

All the storage bins were full. The trunk was packed. But we managed to stuff in more of those unrelated items that don't fit into neat categories: a stray pillow, a lamp, that dusty board game you know he'll never play.

When our youngest son went off to college for the first time, we began that familiar dance many parents do, deciding what to help with and what to leave for him to do on his own. We did last-minute grocery shopping because he'd need those energy bars, Ramen noodles and anything you can microwave. I was obsessed with hydration, so I made sure he had some sports drinks. Even though he had a car and his dormitory was located minutes from a grocery store, I suddenly felt like we were leaving him alone on a desert island and feared he would go hungry the moment we left.

My wife and I decided we couldn't leave him in the sparse dorm room without at least making his bed, so there



The author's wife, Beth (right), with their son Hunter on move in day.

would be something that looked somewhat cozy and inviting when we left. We continued to linger, just long enough to see a few decorations on the walls and make sure he (cough, cough) knew how to hook up his computer. What Gen Z-er



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doesn't know how to hook up a computer? We'd begun to run out of excuses why we absolutely needed to stay.

The process of move-in day is one big metaphor for the whole parental dilemma faced by parents of college-age kids. It's all about the push and pull, learning to let go and trying to decide exactly how *much* to let go.

For college kids, especially that first year, they're straddling two worlds: adulthood and childhood, with one part of them shooing you out of their dorm room and the other part making sure a favorite stuffed animal is still with them. It's a weird limbo status that many parents and their college-age kids have to navigate.

Every parent experiences this transition differently. I know someone who couldn't leave until she'd picked out the ring hooks on her son's shower curtain. Others unloaded the car at the curb and said their goodbyes. There's no right or wrong here. You know your child's personality, which means trusting your gut to know just how much involvement they need from you.

Sometimes it goes against every cell in your body to push your kid out of the nest when they're still asking questions that you're in the habit of answering. But finding their way on their own will benefit them in the long run.

I heard this quote: "When you're made irrelevant, you've succeeded as a parent." That may sound a bit harsh. But there's some truth there. We raise our kids so they can be fully independent, functioning adults. If they have to call us every five minutes asking how to do everything when they're forty years old, perhaps we didn't prepare them enough?

Must-Do's Before Move-In Day

For move-in day, it's a good idea to create your packing checklist early. Do all the shopping for linens, bathroom products, etc. with your child long before there's a rush on everything. If you wait too long, you might find shelves picked over and all the "good stuff" taken. Before the big day, ensure that they've been practicing life skills that will set them up for success, including doing laundry, some cooking, cleaning the bathroom, *continued on page 49*



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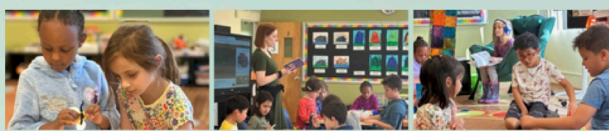


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managing money and remembering first aid basics. It's a good idea to start these things early. But if they haven't already been doing this, take the time before they leave for college to make sure they know how.

Before arrival, it's important to visit the school's website to learn about policies, procedures, and to see what other students and parents recommend. Many colleges have message boards where parents can chat with each other. You may find a supportive community to help you through the process. The biggest help for our son online was getting his student I.D., dorm assignment, designated parking lot, etc. The website is THE place for those sometimes overwhelming details.

When you arrive to the school, if you can, meet the roommate(s) if there is one. Our son was probably mortified, but we wanted to ask his roommate questions about his major, where he was from, just to get an idea of whom

our son was sharing a small space with for the first year. Of course we checked out the environment, taking note of any safety drill signs, social/community events going on, etc. We wanted to get a sense of what his dorm life might be like.

Support Each Other When You're Stressed

There's no shortage of parental advice out there. Many people have no problem critiquing your parenting, and sure there are parents whose methods I may not agree with. But the bottom line is that you have to do what you feel is right for you and your child.

During this high-stress time, you and your spouse may disagree. One of you may think the other coddles too much, or doesn't care enough. Emotions can run high because both of you are also navigating this limbo period that's on the horizon. I try to comfort myself in the knowledge that both mine and my wife's approaches have melded together, and that each has served

a purpose.

