

Creating a kids' zone is child's play

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"Some of the items she shopped for me, but I also found options and asked her advice and she steered me in the right direction. I am so happy with how it came together," Friedman said.

Some of Catron's advice for parents of little ones is to keep the accessories to a minimum and opt for a clean and uncluttered look. To keep youngsters safe, use a big ottoman or a few average sized ones as a coffee table with a decorative tray.

Since children can be messy, Catron said to pick white furniture that can be bleached or utilize slipcovers on couches, chairs and ottomans. She noted that dual purpose pieces are ideal for saving valuable space such as a tall bookcase that can house more valuable pieces on top shelves and toy storage in baskets on the bottom shelves.

"Think about your priorities and how you want the space to be used. That's the most important thing. And

don't be afraid to repurpose what you have," said Friedman, who admits that her home's redesign was an education in interior decorating for her.

For families with infants and toddlers, Orinda's Trish McDermott suggested that portability and compactness of baby gear helps to cut down on clutter in the home. McDermott manages a baby equipment rental business called Babierge East Bay.

"Some high chairs and strollers fold more compactly than others and can be easily stored between uses in a nearby closet, which helps your home look less cluttered," she said. "You can also match your gear's color scheme with the same manufacturer like your pack n' play, infant swing and high chair."

A huge part of the process of redecorating a family home is to ensure that the kids feel comfortable and cozy there too. Catron said that plush rugs, beanbags and blan-

kets are ideal for that.

"Get down on the floor and imagine how it feels to be there," she said. "Any home that is pulled together, looks great and has spaces that feel organized will add to a child's sense of well-being."

Before the home makeover, Friedman said her family knew what they liked but struggled with committing to real pieces over temporary solutions. Catron didn't come in and decorate the home but guided them with vendor and color choices and design options and empowered the Friedmans to create their new, family-friendly home.

"It has absolutely made us enjoy our home more," Friedman said. "She gave me confidence to make some of these decisions myself that I never would have before. She taught me what to look for and how to see design elements that would complement each other."



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