



1 & 2: Replaceable floor tiles and feel-good art contribute to the kid-friendly atmosphere at Village Pediatrics. 3: When designing the space, Centric Projects kept in mind the needs of both the patients and their parents. 4: Seating options like the Ripple bench provide stability for patients and easy cleaning for staff. 5: The primary colors of Village Pediatrics' logo are reflected in the floor tiles of patient rooms.

DOCTOR VISITS BECOME CHILD'S PLAY

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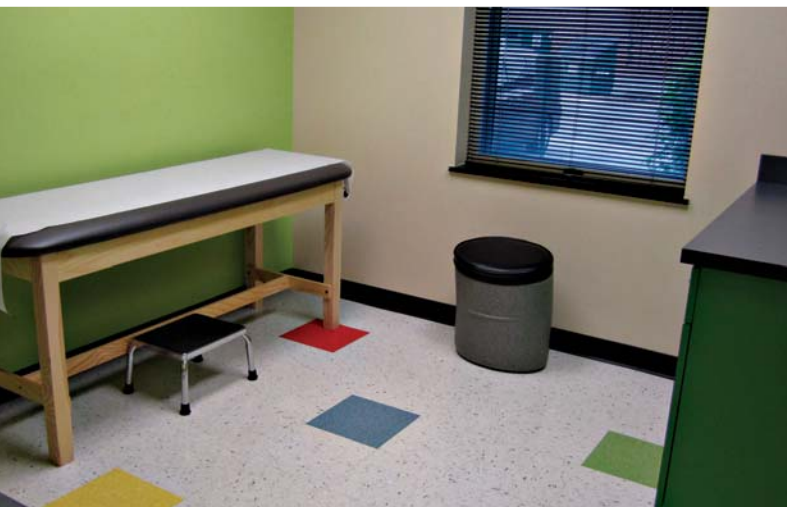
When the time came for Village Pediatrics to “mature” and relocate, the multi-physician practice sought the best prescription to bring their vision to fruition. Doctor visits—even when routine—typically generate a mixture of anxiety and boredom in the waiting area. For children, those feelings can be even more profound. The doctors in Village Pediatrics wanted to challenge those perceptions by creating a comfortable environment.

The firm's relocation to the Corinth office building at 8340 Mission Road in Prairie Village provided the perfect opportunity to convey a feeling of warmth during every step in the patient's

experience, from the waiting room to the hallways and even in the examination rooms.

Unlike new construction, moving into an existing office space has its foibles. “As with any remodel, there are challenges with existing equipment and being able to achieve [the desired] design with strategic retrofitting,” says Shawn Frost, supermanager of Centric Projects, the firm responsible for the construction.

According to Frost, the drywall soffits in reception required careful configuration. For example, existing mechanical equipment needed to be moved to accommodate the soffits. The entrance was



expanded to a double entry that divides the space between sick and well reception areas to prevent the spread of illness.

Furthermore, Centric Projects' team framed a thick demising wall between the two rooms. "We also installed gypsum board all the way back so pathogens could not travel between the sick and well rooms," Frost says. "That demising wall is insulated with R-19 insulation."

Centric Projects also was responsible for selecting wall paint. "Today's standards for paint have changed dramatically from even four to six years ago," Frost says. "Since this was a medical project with an emphasis on children, we used a Benjamin Moore product with no [volatile organic compounds]." With the danger of chemicals removed from the equation, the team applied three coats to achieve the perfect finish.

Extensive remodeling projects are becoming de rigueur, as current market conditions have curtailed new construction.

"We are seeing more tenants/clients updating their spaces in lieu of building or moving to a new building," Frost explains. "With the cost-conscious team at Village Pediatrics, we were able to reuse some of the previous layout and offices to integrate with the new. You would never recognize that this was not all-new construction."

This project was personal for Centric Projects. "We have employees ... who were patients of Village Pediatrics as children and now take their kids there," Frost says.

The medical office was also well-known to the staff at Scott Rice Office Works, which handled the interior design. Before the practice relocated, it had already established a whimsical, kid-friendly logo as part of its identity. "We decided to carry their logo colors throughout the new office," says Carrie Carlson, a health care consultant at Scott Rice. "We wanted the design to be fun, updated, bright and cheery. While the logo features bright primary colors, we opted for a more muted version in the décor."

The five primary colors are adapted in the flooring—as spots of color on the floor of the exam rooms—on the upholstery and finish choices in the waiting rooms, and even in the scrubs worn by staff.

Instead of stiff, commonplace chairs in the waiting rooms, furniture was chosen based on kid appeal and cleanability. "We specified soft seating and ottomans that instantly look fun for a child to sit on," Carlson notes. "For example, the Ripple bench has a hard frame for stability, but it is softened by the padded vinyl upholstery that can be wiped down easily. We didn't want the cleaning staff to have to be digging down between seat cushions every night."

The carpet in the waiting rooms and the hallway helps control noise and is also easy to maintain. "We used carpet tiles that can be individually replaced or cleaned as necessary," Carlson says.

Even the seats in the examination rooms have comfort in mind, since parents accompany their children on visits. In addition to colorful armless chairs, there are highly movable Crushed Can stools from Turnstone that provide comfort and flexibility.

Each of the examining rooms reinforces the medical practice's logo colors. One wall is painted in an accent color and there are random squares of coordinating color incorporated within the standard composition tiles. "We've since learned that the exam rooms have been nicknamed according to the color," Carlson says. "There's the red room, the purple room, etc."

The crowning decorative touch is the artwork sprinkled throughout. A local portrait photographer was commissioned to provide images of happy babies and toddlers to underscore the feel-good vibe of each space.

The renovation feedback has been extremely positive, Carlson says: "The new environment really perked up the staff." **CJ**