GARAGE POD

127 Main Street
914-231-6422
Sam Bercovich & Ana Szyld
Owner/Operators

A GaragePod Grows in Dobbs

It took a garage, a pod, and a pandemic to transform San Bercovich from teacher to entrepreneur.

The garage was behind his Dobbs Ferry apartment. The 'pod' consisted of nine youngsters, including his own children, who spent weekdays gathering in a spot previously reserved for cars. The pandemic was the catalyst. And the result was GaragePod at 127 Main Street in Dobbs.

"It grew from a confluence of the right time, the right place, and the right people," says Bercovich.

A veteran teacher and special educator for the New York City Schools, the Brooklyn native had just received a second master's degree in library science and was thinking about a job change steps, when Covid brought everything to a halt. With his career on hold and his young children stuck at home, Bercovich and his wife Ana Szyld, a Pratt Institute-educated interior designer, reimagined the space once claimed by their car as a magical indoor-outdoor activity center, just steps from Wicker Creek.

Neighbor and fellow educator Paula Rabasco-Donchez, who spent more than 30 years with Greenburgh Schools, carefully built a program around the childrens' own interest. It was a formula that worked remarkably well.

"By the end of the 2020-2021 school year, our Pod had nine kids and other families were asking if they could join the group," recalls Bercovich.

As the world slowly emerged from its Covid stupor, Szyld and Bercovich pooled their resources, hunted for a permanent location, and hit the jackpot at 127 Main Street storefront. The location has wide-open space and a large, but then largely neglected, backyard.

Almost immediately after GaragePod's June 2021 debut, parents signed up for the Monday through Friday afterschool program. The center's offerings later expanded to include a Friday morning toddlers' group, weekend special interest classes in film, cooking, a monthly 'Kids Night.