



OPEN CONCEPT

We hear it all the time on our favorite home renovation shows: everyone wants “open-concept” living spaces. There is a reason for this—it’s easier to multitask if you can watch your kids playing while also making dinner or paying bills at the kitchen counter. The downside, however, is that you can see *everything*, all the time. Your kids’ toys mingle with your dining area and their snacks creep their way into the living area. So be sure to offer up lots of places to store things and try to make each area of the space dedicated to a specific purpose.

OPPOSITE: Designer Kate Coughlin did a tremendous job unifying this large, open-concept family room and making it feel cozy through swaths of bright color.

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: The casual dining area of this Kate Coughlin-designed space features tough-as-nails bistro chairs but also a show-stopping light fixture. ■ Another great example of spreading color throughout a room, even in unexpected places.



WINDOW TREATMENTS: These are expensive if made custom to your windows, so spend once smartly. Solid shades or draperies (I like white with a colored trim or border—which also can easily be switched out) need to last way beyond the nursery years. When selecting these, imagine if they would work in a teenager's room or even a guest room, if one day this space will be used for that. Redoing window treatments is painful, so hiring a professional is highly advised! If you don't know where to begin finding a local workroom, check out online resources that will even send you samples to try out before ordering.

ABOVE: In this tiny city nursery, designer Emily Butler maximized the amount of functional furniture, making it usable as a guest space in a pinch.

LEFT: Designer Kate Coughlin gorgeously paired powder-blue walls with glossy red trim and a fun star-pattern fabric to craft a chic play-room scheme.



SAVE: CRIB—There are so many amazingly designed cribs at such great prices these days; spending on a crazy-expensive one isn't the best use of money when on a budget. Stick to something white with clean lines and use other items in the room to add detail and dimension. Also, buying a gender-neutral style ensures you can use it for your second (or sixth) child!

ABOVE: By applying grass cloth to the walls and painting the trim navy, designer Kate Coughlin created an appealing space for any age.



a note from dad

ANDREW'S REFLECTIONS ON FATHERHOOD

Henry is just over two and a half years old. Fatherhood is every cliché ever written. That I'd jump in front of a bullet to save him goes without saying. I'd shoot my foot if I thought it would make him giggle for a moment. When it comes to Henry, every nerve ending is on high alert. Every emotion is amplified. Every action, decision, and moment is more meaningful. Every morning when he wakes up asking for "Daddy" is like Christmas. Every night when he finally goes to sleep is also like Christmas. I can't imagine loving anything more intensely. I can't imagine how it feels for Erin. She created him, after all.

Fatherhood is just getting started. There are so many experiences I want to share. His first game at Fenway. The first time he sees the Eiffel Tower. The first time he scores a goal. The first time he gets his heart broken. The first time he fails after giving it his all. There are so many places I want to show him. We're going to do a drive across country. I've never been on safari and he's the perfect excuse. There are so many movies he needs to appreciate, from *Star Wars* to *Caddyshack* to *The Godfather: Part 2*; I have a whole list. There are so many things I have to teach him and even more I have to let him learn for himself. But the truth is, I am the one who gets to have all the new experiences. I am the one learning every day.

Watching him grow, seemingly every minute, makes everything worthwhile.

While the gray may be coming quicker now, kids do keep you young. It's a second chance to relive and improve upon your own childhood. There is a constant internal struggle between wanting to map out the perfect path and letting him grow up. Erin and I were brought up differently in certain respects. Erin had more structure and I was pushed out of the nest. We both were brought up by loving parents who believed what they were doing was the best way to raise us. And they were right. If Erin and I agree on anything, it is that a balance of those two practices is how we want to raise Henry.

I can't sum up fatherhood in a couple of paragraphs. I can't sum it up period. Being "Daddy" is the best. Being a parent is f*cking hard. I suppose that finding a balance between the two is the goal of fatherhood. I'll do my best to enjoy every second of this journey.

OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM: Wallcoverings are my favorite way to add interest to a space and make it special, like this large-scale map wallcovering used by designer Kate Coughlin. ■ A fun playroom doesn't HAVE to be colorful—graphic black and white done in a variety of patterns makes this playroom by Jessie Miller just as exciting!



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Kate Coughlin's deep plum and turquoise palette for this dining room is such a fabulous study in how to use saturated colors in a truly elegant way. ■ The multicolor drapery panels and two-tone upholstered chairs blend colors together in a balanced and tasteful way in this bold room.



ABOVE: A tile-patterned wallpaper envelops you as you enter this elegant powder room by Kate Coughlin.



OPPOSITE: The two-tone paint treatment in this office by Kate Coughlin is a great alternative to standard white trim. The pops of orange are a perfect contrast to all the blue.

LEFT: I like to find accessories that really stand out on a dark built-in, as Kate Coughlin did here in this space she designed.

USE ALL SURFACES

One of our favorite ways to stay organized at our office is pinboards and memo boards. We had some HUGE custom pinboards made for our walls in fabric and trim that coordinated with our space (check Etsy to find a vendor of your own). Having storage and display space on the walls as well as desks and drawers is hugely helpful in a creative field or when you are a busy mom trying to keep a grasp on everyone's schedule.