



MARTIN MANN

ROOMS TO GROW

Brothers' spaces made over

IRIS AND BARRY ALMODOVAR have to cram a lot more into their days than most parents who work 9 to 5. For one thing, their two boys are only one year apart. For another, Barris, age 2, and his brother Kensington, age 3, have special needs, which means Iris and Barry have to find extra time to deal with therapy and doctor's appointments. Somehow, this devoted mom and dad also carved out time to begin planning two areas they wanted for their sons that would promote creativity and learning, and foster their growth and development through play in their home.

With this kind of inspiring commitment, it was no wonder that Sunny Days, an early-intervention provider serving special-needs children from birth to 3 years, nominated this family for room makeovers provided by Cecily's Closet, a non-profit organization that also supports special-needs children. With the help of volunteers — local designer Emily Dolton, contractor Ryan McDaniel and painter Jon Ray — Barris and Kensington now have two rooms that spark their imaginations.

One of the spaces — a special in-home therapy room — already contained an elegant leafy tree that Barry had put together using pieces of Styrofoam. "That corner tree was a wonderful jumping off point for the dinosaur theme I wanted to create in this room," says Rachel Ackerly, president and founder of Cecily's Closet. "In fact, Emily used the tree as an integral part of her mural, which is a landscape backdrop with a brontosaurus."



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Partners and volunteers with Cecily's Closet designed two imaginative spaces for the Almadovar brothers: a delightful therapy room (top) and a charming bedroom (above). Inset: Bedroom before.



For the shared bedroom, a bunk bed seemed ideal, however it was discovered that most are manufactured in a height suitable for older children. "When Emily saw the Circo transportation bedding pieces I had bought, she thought we could integrate the vehicle theme in a simple, child-like style," says Ackerly. "She drew out some rudimentary plans for a lower bunk made to look like a garage for the car bed. Ryan took the rough drawings and created a custom-made bed from affordable MDF panels, using hardwood struts for stability and longevity." A Ford sign and an Almodovar Bros. Auto Repair shop logo were a perfect finish for this inspired, but safer, bunk-bed creation. ♦

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