

Pro tips for working with kids

Calgary designer Adene Lucas of Accent on Design has some advice for designing kids rooms:

- Keep the choices simple. It's great to involve your son or daughter in the process but to eliminate tantrums and hurt feelings, avoid bringing your child to the store; instead bring parts of the store to the child. If not, your child will zone in on the one thing you detest and the tantrums ensue.
- Don't overwhelm a child or yourself with too many options. Think through your plan first, and provide the child with variations of the same look. As the parent, it's up to you to do the legwork, get the samples and narrow the choices. For example, have a paint swatch ready and ask your child which colour on the swatch she likes.
- Trust your child. If given the opportunity, some kids have a real eye for colour and visualizing the space. They may surprise you with what they come up with. Sometimes their choices are much more mature than I would have thought, or selected.
- Stay away from theme rooms. Your child will go through a few (I know from experience) and when they do, you are redoing the entire room. If your child is into princesses or pirates, it's OK to have a lamp or a throw cushion with that theme. But you don't need bedding, window treatments, art and figurines.
- Be respectful of your child, but guide their choices. You don't have to give up and allow your child to paint their entire room black, but you can have black bedding and accent pieces.
- Keep a healthy perspective. Don't waste your time or energy on the little things. The process should be fun and if not, involve a friend who your child likes, or hire a professional who can work with your child without the emotional attachment.

— Adene Lucas, Accent on Design