

THREE SPACES – A CHILD'S CLOSET, A GARAGE, AND A HOME OFFICE –
CRIED OUT FOR DECLUTTERING AND REORGANIZATION. SO WE SET
THREE DESIGNERS LOOSE WITH A MATERIALS BUDGET OF \$200 EACH.

Living in Harmony

BY ELIZABETH GEHRMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC ROTH

In some ways, living in a compact space really simplifies your life and reduces stress," says Elizabeth Gagnon, a psychologist who lives with her husband, Jim, a property manager, and their 22-month-old daughter, Lettie, in the 800-square-foot top floor of an East Boston triple-decker the couple

own. "But you have to have systems that work, because otherwise it can be very frustrating." Obviously the system for Lettie's closet, which Gagnon says "worked a lot better when she was an infant," had outlived its purpose.

Kyle Elizabeth Freeman of Cloud 9 Organize & Redesign recommended taking out the too-big dresser. "I wanted to maximize all the space that

was in there," Freeman says.

Gagnon says she is "totally thrilled" with the revamped closet. "Everything is so easily accessed, and it's so easy to see what we have. And the process of working with Kyle also taught me a lot about how to let go of things we don't need and organize the stuff we do need." She plans to tackle her home office and the back hallway next.



BEFORE

PROJECT Child's closet,
East Boston

DESIGNER Kyle Elizabeth
Freeman, Cloud 9 Organize &
Redesign, Jamaica Plain
AMOUNT SPENT \$199.33

"Psychologically," says Freeman, "[labels] interrupt sloppiness. They're like bullies saying, 'You can't put this in here; it doesn't go.'"

Baby wipes, sweaters, and diapers go in the biggest bins. One of Gagnon's favorite things about the system, she says, is that "I can actually look at the closet and imagine how we'll use it when she gets older."

The bottom shelf was placed high enough above the floor to give Lettie some extra space. "She can access her shoes by herself now," says Gagnon.



AFTER

The top shelf now holds crib linens and blankets, while the clear bin contains Lettie's future clothes. "In the past, people would give me something for her to grow into and I'd find it after it was too late for her to wear," Gagnon says.

Creating a rainbow of hanging clothes can make choosing an outfit fun for kids who are learning their colors.

Freeman prefers bins without lids over drawers, since it's easier to see what's in them. Here, the four smallest ones hold socks and tights, undershirts and bloomers, short-sleeved shirts, and dress-up clothes, like Lettie's Halloween cow costume and hula skirt.

The middle shelf contains slightly larger items: pajamas in the first bin, long-sleeved shirts in the second, and pants, shorts, and skirts in the last.

The InterMetro shelving unit "uses the whole footprint of the closet," says Freeman. Gagnon likes that "high-frequency stuff" is in the middle, while "the bigger bins on the bottom are for things we don't need to access as often."