

Feng Shui and the Healthy Child

by Michelle Luongo

Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese art and philosophy that has been used for over 5,000 years to heal, balance and enrich people's lives. It reminds us that everything is connected and that our physical surroundings have a significant impact on our mind, body, and spirit. Feng Shui, at its very core, is a means of arranging the things you surround yourself with on a daily basis to create an optimal and harmonious flow of vital life energy – chi.

How can Feng Shui help your children to grow and develop in a positive way that enhances their progress, development and behavior? Most parents don't realize that there can be negative stimulation in the home that affects their child's behavior, health and even their grades. This negative stimulation is invisible; however, it can be easily remedied using a combination of ancient Chinese wisdom, modern day science and common sense. Applying the practical techniques of Feng Shui and holistic awareness to your home will help you create a balanced and nurturing environment.

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personality. The most obvious aspect to consider is that they are growing, exploring, curious, active, and unique and evolving into their true potential. How can you begin to create a space which can reflect all these needs?

In Feng Shui, we work on creating balance in an environment based on the function of the room. As a general rule, all bedrooms should have a "yin" quality – "yin" meaning quiet, calming, relaxing, nurturing energy. This is especially important in a child's room,

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as in my experience, most children's rooms are decorated in primary or bold, bright colors. These colors create too much "yang" – active energy, thus the issue of them resisting the dreaded bedtime, lack of concentration or over-stimulation.

Avoid using energizing colors like red and other bold, bright colors in the bedroom as they can cause tempers to flare and hyperactive energy. Children surrounded with too much yang (active) energy can't relax or settle down. Your

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"I honor in you the divine that I honor within myself and know that we are one."

child's sleeping habits will let you know whether their room is comfortable. If you keep finding your child in bed with you, then their room is not working for them. Calming colors such as soft greens, muted blues or earth tones are best for a child's room and will make them feel secure and comfortable. Bright colors are good for playrooms but bedrooms need to be more subdued.

A child's sleeping arrangement is also a very important factor. The goal is to align the child's bed so they are sleeping in an "empowered position", seeing the doorway to the room but not in direct alignment with it. We do not want the bed to be in direct alignment with the doorway as the chi comes into the room, hits them in bed, disturbs their sleep pattern, and they will opt for a more secure place – i.e. crawling into bed with mommy and daddy.

Children adore bunk beds, but they are not the best solution for limited space. They feel like they are on an adventure, but tend to fight over who sleeps on top and bottom. If this is the only solution for the space you have, make sure that the children regularly interchange where they sleep. Sleeping on the lower bunk gives a feeling of being under pressure and being in a cave. To soften this effect, consider painting the "ceiling" of the upper bunk a light color to give the impression of more space for the child who sleeps on the bottom. The headboard should be against a solid wall, with the ability to walk around each side of the bed. Try not to push the bed up against one wall or use under the bed for storage. We need the chi to circulate under and around the bed freely, bringing healthy, vibrant energy to your child.

If two children share the same bedroom, try to create some form of separation to allow them to personalize and individualize their own area of the room. Designate a specific spot for each child, such as a dresser, shelf, closet, or table. This will help identify each child's chi and teach them respect for other people's belongings. Children, just like adults, need their own space. Sleeping under skylights, beams and shelves loaded up with books and puzzles is certainly not ideal. The pressure from above can give them headaches and

disturb their night's rest.

EMFs (electromagnetic frequencies) are unforgiving energies emitted by electronic devices. They also decrease the body's production of melatonin, which is a hormone that regulates your sleeping patterns and moods. Arrange furniture so that your child's body is at least 2 feet away from electronics such as computer, television, or gaming equipment. Better yet, store them in an armoire and close the doors during sleeping hours. In addition, television and computer screens are reflective surfaces and follow the same Feng Shui guidelines as mirrors. We prefer not to have mirrors in bedrooms as they create yang energy, making the room too active. Additionally, if the mirror reflects them in the bed, they can become startled if waking up in the middle of the night. This will make them feel unsettled and once again opt for the cozy comfort of squeezing between mommy and daddy.

Look at what your child sees every day. A happy family photo visible from the child's bed is comforting to see before they fall asleep and when they awaken. When they are alone in their room, it reminds them they are part of a happy family. Posters of kittens, puppies and favorite cartoon characters are non-threatening and comforting for the little ones.

Get to know the subliminal meaning behind the images in your teenager's

room and play down any cool "negatives". If your child is having an issue with focus or concentration, try to have their back to a wall when they are studying. This allows the child support so he can sit there and study longer rather than a short attention span.

Make sure that nothing prickly, piercing or pointed is directed toward their desk chair or bed. Even a poster with arrows or airplanes with weapons pointing toward them can create some unhealthy energy. Also, put the action figures and stuffed animals away at night. Children need a place to store their stuff to keep clutter under control. If a child's bedroom is also their study room, they won't be able to focus surrounded by a lot of clutter because clutter is "eye noise".

Creating a comfortable, harmonious bedroom makes for a good night's rest. And a good night's rest makes for a refreshed, healthy child.

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