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# HOMIE

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## *Great Gatherings*

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In the children's music room, designer Jenn Frost added playful touches, including a refinished piano in bright lacquered Sherwin-Williams Cruising and a Rebel Walls mural of a world map pasted across an entire wall.

# FAMILY ROOMS

TEXT BY SARAH CROSLAND | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DUSTIN PECK

IN THIS NEW RALEIGH HOME, EACH ROOM WAS CREATED WITH A FAMILY OF SIX IN MIND.

With their house full of boys, the Burkes incorporated touches of blue throughout the space, but they also just love the color. “They really like blue because it’s soft, serene, and classic,” says Frost.



WHEN MELISSA AND JAMES BURKE began the process of building and designing their new home, they wanted to create a space that was both functional and fun. The couple has four boys, including twin twelve-year-olds, which meant that in addition to necessary functionality, like plenty of storage for toys and shoes, they also designed cool and quirky elements like a climbing wall to keep them active.

“They have a house full,” says designer Jenn Frost, who connected with the Burkes via their builder, Rufty Homes. “They’re such a fun family, and it was important to them to have a home that was fun and comfortable for the boys. Everything in the home is geared toward the family as a whole.”

The modern farmhouse-style home pays homage to Melissa Burke’s Midwestern roots,



Large doors lead from the living room onto the back porch, opening this space up to the outdoors and creating an easy flow for people to move between them when the Burkes entertain.

where her family still owns a large farm. That style also contributed to two of her other wish-list items: lots of light and plenty of outdoor space.

“I wanted the whole house to be bright, with light streaming in,” says Burke. “And we wanted to maximize outdoor living. Our back porch feels very much like a room, and with its fireplace and heat lamps, you can almost use it year-round.”

The family of six fully utilizes all of the home’s spaces. A music room, featuring a lacquered blue piano and a world map covering one wall, is where the boys often spread out their homework or art projects when they’re not practicing the piano. A loft above the twins’ bedroom, which includes catamaran netting across part of its floor, is a favorite spot for the whole family to curl up for reading time before bed. And a hidden door to a small nook under the staircase is used as a

In the kitchen, functionality was especially important to Burke. "Basically, every drawer has a function," she says, noting that they wanted enough cabinet space for everything to be put away. "Even the paper towel holder has a drawer."





**LEFT:** To make their powder room feel special for guests, Frost designed a custom vanity and papered the space in a striking Schumacher blue-fern wallcovering.

**RIGHT:** With its blue cabinets, bold tile, and big windows, the homeowners liked the laundry room so much that they opted not to put a door on it so light streams into the hallway. "It's utilitarian and a constant hub of activity," says Burke. "But we also made it a focal point."



With four young boys, it was important to the Burkes to create cozy spaces for them throughout the home, such as this window seat in the primary bedroom.



Everything in this home is geared toward the Burkes's four boys, but the twin boys' bedroom is special, featuring a climbing wall and loft play area.

play area for the youngest son, who is five. “We call it his Harry Potter room,” jokes Burke.

Of course, like any busy working mom, some of her favorite spaces in the home are the ones that are the most functional. “The mudroom is this massive drop zone where everyone has their own cubby—including our nanny,” she says. “This was a critical part of our design—we kept making it bigger and bigger.”

They also embraced the idea of both usefulness and style in the laundry room. “It’s a room that sometimes falls flat,” says Frost, who notes that because of the heavy use of this room, they included two washers and two dryers. “This gave it an

almost commercial feel, but then we added the fun black-and-white floor with soft blue accents. The space really pops out.”

In many ways, the Burkes wanted a home that gave them all their own spaces, but ultimately brought them together. Nowhere is this clearer than in the built-in seats that are spread throughout the home. “I wanted to create places where my kids would sit and talk with me,” says Burke, noting spots like the window seat in the primary bedroom and a built-in seat in her husband’s office. “They’re intentional gathering spots where they can rest and talk. We’ve really loved these little touches in the home.” ♦