She feels better making life a little easier for him, whether it's helping him get organized or doing those maddening tasks like untangling wires for electronics. I'm ready to hit the road to beat traffic and let him begin to experience ownership of his new home. Both of us are contributing valuable things. What's important is not to diminish your spouse's feelings and to be supportive of whatever emotions are triggered. After I kept insisting that he needed to learn for himself, the moment I got in the car, I started bawling so much there weren't enough tissues.

My wife, on the other hand, kept giving our son all kinds of safety reminders as we walked toward the car. She was uneasy about possibly forgetting to tell him something important.

How Do You Let Go?

The hardest part is knowing you can no longer be there for the tough questions and decisions. You have to hope that your voice will be there in the



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back of their mind when faced with something important. No matter how much our son acted like he was too cool to be told anything, or that we embarrassed him worse than the people on the Progressive insurance commercials, I knew he would think of us when faced with a major decision.

How did I know this? I know because it happened to me. When I went off to college, it felt so good to be free to decide when I ate, slept or studied, but I still heard my parents' words when I was faced with difficult moments. Their voices were like my conscience. I figured it would be the same with our son. At least I hoped it would be.

And it has. Now when he comes home, he'll answer a question before we've asked it. "No, I didn't have a drink because I was the designated driver." Or "Yes, I got enough sleep before the final exam." When he does that, I smile to myself and think, maybe we did prepare him well. And that's all you can do. Prepare them the best you can. Then let them fly.

▼ *Renée J. Lukas is a screenwriter and author of five LGBTQ novels. Her latest, **The Big Guilt**, features a funny dysfunctional Polish American family, and is available at*

The author, Renée Lukas, (front right), with her wife and their two sons.

bellabooks.com and Amazon. Renée lives in Massachusetts with her wife and two sons.

Photos courtesy of Renée J. Lukas



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Following up with the Family of Brian Rosenberg & Ferd van Gameren

By Gary Hurtubise

When Brian Rosenberg was [last profiled in 2019](#), life revolved around three young children, a growing online platform called Gays With Kids, and the daily work of normalizing gay fatherhood in a world still catching up. Six years later, much has changed, and yet in many ways, the core of Brian and his husband Ferd van Gameren's story remains the same: family, resilience, and a commitment to making the path easier for those who follow.

Since the pandemic, the most visible shift in Brian's life has been the evolution of Gays With Kids into GWK Academy, a standalone nonprofit organization with a broader mission and a clearer sense of responsibility. What began as an online community for gay dads has intentionally expanded into an educational hub serving the entire LGBTQ+ community, offering comprehensive information about all paths to parenthood.

That shift, Brian explains, "was driven by a mix of legacy thinking, the political climate, and realizing there still wasn't one place where *all* LGBTQ+ people could get clear, comprehensive info about *all* paths to parenthood."

"GWK Academy is web-based, inclusive of all identities, and intentionally broad," he continues, describing it as a first stop for any LGBTQ+ people beginning to consider parenthood, as well as a resource for those who are already on that journey and feeling stuck, uncertain, or overwhelmed.

Professionally, this evolution has given Brian a renewed sense of purpose. Personally, he recently turned 60, a milestone



Left to right, Levi, Ferd van Gameren, Sadie, Ella, and Brian Rosenberg.

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that, “definitely changes how you think about time, health, and what matters,” Brian reveals.

Family life, too, looks very different for Brian than it did in 2019. The couple’s three children are now teenagers, and with one away at boarding school, the rhythms of daily life have shifted.

Levi, whom Brian and Ferd adopted as an infant, is a junior in high school. “He’s as big as me,” Brian says, “he has his driver’s license and is very into aviation – he’s actually learning to fly a plane, which blows my mind!”

Sadie and Ella, the twins born via surrogacy, are both freshmen in high school.

“We’d say Sadie is a typical teenage girl; curious, trying out new sports and subjects, discovering what lights her up, and learning how to balance family time with the friendships that mean so much to her.”

Ella’s path looks different, but no less full. She is on the autism spectrum and attends a specialized boarding school about an hour and a half from home. “She’s thriving there in ways we couldn’t have imagined a couple of years ago – socially, emotionally, even romantically. She has a boyfriend, who is himself the son of two moms, so it all makes us smile.”

