

Feng Shui & Children's Bedrooms

Most of the children's bedrooms I see are neon bright and busy, busy, busy. It's no surprise when the parents remark that their child never settles down. In almost every case, the child is being overstimulated by the bedroom decor. Feng Shui observes a direct correlation between the epidemic of hyperactivity in our children and the way their bedrooms are decorated. When you really think about it, could you relax in a bedroom overflowing with toys and accentuated by bright primary colors and action figures swooping across every surface? This is a room that's perpetually awake and active. Instead, we need to tuck our children into the tranquil embrace of a cozy, serene bedroom that encourages them to calm down and get the rest they need.

Colors to Sleep By: When choosing colors for a child's bedroom, keep in mind that the best bedroom colors are found in the skin tones of all the races—pearly beiges and tans, creamy cocoas, blushing pinks and peaches, subtle yellows, pale violets, and earthy reds. There are a wide variety of warm pastel colors, as well as more pigmented rich tones such as coral, chocolate, butter cream, terra-cotta, cinnabar, raspberry, aubergine, burgundy, copper, gold, and bronze. Pure white, gray, black, blues, and gray greens can create a gorgeous look, but when they dominate, they make the room too chilly to be sensual. Replace bright primary colors such as fire-engine red, cobalt blue, and day-glow yellow with warm rich pastels or rich colors such as lavender, peach, butter cream, and cocoa. Change art and decorative themes that are flying, falling, driving, or running around the room to a motif that is tranquil and calm. Include self-esteem boosters that are frequently updated, such as a bulletin board for their latest creations, or easy-to-change frames displaying their artwork. Serenity is the keynote here. When you calm the bedroom down, you'll calm your child down, too.

Possessions to Sleep By: Children's bedrooms can easily become overcrowded with toys, games, equipment, and collections. Every item that speaks of activity contributes to keeping the room "awake." Display a selection of comfort toys, such as stuffed animals and dolls, and store their action-oriented toys out of sight in trunks, closets, and cabinets.

Children outgrow clothes, toys, and interests quickly, so it's an ongoing task to keep their possessions current. Teach your children that when they let go of the belongings they've outgrown or lost interest in, they make room to receive the new things they'd really like to have.

Family Photos, Mirrors, and Bedroom Pets: Unlike the master bedroom, it's a good idea to keep family photos near the child's bed. Photographs of parents and other family members communicate love and security to a child. Children are often very sensitive to the activating influence of mirrors. Be sure to curtain, cover, or remove mirrors in their bedrooms, especially when children aren't sleeping well.

Pets living in a child's bedroom, such as hamsters, lizards, turtles, and fish, need to be checked on a regular basis. Unfortunately, I've seen the dank green leftovers of aquariums and starving hamsters in bedrooms where the child had promised to take good care of them. This is not only cruel to the pet, but it depletes the energy in the house. Keep an eye on your kids' pets, even when it's their responsibility to provide pet care.

Siblings to Sleep By: When children share a bedroom, give each child a distinct place within the room to call their own. It may be half of the room, a table and chair, a toy trunk, a closet, or a bureau. This keeps each child's individuality defined and helps them learn how to respect other people's space.

Bunk beds can be used as long as both children are happy with them. What may have been a snug retreat for a child can change—seemingly overnight—into a claustrophobic box as the child gets older. Be sensitive to children outgrowing their bunk beds, and rearrange the room accordingly.

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