



## Growing Up Green

text | Elyse Glickman

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**Trista and Ryan** Sutter's courtship captured the nation's imagination, and now Lisa and Ron Beres, cofounders of Green Nest, are using baby Max Sutter's nursery to inspire young families to live green from the cradle forward.

As parents and environmentalists, the Bereses take their leadership role seriously with a comprehensive line of home and baby products that are equal parts stylish and socially conscious.

The Bereses and Sutters were introduced by a mutual producer friend involved with [EcoZone](#) (an educational television series co-hosted by Ryan). Although Ryan continues his public life, the Sutters' settling in Colorado reflects their desire to live a clean, outdoorsy life in an environment perfect for raising children.

"Because people follow what they see on television, and Trista and Ryan are recognizable, we saw this as a great opportunity to show a large audience how families can do good and make changes," says Lisa Beres. "As they are very down-to-earth, and admit they are on a learning curve themselves, audiences will connect with them all the more."

Like most expectant mothers, Trista got started by looking for places to register for the baby's bedding. However, the first thing Lisa taught Trista was an effective medical grade [HEPA air filter](#) was the first step to creating a healthier nursery--not only for the baby, but also for the parents and others working on the decor.

Trista knew how important it was to have organic bedding, and she learned that an organic mattress would be a great investment in the long run, considering babies spend 12 to 14 hours a day sleeping on it. Although aesthetics were important for the couple at the outset, Lisa introduced them to a family of paints that were either VOC-free or low-VOC.

“Some couples may think these options are more expensive,” says Lisa. “But when one looks at the long term cost of health care, we want to show families it is better to be more proactive than reactive when it comes to things that touch your baby and family directly. While most mattresses have pesticides and flame retardant chemicals (which are required by law), organic mattresses have wool, which acts as a natural flame retardant. The same goes for bedding, where you’ll want to use organic cotton sheets and natural latex rubber toppers.”

Other essentials included organic toys colored with vegetable dyes--important when you consider young children put things in their mouths. Lisa also points out that old-fashioned baby supplies such as glass baby bottles are new again because they are kinder to the environment and won’t leach chemicals into formula or other liquids when heated.

*Photos courtesy of Lisa and Ron Beres, cofounders of [Green Nest](#)*

#### **Cleaning Up Your Family’s Act**

As the old saying goes, it’s what you don’t know or see that can hurt you. According to Lisa Beres, when making a home more environmentally sound, you are also remedying common but invisible problems that can affect your family’s health.

- A home can contain levels of pollutants two to five times higher than outside air.
- As the average American spends about 90 percent of his or her time inside, the EPA ranked indoor air pollution as one of the top five environmental risks to public health.
- Materials used to build and furnish homes contain a variety of synthetic materials (volatile organic compounds, or VOCs) from carpets, paint, and foam cushions to insulation and chemically treated pressed wood products. These compounds break down and are released into the air over time in the form of toxic fumes.
- To bring the message “home” to children, the Bereses published *My Body, My House*, which thoughtfully explains how the health of a home affects the health of a person.

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Stylishly sound--While this room is elegant and provides everything a baby and his parents could want, Lisa Beres notes that much of what's in this room is also affordable, or worth the investment, for the health and well-being of the entire family.



Although aesthetics were important for Trista and Ryan at the outset, and they wanted a blue and chocolate brown color scheme for their baby's room, Lisa introduced them to a family of paints that were either VOC-free or low-VOC.



Toys you can trust--In an era where toy safety issues have made the news, it is comforting to know there are toys available like this one that are made from the safest materials.



Lisa Beres, cofounder of Green Nest, who also served as Trista and Ryan's eco-mentor in the process.

*About the Author:*



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Elyse Glickman is a Los Angeles-based writer and editor covering a wide variety of lifestyle-driven subjects including interior design, travel, food and wine, fashion, and beauty/wellness.

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