



House Calls

with Stephen Saint-Onge

Eye-popping paint colors, just-for-them furniture, and an honest-to-goodness stage all add up to a dreamy playroom for the kids.

BY JOANNA SMITH PHOTOS KELLER • KELLER



Dull first act

In this over-the-garage addition, a makeshift play space was previously tucked in next to a tiny TV area and stray furniture. Stephen cleared everything out, ripped up the carpet, then loaded the room with color and bright, durable furniture.

Fantastic finish

"I wanted to design a space that said 'be creative' the minute you entered it," Stephen says. He divided the room into zones, adding a large table for art and craft projects, a reading area, and a desk for homework. But the real showstopper is the curtained-off stage—complete with a painted mural backdrop, spotlights, and storage for costumes.

indoors **MAKEOVERS**



"The kids are instantly drawn to the stage area. They put on costumes and start dancing around."

HOMEOWNER ANDREA SANDY

THE PALETTE



PLAYROOM Plenty of lime green and bright blue warmed with tangerine tones.

ONE-STOP READING SPOT

Forget the bulky bookcase—a knapsack attached to the chair holds favorite books. irononarmchair.ru86@mac.com

PLAY IN PROGRESS

Curtain panels (hung from a wire cable system) instantly create a stage. Audience members can pull chairs over from the table. [Wire cable system and panels: gtees.com](http://wirecable.com) [Q](http://www.gtees.com)

For styling information, see page 214.



EMBRACING THE ARTS

"I wouldn't be the designer I am today without support from my art teachers," Stephen says. "That's why I set people to support the arts in their children's communities." Here are his ideas for stimulating kids' imagination.

• **Turn out last** by turning off the TV and video games for an afternoon.

This frees your child from media bombardment and gives him mental space to be creative.

• **Set an example** Make a point to enjoy cultural events as a family. Theater, museum, and concerts all spark imaginative play.

• **Set downtime** Give kids time to unwind after school before starting homework or chores. Gently nudge them toward

a no-pressure activity such as drawing or reading.

• **Give them space** Making a spot just for them—even if it's a small table with art supplies in the family room—shows you're committed to their creativity.