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BRIGHT, HAPPY KIDS' ROOMS IN NEEDHAM

Through the nonprofit Room to Dream Foundation, three siblings get cheery spaces to call their own.

By Cheryl Fenton, Boston Globe Magazine

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With their son Stephen's health challenges, Raven and Greg Register were most concerned about safety and practicality when they first furnished his bedroom in their house in Needham. Born with a rare disorder called incontinentia pigmenti, Stephen, now 8, copes with compromised sight, balance, and body strength. A double bed in his room took up a lot of space, but its size prevented him from rolling out. Lamps were chosen for the amount of light they provided.



In April 2013, both Stephen's bedroom and the one shared by his two sisters, Fiona, now 4, and Bridget, 6, got a major boost, courtesy of the Room to Dream Foundation. Through donations of time and products, the foundation creates healing environments for Greater Boston kids living with chronic illness. Stepha-

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nie Rossi of Boston-based Spazio Rosso Interior Design, working with Natick-based architect Michael Collins, devised colorful new schemes that combine function and fun in the Register children's rooms.

To fuel Stephen's fascination with cartography, Rossi brought in a wall-size world map created by graphic artist Eddie Collins of Boxborough. It's printed on vinyl wallpaper so Stephen can draw on it with dry-erase markers. Rossi warmed the adjacent walls with Sherwin-Williams's Rhumba (orange being Stephen's favorite color).



Ken Soderholm of Soderholm Custom Builders in Natick made the bed, designed by Michael Collins, which has an attached bench topped with an orange chenille cushion. The bench helps keep Stephen from rolling onto the floor during sleep and serves as a place for him to sit when he gets dressed. The IKEA Dvala bedding pops in bright red and orange.

Although storage is key in any active kid's room, decluttering was particularly important for Stephen. "He doesn't have the depth perception to see things on the floor," explains Raven. Rossi placed spring-green IKEA bins in underbed nooks, and Stephen packs them with his night leg brace, books, and maps.

Striped carpet tiles from FLOR cushion underfoot. Desk, dresser, bookcase, and armchair, all from IKEA, have simple lines and easy-to-clean surfaces.

With a totally different palette, the girls' bedroom plays off of

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their love for butterflies and the color purple. Walls painted Sherwin-Williams's Silver Peony make a beautiful nesting ground for the room's showstoppers — hundreds of 3-D butterflies, the type made for floral displays. FLOR carpet tiles in lavender plaid, deep purple, and cream were used here.

The mission-style bunk bed from Mill Stores, covered in IKEA's playful striped Brunkrissla duvet cover and decorated with whimsical pillows, channels sleepover fun. So they won't disturb each other with the clip-on lights positioned near their heads, the girls face opposite ends of the beds. Each sister has an IKEA dresser, arranged on opposing walls.

Architect Collins's original floor plan hangs inside Stephen's closet as a reminder of the excitement the project brought the family. "We've been through so many difficult times," says Raven. "This was so fun... It's practical, useful, and happy."