New York _

PhotoOp

442 Columbus Ave., nr. 81st St.; 212-362-1911

Every parent wants button-cute pictures he or she can off send to adoring relatives, but the atmosphere at most professional photo studios—all forced smiles, fuzzy backdrops, and an internal meter ticking off the remaining time—can be agonizing for all involved. PhotoOp, which recently opened on a stroller-clogged stretch of Columbus, makes the process easier—and actually fun. Kids can don costumes and props, pick from a small selection of Crewcuts garb, or just stick with their street clothes. They then get primped in a *faux*-movie-star dressing room, making each session feel more like a game of dress-up than a choreographed shoot. The young, enthusiastic staff works so quickly that subjects barely have time to get fidgety and bored. The sessions are an investment (\$199, with a handful of price options for prints) but the results— relaxed, natural images—pay off.