As members of an LGBTQ+ family, the children have grown up with an understanding that their family is different... but not by much. From birth, Brian and Ferd have been open and honest about how their family was created, always using age-appropriate language. The kids are close to their extended family and maintain strong friendships.

Brian describes their community as progressive, which has insulated them from overt homophobia; the family’s overall experience has been largely one of acceptance, a reality that Brian and Ferd recognize as a form of privilege.

The privilege they now enjoy is a constant reminder of how important their mission is. GWK Academy places a strong emphasis on education, resources, and inspiration – elements that were shaped by what Brian and Ferd *didn’t have* when building their own family.

“When we were building our family through adoption and surrogacy – espe-

continued on page 59



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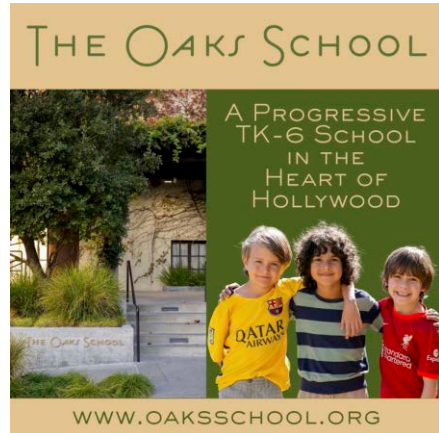


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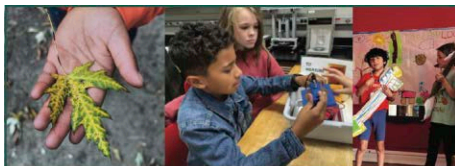
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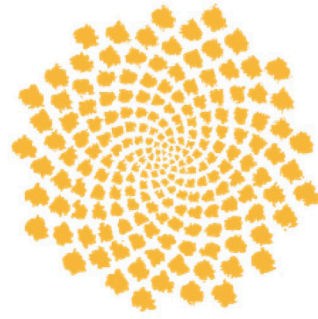
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*Rosenberg and van Gameren family
continued from page 56*

cially as a couple impacted by HIV – resources were seriously limited and not affirming. We had to figure out so much on our own; we don't think we made a single decision feeling very confident."

The goal now is to ensure others don't have to go through the same thing. GWK Academy aims to equip people with comprehensive education about all available options so they can choose the path that best fits their circumstances and values.

Emotional preparedness is also a key focus. Brian notes that every coaching call surfaces new fears, new questions, and new topics that deserve attention – a reminder that the work is constantly evolving.

Although GWK Academy is closely tied to the family's origin story, Brian and Ferd's children relate to it in a typically teenage way. They understand why it exists and recognize its connection to how their family was formed, even if they don't spend much time talking about it.

"Levi sometimes helps – taking photos, filming videos at events or on trips. And occasionally the whole family will show up in a picture or video when it's warranted, which feels like a nice, organic level of involvement."

Looking ahead, Brian and Ferd hope that within five to ten years, GWK Academy will be nationally recognized as the



Photo taken on Brian and Ferd's wedding day, 2013. Left to right, Brian holding Ella, Levi, and Ferd holding Sadie.

obvious first stop for LGBTQ+ people thinking about parenthood. They also envision it as a trusted resource for those already on the journey – people seeking guidance, referrals to affirming providers, or help navigating unexpected challenges.

"One really important area for growth will be our ability to impact foster care, especially helping more LGBTQ+ kids (and even *more* especially, trans and nonbinary kids of color) transition out of the foster care system into loving, affirming

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LGBTQ+ families,” Brian explains.

“These kids are over-represented in foster care, and we feel confident that we can be a wonderful resource to help close that gap in a thoughtful, informed way.”

Another priority is expanding resources for the period *after* a child arrives, whether through birth or adoption.

“Building a family doesn’t end at placement or birth; that’s when a whole new transition begins! We want to help people step into parenthood feeling prepared, supported, and less overwhelmed during those all important first several months.”

Yet another area that Brian and Ferd feels increasingly urgent is mental health support.

Loss, grief, and unexpected outcomes – miscarriage, failed adoptions, disrupted matches – are part of many family-building journeys, yet there are few affirming spaces where LGBTQ+ people can process these experiences openly.

“Even straight people don’t talk about this openly, and for LGBTQ+ folks it can feel incredibly isolating.”



