



BELLEVILLE, Ont. - Sydney Porter, 13, sits on her bed, texting a friend as the family dog walks through the room. She says her bedroom is cozy and conveys that she likes hanging out with friends and that she's different from other girls her age. Purple is not her favourite colour.



LASALLE, Ont. - Karlie Mady, 18, sits on the bed in her basement bedroom in her parents' Lasalle home, painting a topcoat on her nails. She thinks her room is very representative of her interest in beauty and fashion, but is not necessarily an accurate depiction of her personality as a whole.



CORBYVILLE, Ont. - Charlie Vilagut, 17, sits in his bedroom with his dog and cat. He believes his room conveys that he's creative, loves skateboarding, and is proud of his Venezuelan heritage. He thinks someone would be able to walk into his room and get an accurate idea of who he is.



WINDSOR, Ont. - Dylan Logan, 15, sits in his bedroom reading World of Warcraft: Arthas: Rise of the Lich King. He doesn't keep much in his room besides books and old photos his mom has put there. He describes himself as "nerdy" and says his room conveys that because books are almost the only thing in the room.



BELLEVILLE, Ont. - Kyle Snyder, 13, sits on his bed on his laptop. He doesn't think his bedroom conveys much about his personality besides that he is messy and likes to read. He says it's more of an accurate representation of his personality a few years ago but that his interests have since changed. He has 3 crucifixes in his room and says he is "a bit religious".

SACRED SPACE

Photos and story by Gabrielle Smith

"I think my room says that I like things in a very particular way. It always looks like this and never changes. If there's a pillow out of place, I know. It's my sacred space."

Karlie Mady, 18 years old, said of her monochromatic cream bedroom. The basement bedroom, located in her parents' sizeable Lasalle home, is clean and girly, with fuzzy pillows, butterflies on the walls, and makeup displayed on the dressers.

When asked what she spends the majority of time in her room doing, she said she uses the space primarily for fashion and beauty, when she isn't sleeping or watching *Suits*.

It's clear by her bedroom that Mady has an interest in fashion and beauty, but her interests in traveling and mountain climbing might not be as obviously displayed. She explained that her room does a great job of capturing one side of her personality and interests, but isn't necessarily representative of her as a whole.

Mady's desire to create a space that is representative of her is an experience that is shared by most teenagers.

Michael Manthorpe, a psychotherapist and expert on adolescence, confirmed the importance of bedrooms during the developmental teen years.

"As puberty comes on for most teenagers, they start to develop a different perspective of themselves and life. It's normal at this point

in time for teenagers to put a higher value on personal privacy and wanting to have more control over their life and their space. To some degree, the room is a statement of themselves."

Allie Bachtold, a vibrant and driven 17-year-old, pushed open her bedroom door to reveal a bright pastel green room with a purple bed. The space was welcoming. The floors were clean and the bed was made.

Stepping into the room to face the door revealed a large open dollhouse, filled with books and trinkets. Leaning against it was a 5-foot long inflatable Orca whale that she commented was part of a Sea World trainer Halloween costume. A collection of track participation numbers and academic awards and certificates covered a bulletin board.

When asked what she uses the space for, she said that being so involved in extracurricular activities results in the room being a space for sleeping, homework – that she routinely does on the floor – and a "dumping ground" for her stuff.

Bachtold is aware of her room's split personality. "It's kind of disorganized but also put together. On the surface when you walk in, it looks fine, but then once you get in there you're like 'Oh man, there's a lot of stuff in here,'" she laughed.

"I don't know what that says about me. Probably a lot."



BELLE RIVER, Ont. - Kat Moscone, 14, sits on her bed watching a Youtube video while her younger sister, Sierra, 13, lounges next to her. Moscone likes spending time in her room and thinks it's an accurate representation of her interests in music, beauty, and art. She says her sister only hangs out in her room when she wants something.



WINDSOR, Ont. - Allie Bachtold, 17, sits on the floor in her bedroom against her bed frame doing math homework. She is highly involved in extracurricular activities so her room is mostly a functional space for sleeping and homework because she doesn't have time to do much else in it. She has been in the same room since she was three years old, so it has grown up with her and she admits to having quite a few outdated elements in it.