

# GOTTAM

JESSICA BIEL  
Is it **HOT** in here?

New &  
Improved

## DEEP DISH POWER PLAYERS

### POWER EDUCATORS

## Center Stage

"EVERY MORNING my mother used to sing 'Good Morning' to me from *Singin' in the Rain*," says Audrey Kaplan, founder of Applause New York, which is home to Broadway Babies and Broadway Superstars. For 14 years Kaplan has grown her thriving business, teaching stage skills to thousands of students ages four months to 18 years in 200 classes in New York, Westchester and Long Island. Now she plans to go nationwide.

Kaplan developed a strong curriculum for Applause by drawing from her training (she has a Master's in education from NYU) and working closely with a pediatrician. "I wrote all the activities to go with the three-month intervals of child development—every toy and activity is educationally based. At two years, children should be able to say 19 full words and that was my aim: to get children to be verbal by developing their motor skills." She also takes content from the Educational Records Bureau and subtly weaves it into her curriculum. There's even a rock-'n'-roll class, a favorite of fathers who want their sons' repertoires to go beyond show tunes.

### NEW YORK FAVORITES

- Broadway Musical:** *Hair*—I loved it as a child and still do now.
- Broadway Theaters:** The Booth Theater; it's small and intimate and you are really part of everything. The Shubert Theatre—the beautiful corner entrance all lit up makes it very special.



Kaplan integrates drama into older kids' classes to boost confidence. Casting directors regularly attend shows performed by her roster of talented students and teachers. "Parents are so happy to see their children happy, singing and feeling good about themselves," she says. "Many parents tell me it even helps get their children through their divorces. When the children come, they put their troubles aside." *Applause New York, 184 East 76th Street, 212-717-0703; applauseny.com.—C.G.C.*