The family on vacation in Aruba, 2017. Left to right, Ella, Brian, Sadie, Ferd, and Levi.

“If GWK Academy can be the place people turn to not just for information, but for compassion, mental health support, and community when things don’t go as planned, that feels like real impact.”

Brian notes that the visibility he and his team have fostered over the years has begun to shift perceptions around ‘dadsdiscrimination’ and “gay-dadsdiscrimination,” terms he and Ferd coined years ago.

“There’s definitely been progress,” he acknowledges, “especially in more progressive areas. Seeing men, including gay men, as

primary caregivers isn’t as novel as it once was.”

“That said, systems still lag. Many events, services and resources still assume there’s a pregnant person or a ‘default mom’.”

To address this gap, GWK Academy is launching an LGBTQ+-affirming certification for the fertility industry, allowing organizations to back up their stated values with education

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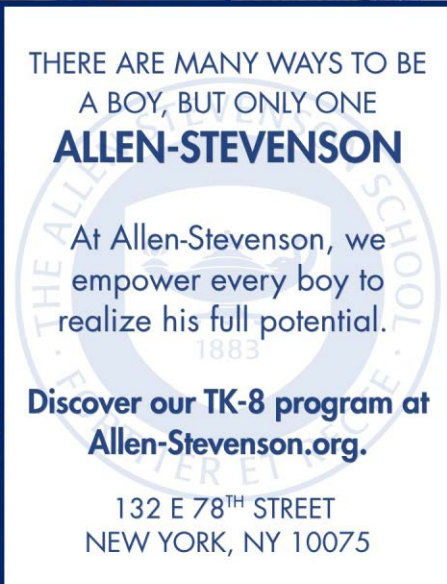


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and accountability.

When asked if he has noticed a change over the years in how his neighbourhood and community treated him and Ferd as gay parents, or as an LGBTQ+ family, he refers back to the progressive nature of where they live.

“Our neighbors know us. Some people probably still think of us as ‘the gay dads,’ but in practice, we’re just another family on the block. The novelty has faded, which in many ways is a good thing.”

“Where this question really shows up differently,” Brian shifts, “is when we listen to families from *outside* our bubble.”

Through GWK Academy, Brian and Ferd hear from people in much less progressive communities where being visible as an LGBTQ+ family still feels risky or exhausting.

Listening to those families has reinforced the importance of *visibility*. “Even in affirming spaces, seeing LGBTQ+ families living ordinary, full lives helps reinforce that sense of belonging, *especially* for kids.”

And over time, Brian notes, visibility *does* change things: neighbors adjust, schools adapt, and communities begin to normalize what once felt unfamiliar.

At the core of all this work and support, we find Brian and Ferd’s partnership. In June 2026, they will celebrate their 33rd anniversary as a couple. Together, they’ve navigated the AIDS crisis, HIV, marriage, parenthood, relocation, and entrepreneurship – none of it following a straight line.



Left to right, Sadie, Brian, Ella, Ferd, and Levi.

“Something we’ve learned over the years,” Brian says, “is that you can’t let parenting, or work, or even a shared mission take over the entire relationship. Those things are huge, but if you’re not careful, they can crowd out the partnership itself.”

“Intimacy,” Brian continues, “has changed over time. It’s no longer always about sex. Sometimes it’s holding hands,



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sometimes it's sitting next to each other on the couch at the end of a long day, sometimes it's just checking-in and asking, 'Are you okay?' Those small moments end up mattering more than you'd expect."

And these small moments of checking-in are perhaps more important today than ever before, given the broader political climate.

"It's a heavy moment," he states. "We are hopeful that more people – Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike – agree that what we're seeing right now is unacceptable. This isn't who we're supposed to be. It doesn't feel American, and it doesn't reflect our core val-



Clockwise from top left, Ferd, Levi, Sadie, Brian, and Ella.

ues as a country."

"We especially hope we're able to move away from a place where parts of our community are constantly being vilified. The most vulnerable among us, particularly people on the trans spectrum and gender-nonconforming people, should be the ones we're protecting, not targeting."

"This shouldn't be partisan. Democrats talk about equality; Republicans talk about freedom. Both of those values point to the same truth: people deserve to live as who they are, safely and openly."

