

## Chelsea Now

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*Chelsea Now photo by Marsha Lebedev Bernstein*

Apple Seeds co-Founder Alison Berna and daughter Madeleine, 2, of Chelsea at the Lego table in the playground's construction area.

### Apple Seeds brings child's play to Chelsea

By Marsha Lebedev Bernstein

On a solemn stretch of Chelsea along 25th Street between Broadway and Sixth Avenue, a pleasantly incongruous window beckons passers-by with its merriment and mirth. A plush red-and-white monkey hangs from a rope, its arms secured by a wooden clothespin. All the while, two furry friends perch below, enjoying their tea atop modern espresso-colored chairs. Pushing through the glass doors to the left of this whimsical scene brings more of the same, in the form of an expansive mural featuring lollipop-shaped trees and a Lilliputian deli where the organic produce is magically non-perishable.

To the uninitiated, Chelsea might sound like an unlikely spot to open a play space for preschoolers. For many, the neighborhood is synonymous with painting canvases and cocktails, not jungle gyms and juice. But earlier this month, Apple Seeds became the area's first all-in-one indoor play space for the 5-and-under set, signaling a shift toward family-friendliness reflective of the new demographic taking hold nearby.

On a recent Wednesday morning, the interior globe pendant lights at Apple Seeds offset the overcast sky outside. With clutched umbrellas, parents scampered inside and valet-parked their strollers while their kin shed their puffy coats with anticipation.