

Creating a zone for your little ones is child's play

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When designing a family dwelling, ensuring youngsters have their own spaces to grow and flourish within makes for a happy home.

Trendsetter Homes Architectural Designer Colin Te Braake said the first step in planning a child's room was establishing how it was going to be used.

"When designing the space, bear in mind how old the child is, how big their bed is and if they have any interests," he said.

"Also take into account the room's flexibility because it may evolve as its occupant's needs and interests change over time."

Mr Te Braake said children's sanctuaries needed to be intimate and inviting, providing emotional comfort to help them feel secure and safe.

"We would avoid having large open windows facing the public realm where there may be peering eyes, instead controlling the window placement by having either highlights or strategic windows facing inwards," he said.

"These areas also need to be fun and functional for their intended purpose, so once it is established how they are going to be used, you may zone the rooms with spots for playing and creativity, for rest and – very importantly – for storing toys, bags, equipment and bins."

When it comes to nurseries for the littlest ones, Trendsetter Homes Design and Strategy Executive Rachel Maree Smith said emotional ambience could be achieved through various design elements.

"Soft fabrics, plush rugs and tactile toys can create a comforting and stimulating environment for the baby," she said.

"Lighting also plays a crucial role – natural illumination is essential but there should also be options for dim lighting during naps and night-time.

"Blackout curtains or shades can help to create a dark environment conducive to sleep."

According to Mrs Smith, the colour palette can influence the mood of a child's room.

"Soft pastels and neutral tones often create a soothing atmosphere while brighter colours add energy and excitement," she said.

"Art is another fantastic way to add personality – personalised artwork or family photos can make it feel special and unique.

"In a recent Trendsetter Homes custom build in Marmion, both boys had personalised murals created by Sabi Art & Design (pictured below).

"These bespoke pieces not only added a special touch to the room but also reflected the children's individual personalities and interests, making the space truly one of a kind."

When designing playrooms, Mrs Smith said it was important for them to be suited to all age groups – from toddlers to older kids.

"This can involve incorporating a variety of play areas and activities catering to different developmental stages," she said.

"It might include a soft play area for younger children, a craft table for pre-schoolers and a reading nook or a gaming area for older kids."

Mrs Smith said ensuring kids' zones were inviting for adults encouraged more shared activities and bonding time.

"You could add seating where adults can relax while keeping an eye on the little ones or even a small workstation for parents who might need to catch up on work while supervising playtime," she said.

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