For Brian and Ferd, their focus re-

mains unchanged: keep family-building visible, keep people informed, and keep showing up – for their children, for their community, and for the families still finding their way.

For more information on Brian and GWK Academy, visit www.gwkacademy.org. Read our first article on this family on our website here: <https://bit.ly/4zb-vpEn>



Gary Hurtubise lives in Eastern Ontario with his husband Trevor, their two sons Noah & Meo, and their two yellow labs. Gary attended the Royal Military College of Canada and served in the Royal Canadian Navy before becoming a high school physics teacher, and part time Ghostwriter. Gary finds time to write during those odd moments between life: at 4:30 in the morning, on long road-trips with the kids, while back-country camping, and when he should be doing his share of the chores.

Photos courtesy of Brian Rosenberg



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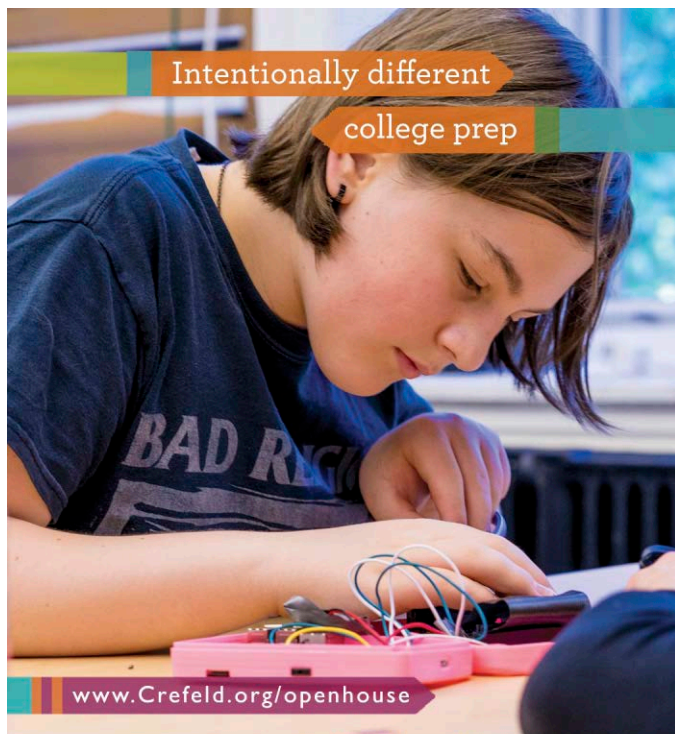
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Proof That You Don't Have to Pause Travel After a Baby: We Took our 6-Month-Old to Spain...And Survived (Actually Thrived)

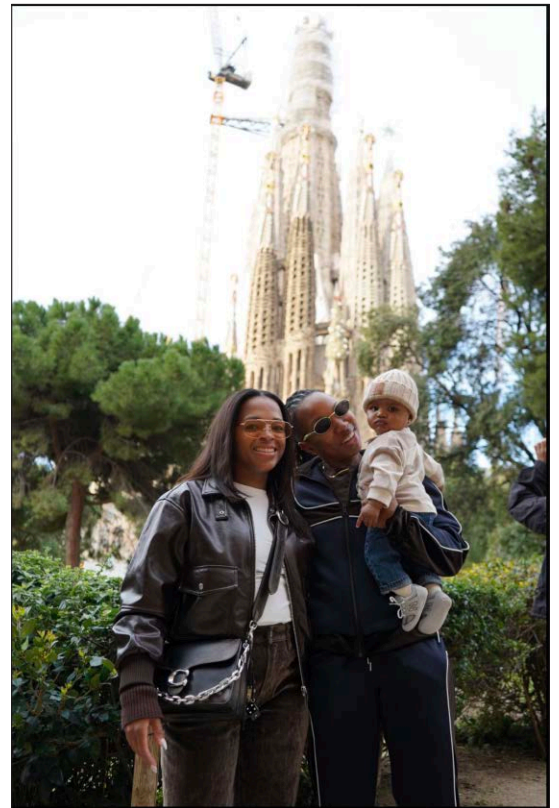
From Light Packing with Carry-Ons to Full Family Logistics with Dual Strollers/Car Seats

By Brittney and Simone Sims

It goes without saying that prepping for your first vacation with a baby is a cocktail of emotions, equal parts excitement and anxiety. The pendulum between “overly excited new parent” and “ball of nerves new parent” was swinging rapidly in the weeks leading up to this trip.

