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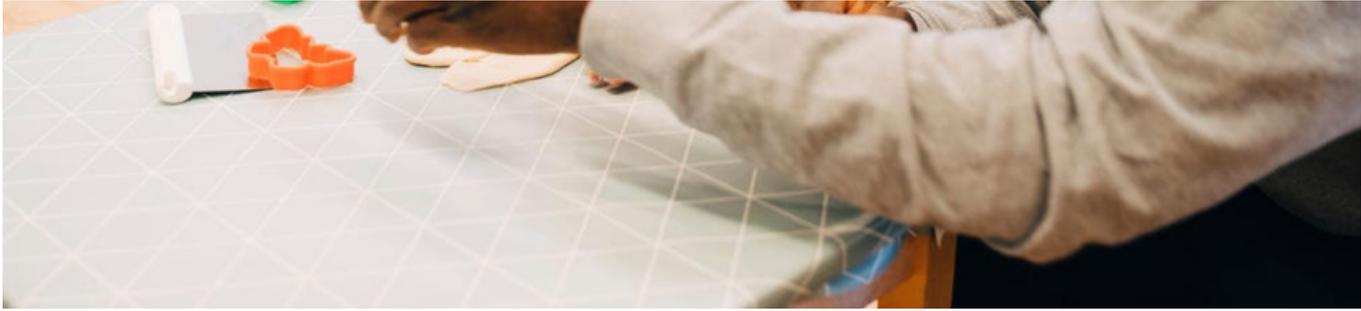
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# Prestigious preschools are notorious for evaluating family values. Consultants share how to best align yours with your ideal program.

**Robin Madell**

38 minutes ago





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**A preschool's mission statement and philosophy says a lot about the program.**

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**Two preschool consultants said tying your personal and family values to a school can boost your chances of getting in.**

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**Focus on your child's learning style and religious values, among other things, to show you align with a prestigious school.**

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One of the best ways to guarantee your child a spot at an elite preschool is by connecting to the program's values or "mission statement" as outlined on their website.

As Founder of [Rainbow EDU Consulting & Tutoring](#) Cindy Chanin, who's heavily involved with several of New York City's and LA's most sought-after private schools, told Insider, "Your appeal to an institution as a parent and family is reflected in how you actively

align with the mission, vision, value, or philosophy of the school."

But what does finding that alignment actually look like in practice?

Chloe Peterson, an actor and Pilates instructor from Los Angeles and mother of a three-and-a-half year old, said that anchoring on her family's personal values helped her avoid becoming overly stressed about her daughter getting into certain programs.

"I trusted that once we found a school that matched our values, getting in would take care of itself," Peterson said.

When applying to preschools for her daughter, she first got really clear on what her priorities were. "Ideally, her teachers are an extension of my own values as her mom," Peterson said. "I wanted her to be in an environment where her voice would be heard, her spirit accepted, and play encouraged." She added that while structure was important, she wasn't looking for a highly academic environment for her daughter.

***Read more:*** [\*The 12 most prestigious preschools in New York City and how to get in, according to parents and consultants\*](#)

She then went to prospective schools and asked thoughtful questions related to those priorities, such as how they handled

tantrums, separation anxiety, and other disruptive behavior.

When Peterson walked into her daughter's current school for the first time, she saw the main room was divided into different sections — a quiet reading area with books and puzzles, a big play kitchen with pretend accouterments, a costume area, tables covered with art projects and games set out to entice and invite kids but with no "requirement" for them to participate, and a large outdoor area complete with a sandbox and climbing structure.



**Chloe Peterson with her daughter, Anya.**  
Chloe Peterson

"I saw many different kinds of activities offered, tailored for kids of varying attention spans and moods, and I could see Anya enjoying everything there," Peterson said.

The family also learned about the preschool's style and values through a sample schedule that they received during the tour.

"I got to see how the day was divided up and what time was allotted for certain activities," Peterson said.

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In addition to considering the school's schedule and general environment, Chanin suggested digging into what its teaching method is and how it aligns with your kid's learning needs — or doesn't. "For example, if your child is a kinesthetic learner, they won't necessarily thrive in a school where kids sit at desks and face the teacher," she said.

She emphasized that a school can recognize a lack of alignment through what that family says or does in the interview and application.

For example, she said, "The Reggio Emilia approach believes in



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who shows up for a tour and hovers over their kid during playtime is not going to be perceived as a good fit."

As another example, Manhattan-based educational consultant [Wendy Levey](#) said that it wouldn't be wise to tell the director of admissions of a very traditional program that you believe in your child's personal freedom of choice.



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*ed into NYC's prestigious 92nd Street Y  
preschool consultants and a parent*

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For admissions to schools with mixed age groups, Levey suggested highlighting how the idea of grouping kids aligns with your own family values. "You could mention that you have a family intergenerational dinner every Sunday," she said. "This really hit home for my clients who applied to Montessori schools."

And for religious institutions, make sure to touch on spiritual values. One child Levey worked with, she said, dressed up in a costume and delivered a fresh challah to people she thought would enjoy them every week.

"The schools that she applied to that had Shabbat loved this," Levey said. "It showed connection to the school's philosophy and compassion."

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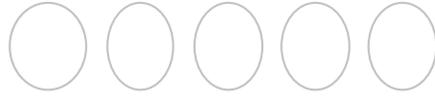


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