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ARTICLE: NEW YORK'S COOLEST KIDS' CRAFT CLASSES

New York's Coolest Kids' Craft Classes

By **Leslie Nipkow**, Contributing Writer

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Want your kids to do something with their hands that doesn't involve a joystick or a two-dimensional stranger named Super Mario? Perhaps you're hoping they'll take up a hobby you can pursue together – without a Wii controller. New York City offers an abundance of classes and camps geared toward unleashing the pint-sized fashionista or crafty kid. Who knows? You might end up with your own in-house couturier.

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Loop of the Loom – Saori Weaving

"In Saori weaving, there are no rules and no mistakes," says Loop of the Loom owner Yukako. "Kids can't believe it when I tell them." Yukako's mission is to nourish the creative spirit, at the loom and after, when leaving the peaceful zen-inspired basement studio. The improvisational weaving technique can be learned in one minute, after which boys and girls as young as seven immediately begin to create astonishing, colorful garments and freestyle tapestries. (One nine-year-old designed a dress that would not be out of place at Barney's.) Yukako recently returned from Senegal, where she taught a group of orphan boys the skills to dye yarn and make bags, pants and embellished t-shirts. Loop of the Loom fosters community, and students show off their work in fashion shows and exhibits. Summer classes require reservations, but the schedule is loose to accommodate busy schedules: Eight classes per session, arranged by appointment. 227 East 87th Street, lower level bw 2nd & 3rd Avenues (loopoftheloom.com; 212-722-2686)

Pins and Needles – Sewing

Visit Pins and Needles in the afternoon and you'll see excited kids bounding upstairs for group classes or one-on-one sewing instruction with owner Rachel Low. Low has designed a variety of week-long summer camps that cover basic sewing skills, but move quickly to incorporate fabric design, hand embroidery, a modern take on quilting, fashion illustration/design and pattern reading. Low wants her students to feel a sense of accomplishment when they leave her studio, and what better way than to go back to school wearing a brag-worthy garment designed from scratch and sewn all by themselves? 1045 Lexington Avenue, second floor (pinsandneedlesnyc.com; 212-535-6222)

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www.LoveSewing.com/New...

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New yarn store in SoHo, NYC Yarns from all over the world www.loopymango.com

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Cooper Union Courses for beginners & the experienced. 212-353-4195 www.cooper.edu/ce

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Summer Day Camp for Kids 9-15 on Upper West Side of Manhattan www.AtlanticYachting.com

The Sewing Studio – Sewing

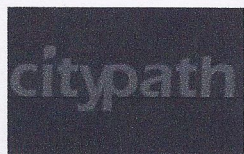
At The Sewing Studio, kids can go from making their own teddy bears (and custom teddy couture), to creating ensembles for their American Girl dolls to using their newfound skills to design, construct and style their own outfits, then posing for a personalized magazine cover. At Designer Purses camp, students knock off – or rather, “pay homage to” – three high-end bags. The studio provides all the materials, and campers leave with a Juicy-ish handbag, a Michael Kors-like purse and a Chanel-ic clutch that look as good as the real thing, only the bragging rights make them even more valuable. During Fashion Runway Week, students design clothes, logos and hangtags for their new lines. Other offerings include guest speakers, fashion history, deconstructing and refashioning existing garments, Mom (or Dad) and Me programs and Elite Fashion Prep, to help teens create a portfolio and prepare for design school. *134 West 29th street bw 6th and 7th Avenues* (LoveSewingNewYork.com; 646-961-4747)

The Yarn Company – Knitting and Crochet

Under new ownership, the remodeled Yarn Company is set to become uptown's go-to destination for unusual yarns and unique craft classes that will eventually include spinning, for those children not permanently traumatized by Sleeping Beauty or Rumpelstiltskin. Here, kids are welcome alone or in small groups for intimate knitting and crochet lessons. The yarn and pattern selection are expansive, and include a vast array of cute and/or hip children's sweaters, accessories and dresses, as well as the materials and guidance needed to make them. The Yarn Co's new owner, Tavy Ronen, a dance-lover, offers a unique set of patterns ideal for the young ballerina, who wants to be fashionable on her way to the barre. *2274 Broadway bw 81st and 82nd Sts, 2nd floor* (theyarnco.com; 212-787-7878)

La Casita Yarn Shop Café – Knitting

Young wannabe knitters learn to cast on, knit, and purl at La Casita's Wednesday afternoon (4:00–5:30 PM) knitting classes. Kids can join the ongoing class at any time. No simple quasi-rectangular scarf knitting here. Instead, students create adorable stuffed bunnies, stylish shrugs and other hip, one-of-a-kind projects. On Friday afternoons, La Casita hosts a kids' knitting circle. For \$10, they get a ball of yarn, a snack, and supervision while they stitch and... chat. Parents can camp out at the bar (!) or on one of the shop's comfy sofas with Wifi and a brownie, or a welcome-to-the-weekend saketini. *253 Smith St, Brooklyn* (lacasitayarnshop.com; 718-963-0369)



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