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Why NYC Families Are Flocking to the Upper West Side Before the School Year Starts

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As summer ushers in ice cream trucks and family vacations, New York parents are also busy planning something far more strategic: the back-to-school move. The Upper West Side has quietly solidified its status as a top destination for families looking to settle in before the 2025–2026 academic year kicks off. With its proximity to elite private schools across Manhattan and Riverdale—think Trinity, Ethical Culture, and Horace Mann—this classic neighborhood is becoming the go-to for parents prioritizing long-term educational access.

Beyond school catchment zones, today's UWS properties offer the full family-friendly package: spacious apartments, kid-approved amenities, and quick access to Central Park, Riverside Park, and a bounty of cultural institutions. It's not just about school runs anymore—these buildings are designed for everything from after-school playdates to Saturday brunches with stroller parking. The appeal of wide sidewalks, tree-lined blocks, and abundant green space gives families a rare blend of urban life and room to grow.

720 West End Avenue



Credit VMI Studio

Located at the corner of West End Avenue and 96th Street, 720 West End Avenue is a reimagined pre-war condominium offering expansive residences and over 30,000 square feet of luxurious indoor and outdoor amenities, thoughtfully designed by Thomas Juul-Hansen. Nestled within a landmarked enclave of the Upper West Side, the building enjoys a prime location near Riverside Park and is within walking distance of several of New York City's most prestigious private schools, including Trinity

School, Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School, The Calhoun School, and more. For families seeking a broader academic landscape, the esteemed Hill Schools in Riverdale are just a short drive away, providing convenient access to some of the region's top-ranked educational institutions. With its gracious layouts, refined architectural detailing, and proximity to world-class education, 720 West End Avenue offers a rare and compelling lifestyle for families who wish to remain rooted in Manhattan while prioritizing academic excellence.

With rising demand and limited availability, the summer market is heating up quickly. Developers and brokers are spotlighting homes with flexible layouts, built-in study spaces, and shared amenities like children's playrooms, rooftop terraces, and even after-school programming. Whether you're a parent making a move or a savvy buyer eyeing future resale value, the Upper West Side is positioning itself as the smartest address for raising the next generation of Manhattanites.