

From Ballet to Pac-Man, Luxe Rentals Play Up Kid-Centric Amenities

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NEW YORK CITY — As soon as Rogeria Hanlon's children entered the game room at the [Ohm](#), a luxury rental on the far West Side, they were sold.

Her son, Luca, 11, and daughter, Keira, 7, hadn't heard of Pac-Man before, but they were still wowed by the 20 classic arcade games and the foosball and ping pong tables the building set up for its tenants.

"My children were driving me crazy because of the arcade. Every time we go to the movies I say there's no money for the arcade, and here it's free," said Hanlon, 40, a recently divorced mom trying to stay on a budget.

It's standard practice for condos to offer playrooms and other kid-friendly amenities. But luxury rentals are now offering these features, too, tapping into the growing market of families who are renting and looking for ways to keep their kids — from toddlers to teens — busy.

At Battery Park City's [Gateway](#), for instance, the 1,700-unit complex built in the 1980s, just converted a hot tub lounge into a multi-purpose room where ballet classes are now offered for children ages 3 months to 7 years old. At [the sleek, high-end MiMA](#) at 450 W. 42nd St., there's a rooftop movie series for kids and a video game room stocked with Wii and Xbox consoles.

"My kids are at an age where it's no longer okay to go to the playground — that's for a 3-year-old. I have to find entertainment for them and come up with things to do," said Hanlon, who works with Brazilian swimwear designers. "I can kill a couple of hours in the arcade and then go for a walk by the river."

During the week, she gives them a choice between half an hour of television or in the game room. They choose the games — and she joins them since she's a Pac-Man fanatic.

Though Hanlon admitted the rent wasn't cheap at the building on 11th Avenue near West 30th Street she moved into a month ago — she pays \$4,600 a month for a two-bedroom— she feels she's saving in other ways.

"I can host play dates here instead of going to Chelsea Piers and spending money," she said. "Two months ago I took my kids on a bowling play date to Chelsea Piers, and it was \$100 for two hours because then they had a Coke and fries."

Kristen Ju Magnani, a broker with [Rutenberg Realty](#), has seen a growing number of families interested in rentals at the [Ashley](#), at 400 W. 63rd St., where for a fee of roughly \$300 a year, renters can share the bowling alley, basketball court, climbing wall and other high-end amenities with the nearby Aldyn condo.

Some are renting because of temporary job situations, but increasingly, families are renting after they've sold their homes but can't find a place to buy since the inventory is so tight, she said.

"The market is tough and tight and very expensive. A three-bedroom for \$3 million is getting to be hard to find in an Upper West Side condo," Magnani said.

"Parents are willing to pay for the amenities just to have some peace and quiet," she said of the building where two-bedrooms cost more than \$8,000 a month. "[The kids] can just go down to the basketball court and knock themselves out for a couple of hours."

Developers are recognizing that basic playrooms won't necessarily cut it nowadays. For instance, the Related Companies, whose high-end rentals have long offered playrooms for toddlers, only recently ventured into the world of older kids with the game room at MiMA, where two-bedrooms start at roughly \$6,000 a month.

"We thought we'd try it and see how it works. People love it," said Daria Salusbury, head of leasing luxury operations for Related. "Raising a child can be a daunting task. It's always nice to offer an amenity that makes life easier."

Keeping the kids occupied was a big plus for Christy Gilardi, who lives in DUMBO's [220 Water St.](#), where the average rent for a two-bedroom is \$6,400 a month.

"My son loves the playroom. That was it for him. We can't get him down there enough," said Gilardi, 41, a stay-at-home mom of a 4-year-old son and 7-year-old daughter.

Parents can watch their kids in the playroom, stocked with wooden toys, through the glass window from the exercise room.

"He can be in there and I can be working out on the treadmill," said Gilardi, who is training to become a boxing fitness instructor. "He comes in and out and finds me. It's like another room in your house."