

DREAM KINGDOM

Creating a dream kingdom for your prince or princess, while maintaining a sense of order, can seem a little impossible. After all they are kids and they come with A LOT of stuff. So how do you create a sanctuary that excites the kids without being a constant nightmare for parents?

Children are very sensitive to the environment around them and additionally find security in having a sense of order, knowing where to find and put away items. So with this in mind let's get started.

AAPO Accredited Expert Professional Organiser (and Bayside mum) Robyn Amott, from Bless this Mess, has the following tips to help you create a better bedroom environment for your kids and you.

Establish a vision for the room

How do you want it to look, feel and function? Go with a slightly more mature theme that can grow with your child. It is a place to sleep, read and relax so keep any toys to a minimum and avoid arts and craft. We don't want them to be overstimulated within this environment or they'll never go to sleep.

Declutter

Get the kids involved. Only keep items that are age and stage appropriate. Children grow out of and get bored with their stuff very quickly. If it doesn't fit – donate it.

**Remember less is more.
Less stuff means more
constructive play
and less mess.**

Storage

Consider your existing storage first before splashing out the cash. The wardrobe is a great place to start. If it doesn't suit your existing or long term needs, consider having a cabinet maker re-design the internal space to accommodate clothing, toys and books. It can often be more cost effective than purchasing stand-alone units. I highly recommend hanging as many clothes as possible, removing the need for draws/shelving. The double hang rail from Howards Storage World is my top pick. Choose storage containers or baskets that are size appropriate to the space and contents and ensure you label them so everyone can clearly identify what lives where.

Furniture

Keep it to a minimum. Furniture provides more flat surfaces on which stuff gets dumped while taking up valuable floor space, reducing the play area kids need. A bed, side table, bookshelf or chest of drawers is more than enough. Desks are a thing of the past. Choose classic pieces that will stand the test of time yet grow with your children and their needs. Consider multi-functional pieces. A bed with storage drawers/side table with drawers is perfect for underwear/socks/pyjamas and swimwear or blankets and spare linen.

Décor

Inject your own child's personality into the room. Choose a neutral or toned down colour palette to promote a place of calm. Let soft furnishings and accessories provide the splashes of colour. A bright floor mat or beanbag can provide a space for your child to play, make believe or just read and relax. Add photos or artwork that can be easily changed as they grow and interests change. Pinterest is a great place to find DIY inspiration that doesn't have to cost a lot.

Functionality

Consider the placement of items within the room and independent storage spaces. Keep like with like to easily identify where they can find and put away and encourage their independence.

Use shoe boxes or drawer dividers to section internal drawers. Additionally, every kid needs an allsorts drawer – a place for all those random items. Place furniture around the walls of the room, again to maximise floor/play space. After all, we all need a dance floor.

Think vertically

One simple way to make a room appear larger is by keeping items off the floor. Kids love to be surrounded by their stuff so why not display it? Wall mounted floating shelves are great for displaying all their treasures while keeping them out of reach. Use 3M hooks on the inside of doors for dressing gowns, hats, raincoats etc.

Keepsakes

For keepsake treasures I recommend having just one box in the top of their wardrobe for them to add to over time, as a representation of their life and achievements.

Minimise the mess

Don't have everything available to them to use all at the same time. Rotate items to help maintain interest and constructive play. Keep within the limits of the allocated spaces to ensure you don't end up back at square one.

