

About the house...

# How to plan children's rooms for bright fun and function



**HAPPINESS IS A CHILD'S ROOM** that's fun and functional. Here, parasol-pretty wall and fabric fashions from the Main Line 7 collection by Style-Tex stand in for expensive furniture that's either too grown-up for the young child, or outgrown in a couple of years. Floor pillows covered to match the walls are more fun than chairs, and a shelf plus pull-back curtain stores toys. The wallcoverings are fabric-backed vinyl for long wear and easy care.

By LIS KING

Yes, it's fun to outfit a child's room, but easy it is not. For this room is usually one of the smallest spaces in the house, and yet it has to provide comfortable sleeping, a spot for homework, a play area, dressing and grooming facilities, and storage aplenty.

Then, too, an incredible range of children's furniture is now available. Just picking a bed can be difficult. The choice ranges from platform beds to padded hammocks. And how much should the child be consulted?

Proceed with caution

According to David Hardie, head of design for Style-Tex Wallcoverings, the answer to the last question is: "Proceed with caution!"

Explains Hardie: "Naturally the child's special interests must be considered, and happily the days of blue-is-for-boys and pink-is-for-girls are gone forever. Today, color has gone unisex."

"But don't give in to the child's every whim, or you're likely to wind up with a custom-made bed that duplicates a rocketship or doubles as an aquarium."

Do-it-yourself tips

Do-it-yourself decorators may also find the following Hardie tips helpful:

• Resist "too-cute" furnishings. Go with basics that can

last from childhood through teens and be put to study/guest room use later on.

• Don't clutter a toddler's place with too much furniture. Give him room to move. Some vivid color and/or a cheerful wallcovering will save the room from looking too sparse.

• Also look to the world of wall designs to satisfy your youngster's special interests. It costs a lot less to paper a wall with a design sporting wild horses than to duplicate an entire Bonanza interior... especially since Junior is likely to lose interest in horses and turn to bi-planes in short order.

• Always choose strippable wallcoverings for kids' rooms. They make it a breeze to change decor.

• Going with pre-pasted wall fashions that make do-it-yourself paperhanging extra-easy will save important dollars.

• The wallcovering for a child's room should be scrubbable and tough. Fabric-backed vinyls are the toughest *par excellence*, and they're sure to be strippable, too.

• Recycling is an important part of today's world, so show your child how imagination and wallpaper scraps can give an old table or chest a new lease on life.

• Let your child's personality shine. Don't force space-age chrome and Star Wars colors on a pint-size traditionalist who loves frills and pastels. Pattern her room gingham or rose buds

and furnish it with white wicker.

• Use a wallpaper with matching fabric to minimize awkward architectural features. The use of one pattern throughout a room will also bring unity to a too-eclectic furniture mix.

• Remember that today, many coordinating fabrics are designed NOT to match the wallpaper. The fabric companion to a floral wallcovering may be a mini-geometric, for example, or a stripe. But the colors

and design orientation relate.

Such prints even come in groups of multiple go-togethers. Mix and match them all through a room to provide the child with a taste-shaping adventure.

• A child's room should feature his favorite color(s). But this needn't mean an all-red room. Compromise! Go with lots of red accents, but insist on neutrality for all large surfaces.

## Eye tests don't reveal all vision disorders

School eye tests will not tell parents all they need to know about their children's vision.

According to the American Optometric Association, most school eye tests rely solely on the familiar eye chart. This test, developed in 1862, only indicates how well a child can see at a distance.

A youngster can score 20/20 and still not be able to see a

printed page clearly; to change eye focus quickly when looking from a book to the chalkboard and back; to judge distances; to copy geometric forms; to use the two eyes together; and to use other vision skills needed for learning.

There are some school vision screening programs that go beyond the eye chart test. The association says these are better than those using the chart alone.

but they still may miss some children with vision problems.

No vision screening is a substitute for a thorough optometric examination. The association recommends all children have a vision examination before they enter school and then annually throughout the school years.

Those annual examinations

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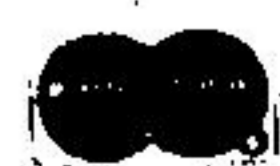
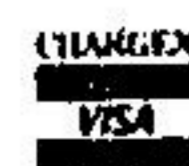


A BUDDING YOUNG ARTIST can make the most of after-school hours with a multi-activity Art Kit which contains crayons, chalks, artist's quality brush, watercolors and water tray, stainless steel safety scissors, a ruler, plastic stencils, colored construction paper, an idea booklet and two bright magnets for hanging newly created works of art. Items "snap fit" into a durable plastic storage case, ready for future creative undertakings. From Fisher-Price's new line of Arts & Crafts.

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