

NY Kids Club Opening Draws Hundreds of Families

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One of the Hottest Events in Brooklyn Heights'

By Mary Frost
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MONTAGUE STREET — If you were wondering where all of Brooklyn Heights' youngsters were last Friday afternoon, you only had to look upstairs at the corner of Henry and Montague streets. Inside the plush, new New York Kids Club, at 182 Henry St., hundreds of children and their caregivers were rocking out at the hottest party in Brooklyn.

As the grownups sipped wine and nibbled hors d'oeuvres (fat chance!) the little ones swung on gymnastics equipment, played soccer, cooked up dishes in the "Culinary Institute," played dress up and worked off a whole lotta steam. After playtime, the Rock-a-Baby band entertained the crowd ("with a baa baa here and a baa baa there").

It was the first of two free grand opening celebrations at the first Brooklyn branch of the New York Kids Club. As parents queued at the front desk to sign their children up for gym, ballet, acting and cooking classes, Kids Club Operations Director Crystal Roberts said the response was "overwhelming."

"This is surpassing even our expectations," she said, in between handing out registration forms and pens. Though she hadn't tallied up the numbers, she said that the club had taken in "many, many registrations."

Brooklyn parents relished the idea of not having to travel to Manhattan for the Kids Club experience. Hillary, a Brooklyn Heights mother of a 21-month-old, said, "This is great. ... For rainy days, to be able to come and play like this will be amazing."

Founded by Pamela Wolf — mother of four — in September of 2001, the New York Kids Club plans a sixth opening in Battery Park City fall of 2008. (Ms. Wolf was recently recognized as one of 2008's top female entrepreneurs of the year by Entrepreneur Magazine.)

Wolf came up with the idea when "she was schlepping her children to classes on the Upper East Side," Roberts told the Eagle last November.

The Birthday Problem Solved

Birthdays are BIG at NY Kids Club, says Roberts. "Birthday team members all audition for their parts — they have to sing, dance and act. They learn their parts, choreograph and interact with the children. "John O'Malley was just cast as Brooklyn's Birthday Leader," she said. "The parties feature the full opening number from Hairspray: 'Baby You Can't Stop the Beat.'"

If a birthday is in the offing, drop by the club next Saturday "We're holding a free Jump 'n' Jive birthday party demo from 3:30 to 5:30," Roberts said.

Another Grand Opening celebration will take place Friday, April 11, from 3:30–5:30 p.m. "Please RSVP for the event to be sure there's enough room for everyone to have a fun and safe time," Roberts said. Additional open houses have been scheduled for Thursday as well. (Call 718-228-0800 to RSVP.)

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