Nonetheless, this is something we planned, prayed about, and executed. While no future trip will ever be our first, we'll always lean on this experience as proof that we can do hard, slightly scary things as parents and succeed.

Now, if you're new here, we're not new to international travel. We've had our fair share of travel woes, like being stranded in Norway en route home from Rome, or missing flights to Brazil and still going after repurchasing tickets the next day. Every hiccup taught us something. With each unplanned circumstance, we tightened up our travel process before the next.



The Sims family in Barcelona.

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But this time was different because it was our first time traveling with our six-month-old, whose half-birthday we actually celebrated in Spain. So naturally, this experience came with a completely different set of concerns:

- Would he sleep through most, or any, of the flight?
- Would he tolerate the air pressure changes?
- Would the time difference derail the sleep schedule we had just worked so hard to establish?
- Would we actually be able to enjoy ourselves while managing all of the above?

After running through every “what if” imaginable, we decided that taking our first child on his first flight to one of our favorite countries was more than worth it.

Even though he won’t remember it, he’ll always have the photos and videos. And more importantly, this was the

beginning of conditioning him to a lifestyle of travel, something we prioritize deeply as a family of three.

So we did it.

We did the thing.

We did the thing most Black elders might’ve discouraged, taking that young baby on a long flight to a faraway land where we “don’t know anybody” lol.

And guess what?

We had the time of our lives. Without a doubt, we would ABSOLUTELY do it again, and we’d encourage new parents to dismiss fear and do the same.

Why We Chose Barcelona for Our First Family Vacation

A lot of people have asked how we chose the location for our first international trip with an infant. The decision was intentional.

1. Familiarity Was Non-Negotiable

We wanted to visit a city we already knew and loved. There’s comfort in understanding the layout, the culture, and how to move around, especially when adding a six-



*Above, diapers in a store in Barcelona.
Next page, baby food.*



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Angeline Acain with her family in 1998

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My life and letting go is a reader supported blog. Subscribe for free and have it emailed to you, scan my QR code, or read on the app at, <https://angelineacain.substack.com/>



<https://angelineacain.substack.com>

month-old to the equation. Familiarity minimizes stress and maximizes confidence.

[Barcelona Blog: Our 1st Trip, Aug 2023](#)

2. Stroller & Walkability Matters

Our son is stroller-dependent, so walkability was key. Smooth and wide sidewalks, accessible public spaces, and easy navigation were priorities. Convenience hits different when you're traveling as new parents.

3. A Baby-Friendly Culture

We wanted a place where children are genuinely welcomed, not tolerated. Somewhere fine-dining restaurants and luxe hotels not only allow babies but thoughtfully accommodate them. We didn't want to shrink our experience just because we're in a new season of parenthood.

The Obvious Choice

Based on all of that, Barcelona was the clear winner.

Beauty, walkability, culture, and a genuine love for family life.

It checked every box.

Recommendations for Traveling Internationally with a Baby

- **Book the bassinet row** in advance for both (long) legs of the trip.
- Prepay for **checked luggage**. (You'll need it LOL)
- Research **airport parking garages** ahead of time so you can properly plan your arrival.
- Arrive four hours early instead of the recommended three — everything takes longer with a baby, and it's important to **make sure they're fed and settled before boarding**. (Feed two hours before boarding, then follow up with bottle number three during takeoff to help prevent ear popping. This worked for us, and he fell asleep for a three- to four-hour stretch immediately after bottle #3.)
- **Invest in TSA PreCheck or Global Entry**. If you plan to travel internationally with kids, this is a game-changer. Shorter security lines departing and smoother re-entry into the U.S. make a huge difference when you're managing bottles, strollers, and an overtired baby. Anything that minimizes airport wait time is worth it.
- **Book evening flights aligned with your baby's sleep schedule**. We intentionally chose flights that coincided with bedtime to encourage longer sleep stretches in the air. It helped reduce overstimulation, crash-outs, and mid-flight meltdowns. When possible, let their natural rhythm work in your favor.
- **Research nearby pharmacies and grocery stores near the Hotel/AirBnB** before arriving, so you don't feel pressured to pack *everything*. (This was espe-

cially helpful in Europe — we purchased most diapers and formula upon arrival and only traveled with flight essentials.)

