

Spotlight On: Explore + Discover in Manhattan

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by Stephanie Barnhart

[Explore + Discover 444 Second Avenue](#)
[New York, NY](#)

The NYC schools admissions process can be one of the most daunting experiences for parents. And for many new to the scene, they don't even know when or where to start. Scarily, as many veterans will tell you, planning for Pre-K begins with (gulp) pregnancy. Not to fear, this is New York, and impressive institutions like [Explore + Discover](#) (a Mommy Nearest partner!) were created specifically on this notion. Most programs revolve around nursery age and K-12, but Explore + Discover began to realize that with all of the attention being paid to these ages, there wasn't nearly as much being done at the 0-3 age range. And thus, this Kips Bay environment was designed for the youngest members of NYC; to satisfy their curiosity and explore their surroundings in a safe, nurturing and specifically designed environment, curated by trained early childhood specialists.



So, it's just a daycare, right? Wrong. Explore + Discover wants to change the conversation surrounding what care looks like in the earliest years. "Daycare" has earned a less-than-stellar reputation, especially here in NYC with unqualified staff and overcrowding horror stories, and Explore + Discover prides itself as a shining example of providing services that are rewarding for students, parents, and also staff. In turn, parents appreciate the constant deepening of knowledge through child development, creativity and health and safety for their children when they need to return to work. "I don't go to my doctor and diagnose my issue for them, nor do I go to my lawyer and tell them how to write up a contract," states co-founder and parent, Daniel Koffler. "I send my own children to Explore + Discover because I know that it stands head and shoulders against the alternatives, and they care about

my own children and their development as much as I do."

Through beautiful environments and spaces created with the developmental needs of infants and toddlers in mind that are crucial to learning, E+D babies are exploring all day, every day. Explore + Discover literally hand selects every object offered to children in their center, as well as materials, books, climbing structures, instruments and art materials.



One of the favorite programs among the local parents is the Music Before Words program where they introduce musicians and new sounds to the children each month. In addition to this, the staff creates musical experiences every day by playing the guitar and singing with the students. Parents are also encouraged to join in for the monthly singalongs, learning the songs their infants and toddlers are exposed to on a regular basis. Another favorite is the Open Art Studio - where both parents and children are invited to join on Friday mornings to explore with creative art materials such as a light box, clay tub or even drawing on the walls.

Explore + Discover is also home to the exclusive [Manhattan Milk Depot for Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast](#) (there are two other depots currently available in Brooklyn). Human Milk Banks have been saving babies' lives since the 1900s, and now Manhattan moms can donate their milk here that will be used for local preterm infants in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) throughout the city.

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Want to try out Explore + Discover for yourself? Their open "Messy Art" classes are a great opportunity for new families to have a hands-on experience of the philosophies that drive the E+D curriculum, and you can join one of their upcoming classes on July 8 or August 5 (both at 8:30am) by RSVPing to info@explorediscover.net.

Learn more about [Explore + Discover](#) by favoriting them on the Mommy Nearest app (available free for [Apple](#) and [Android](#)) and website by tapping the 'Heart' icon, and you'll get information on all their upcoming

classes and programs sent directly to your phone. (We're all about making your life easier!)

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