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BEFORE

an afternoon stop at Sears yielded an off-brand rolling tool chest with a coordinating hanging cabinet with doors. The chest had deeper drawers, and both pieces had diamond plate door fronts. "With a little creative carpentry, Derek had his dresser!" she says.

Although they didn't ever find the fabric they had in mind for Derek's bedspread, they instead used a colorful dirt bike fabric purchased at Philadelphia's fabric district some time ago. Derek chose bright orange and lime green material for the border of the quilt, and Gurney Polay added dirt bike logos on the quilt corners, sewn with an embroidery machine. "I made checkered flag pillows, as well as a dirt bike fabric-covered bolster," she explains. "We decided to just have blinds on the windows, so the room wouldn't be too fussy."

Wall decorations turned out to be the easy part. "Our friends were eager to help with the project, so motorcycle advertising posters and banners, and used bike parts came from Kissell Motorsports, a wall sign [came] from a construction company, extra wheels, tires and sprockets [came] from our friends' inventories of used parts, and license plates from our own collection," she says.

The final accessories include a dartboard that Derek bought at a yard sale, a small galvanized trash can to be used as a clothes hamper, and a "Monster Garage" stool that Jon found on sale at a local automotive parts store. The final touch was a neon "OPEN" sign found at Lowe's, and Derek's Garage was open for business!

About the design team: Derek is a fifth grader who enjoys dirt bike riding, building Legos, and riding on the back of Dad's motorcycle. Jon is a professional carpenter and avid motorcyclist. Sue works at an embroidery company and is a freelance lighting designer (who also gets in some motorcycle time now and then). —SCM

GotKid Clutter?

by Jessica Dolan

Kid clutter can take over a house in mere seconds. I once had a client who actually lost her kids somewhere in a mound of Playdoh. Not really, but end of school year paper accumulation is a common problem in many homes. Make sure to stay one step ahead and have some containers ready for each child. Each container should be labeled with your child's name. Remember to date the art and schoolwork before storing it away. I also strongly recommend going through all the papers that have accumulated during the school year and be sure to involve your children in the sorting and purging process. It will help them to learn what really is important to keep, how to safely store an item and that it's okay to let go of some things.

You may want to also try some of the following:

1. Have an "art spot." Display a different piece of art weekly and at the end of a week, make the item "disappear" and arrange a new piece in its place.

2. Share these wonderful pieces of artful mastery or educational genius with grandparents, aunts, uncle, babysitters, and even the lady at the check out counter. Hey, at least it's out of your house, right?

3. Take a photo of your child holding the art or schoolwork and keep that instead. A photo really is worth a thousand words and takes up a lot less space.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to start implementing organizing strategies and skills at a young age. Not only will it make things much easier for you, it will also better prepare kids to take care of themselves in the future. —SCM

Jessica Dolan owns **Room To Breathe Home & Office Organizing**. Contact her at jessicadolana@roomtobreathe.us or 360.1063.