- Request the **Hotel Crib** in advance.

- **Don't over-plan**. Stick to one/two activities per day and manage expectations around time changes and adaptability.
- Plan nothing for Day One. Give yourselves time to adjust (Especially if there's a time difference).

Highlights

Dusting Off That "First Flight with a Baby" Anxiety

You can read every travel blog in the world, but nothing prepares you for boarding that plane with your six-month-old. We did it, nerves and all, and it felt truly empowering on the other side.

A Much-Needed Reset

A full week unplugged from the suffocating American political climate and hustle culture was necessary. Space to breathe. Space to reset. That alone made the trip worth it.

Seeing One of Our Favorite Cities Through a New Lens

Exploring Barcelona with our baby felt softer. Slower. More intentional. We noticed the stroller accessibility, the accommodations, and how seamlessly babies are woven into daily life. Experiencing it as new parents impressed us all over again.

Living Out a Vision We Spoke Years Ago

Fun fact: When we visited Barcelona for Simone's 30th birthday 2.5 years ago, we stayed at the same hotel, in the exact same suite. I remember sitting there, noticing how welcoming a five-star property was to babies, children, and even pets. We looked at each other and said:

"When the time comes, this will be our first family vacation."

To return — now with our son — and live that vision out?

Full circle doesn't even begin to cover it.

The Takeaway: Do The MF Thing

There will NEVER be another first SIMS vacation as a family of three.

And because of that, the memories we made on this trip, and the liberation that came from actually executing it, are things we'll hold onto for a long time. More than that, we're building on the momentum and knowledge we gained and carrying it into every future family adventure.

This trip wasn't just about stamps in a passport. It was about proving to ourselves that we can evolve, stretch, and still live FULLY in a new season of life.

So we want to end this blog with a challenge...







Brittney and Simone's child traveling on a plane.

Do the thing!

Do the thing you've been thinking about but are scared to pursue. Nurture the uncommon or untraditional interest that's been sitting in the back of your mind for years.

Live bravely and intentionally, because we only get ONE life.

Time is going to pass regardless. The real question is whether you want to reach the end of this journey with a mind full of regrets or a vault full of unforgettable memories.

Big 2026 energy: Do the MF thing.

As Always—

With love,

Brittney & Simone Sims ▼

Brittney and Simone Sims are a married (4+ years) couple living in the DMV, now raising their 8-month-old son. Brittney is a primary care medical provider at an LGBTQ+ affirming Federally Qualified Health Center, and Simone is an interior designer and nail artist. Their platform, The Sims IRL, is a real-life journal centered on marriage, motherhood, travel, and personal growth — created as an LGBTQIA+ affirming, inclusive, and safe space. It's where honest reflections meet evolving seasons, documenting life as it unfolds in real time. Follow along: @simsbrittneyr and @s.ellesims on IG, TheSIMSIRL on Substack and YouTube.

Photos courtesy of Brittney Sims

DISPLAY AD INDEX

Adoption & Foster Care

The Barker Adoption Foundation - page 12

Family Legal Advocacy Group - page 44

After School Programs

The Play Group Theater (NY) - page 29

Wolf Performing Arts Center (PA) - page 57

Assisted Reproduction Services

Beverly Hills Egg Donation - page 15

The Center for Reproductive Medicine & Fertility/ Dr. Louis Manara - page 56

Cryobio - page 10

Miracle Surrogacy - page 38

Pacific In Vitro Fertilization Institute

- page 25

Reproductive Science Center of New Jersey - page 19

Valley Hospital Fertility Center - page 2

Camps

YMCA Camp Foss (NH) - page 20

YMCA Camp Mi-Te-Na (NH) - page 20

Independent Schools/ Preschools/College

See directory starting on page 15

Legal & Financial Services

Empowered+ - page 64

Family Legal Advocacy Group - page 44

Law Office of Shannon P. McNulty

/The Village Law Firm - page 50

Real Estate Services

Gayrealestate.com - page 30

Substack

My Life and Letting Go - page 66

Support Group

Our Family Coalition - back cover

Travel & Recreation

The Inn at East Hill Farm - page 22



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