

Guest Blogger Jenny: Don't Be A Pretender When Applying to L.A. Private Schools

Description



Does She Look Rich?

So you just read the above headline and thought, *Well, doesn't this seem obvious?* Yes, you're right, it does, but apparently there's a portion of the population who are poseurs when it comes to applying to private schools.

[The New York Post](#) recently had an article about just how stressful it is to gain Junior's admittance to a suitable private education institution. The article was called, "Parents Crack Over Admissions." Parents were stressed out enough to require therapy after interviews (just proof that, if paid, someone will listen to just about anything).

But it gets worse. There is the alleged account of a single mother posing as a lesbian in order to get a leg up on the acceptance process. I could discuss the irony of all this until blue in the face, but instead I'm going to remind all of you engaged in this hellish application process of a few simple facts regarding The Great Pretender applicants.

- *If you pretend to be something that you're not, the Admissions Director (AD) will know.* Seriously, those ADs didn't just fall off the turnip truck. It's not their first rodeo. And you

can't pull the wool over their eyes. They know when you're faking it. If you want to buy a fancy new Hermes handbag, go ahead, but don't pretend to be fancy new people.

- *If you pretend to be something you're not, your kid will know.* Kids are not stupid. They recognize a faker immediately, which is why they don't like to kiss certain relatives and have no use for particular babysitters. If you ask them to misrepresent themselves, or they see you act like completely different people, your child's b.s. detector will go off, big time. And there might be trust and behavioral consequences.
- *If you pretend to be something you're not, you'll know.* And, unfortunately, you'll have to continue pretending long after your child's acceptance into the school. It will get wearing. And that new handbag will pull your shoulder out of alignment.

Of course, there are moments during an interview when less than authentic behavior occurs. Sometimes it's not even your fault. When my ex-husband and I were interviewed at a very exclusive, popular school ([John Thomas Dye](#)) a couple years ago, the AD seemed rather fixated on the fact that we were divorced, and that I had a boyfriend (now fiancé). Her probing made us a bit nervous, as if we were under a microscope (we are perfectly amicable, but she seemed to demand something more). And when she suggested at the end of the interview that we all walk off together, get in his car, and drive to mine, we did it. It looked forced, because it was. I drove away feeling vaguely shamed. Our daughter didn't get in. Was it a factor? I don't know, but I'm glad she's at Mirman (who didn't give a fig about our divorce, but did focus on our child).

So hang tough. You don't need to go shopping for a new bag or a new sexual orientation to gain acceptance to the school of your choice. Be authentically yourselves. And hey, if you need that therapy, go for it. They've heard worse.

To read the article, click on [NY Post](#)

Jenny Heitz has worked as a staff writer for Coast Weekly in Carmel, freelanced in the South Bay, and then switched to advertising copywriting. Jenny is a graduate of Crossroads. Her daughter started 4th grade at Mirman School last year. She previously attended 3rd St. Elementary School. Jenny has been published recently in the Daily News and on Mamapedia, The Well Mom, Sane Moms, Hybrid Mom, The Culture Mom and A Child Grows In Brooklyn. She now writes about gift ideas and products on her blog, [Find A Toad](#).

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