



SUSAN CHRISTENSEN

Neutral furniture is one of the keys to creating a kids room that will evolve with the youngster.

GROWING SPACES

BEDROOMS DESIGNED TO CHANGE AS KIDS MATURE

BY CATHERINE GAUGH

First there is the nursery, with crib, changing table and musical mobiles. Then comes the playroom, done in bright Lego colors and dinosaur décor.

But there is a thing about babies and toddlers - they grow up. Soon they need a room that reflects their maturing personalities and changing tastes. The childhood bedroom will be their personal refuge, where they can read, draw and do homework, have their friends over and to just be themselves.

So, how do you design a bedroom that is suitable for a third grader and will continue to be comfortable for a teenager and

then a young adult, through all the many seasons of games and giggles, schoolwork and sleepovers?

A smart approach is to base the design on elements of adult bedrooms: large, soft and comfortable beds, neutral furnishings, colorful accents, varied textures, multiple sources of light and storage space. Then you add the child's personality by using the colors they love and providing lots of places to display their favorite things.

At some point, a child will want some changes, and it will be far easier to repaint the walls and change out the bedding than it would be to buy new furniture. Toys and stuffed animals can be

moved from the display shelf into storage when new treasures are found.

Jackson Design and Remodeling senior interior designer Marisela Contreras had all this in mind when she led a project to update a pair of children's bedrooms in a 1932, two-story, Spanish-style home in Ocean Beach. She shared some of her design strategies with us.

Q. The first thing we noticed were the paint colors, blue for the boy's room, and pink for the girl's. Is the blue and pink still a rule?

A. It does seem traditional, but these were the favorite colors the children chose. The boy is 12; he is into all kinds of water sports,

and the blue he chose for his room is a deep shade that suggests the ocean. The girl is 8. Her room was a bright pink before, but we softened the color, so it approached a more neutral shade. The aim was to make the bedrooms serene and restful.

Q. How did you incorporate the adult design trends in these rooms? How were the children's hobbies and interests represented?

A. It is important to give children a space they can grow into. In both rooms, the furniture including the headboards, nightstands and dressers, are light-colored. The boy's room has a

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neutral wood. The girl already had white furniture, which is timeless, so we kept it all, but added decorative knobs for color. The furniture in both rooms will go with any other color of wall paint when that time comes.

Both rooms have shelves for displaying their treasures and hobbies. The boy's bed has drawers for storage underneath. In the girl's room, the shelves are part of a drop-down desk with a corkboard. We also customized the inside of her closet, which gives her space for clothes and storage.

We did something else kind of neat for her closet. The old door swung out into the room, so to save space, we installed a reclaimed wooden barn door on a track, so it slides open and closed. The wooden closet door, as well as a pair of peaked roof shelves above the desk and a wall of vintage patterned wallpaper, reflects the girl's love of animals, especially dogs.



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The barn closet door and vintage dog wallpaper in this room reflects the young girl's love for animals. The wall color was chosen by the child and can easily be changed as her tastes change.

The boy has lots of display shelving for his hobbies and a vintage surfboard wall sign. His room includes a sitting area, where his friends can hang out and look out the windows at the ocean.

Q. There are thoroughly modern looks here as well as vin-

tage items.

A. There is a mix of old and new. We paid homage to the age of the home with the vintage touches, including the dog-patterned wallpaper, the gold-trimmed shell overhead light and tiny pom-poms on simple white curtains for the girl, and the vin-

tage signs and rope-wrapped chandelier for the boy. Everything else, though, is contemporary, which makes these rooms live-in comfortable.

Q. The window treatments are understated.

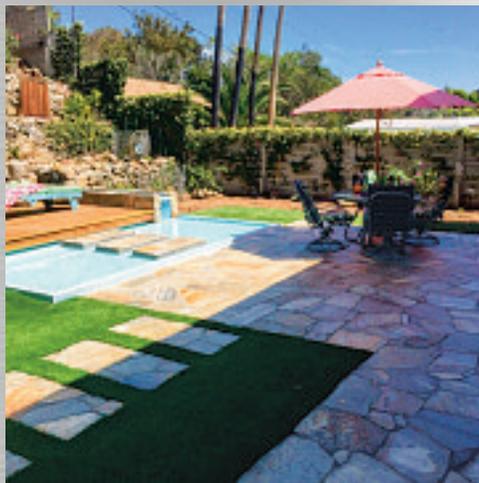
A. The family home has bright beach light, so we kept the window coverings simple. The boy, because he has a view of the ocean, tends to keep his windows open to the light all day. He has simple bamboo shades to pull down at night.

Q. We see each child has a separate bathroom. Is this a new trend in children's bedroom design?

A. I would not say it is a trend. They previously shared a connected bathroom and it just became apparent they each wanted privacy, so we made two bathrooms out of one. Each has a shower glass enclosure, toilet, sink and more storage. We carried the colors and hobby themes into each bathroom to make them look and feel more personal.

Catherine Gough is a freelance writer.

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