Maintenance

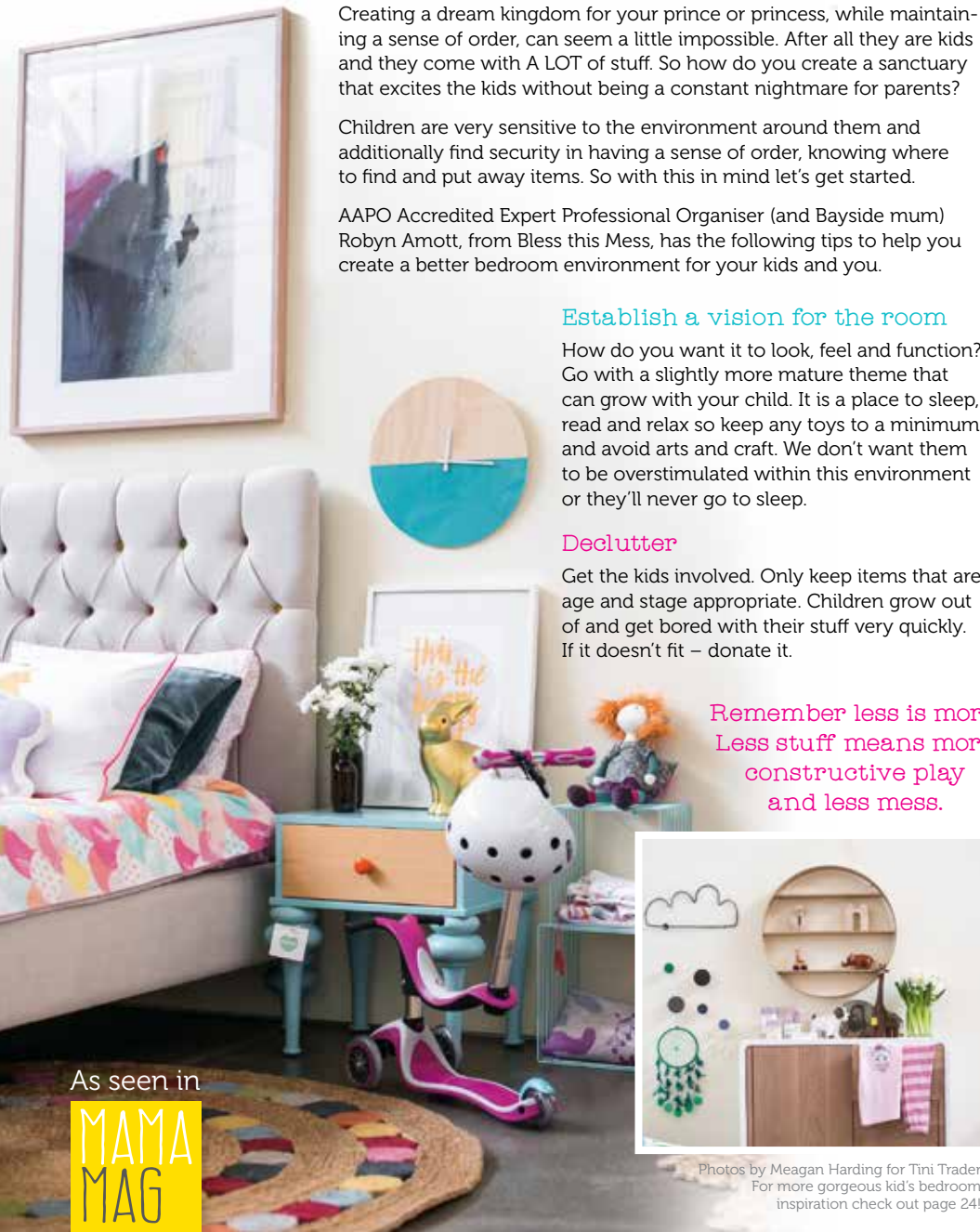
Kids are kids and we can't expect them to be perfect. Identifying obvious homes for all their stuff makes it simpler at pack up time. Instead of asking them to 'pack up your room' - ask them to 'put everything back in its home'. Establish the routine of packing up before dinner or at the end of the day.

**Teaching kids the valuable lesson
of learning to let go is also
a fabulous life skill.**

De-clutter regularly. Gift giving times such as birthdays and Christmas are the perfect opportunity to donate clothing or toys that are no longer age or stage appropriate. Try the 'one in one out rule' for all items that enter the home. For everything new something must go. This allows us to maintain a sense of balance. Again, involve the kids in this process.

So what are you waiting for? Go! Discover your inner child – draw on your child's imagination, personality and creativity but ultimately keep it simple. Oh and don't forget to get the kids involved – it is their room after all.

For more information visit www.blessthisMess.com.au, www.facebook.com/BlessthisMessOrganising or contact Robyn on 0407 757 466



Photos by Meagan Harding for Tini Trader
For more gorgeous kid's bedroom
inspiration check out page 24!

As seen in

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