



## Children's Shrine

It is customary in the Shambhala community to set up a children's shrine in your home for your children. It is usually set up a few weeks before Children's Day and taken down a few weeks after. However some children prefer to keep it up all year.

Make sure you get your children involved with the setup and the decoration. Ideally, a children's shrine should be at heart level, covered with a beautiful piece of silk, satin or brocade, with a statue, a thanka or even a framed poster, of the Buddha simply meditating. This serves as reminder to the children that we are trying to sit still and peaceful, like the Buddha. You could also have a King or a Queen representing the

masculine and feminine principles. Aside from that, you could keep the shrine quite simple. Five little bowls filled with sand, rice or jewel like stones and topped with offerings for the five senses are appropriate, as many of the contemplative arts the children will be learning develop mindfulness of their five senses, and so it is something they can easily relate with. The five sense offerings for a Shambhala shrine are: mirror (sight), musical instrument or conch type shell (hearing), feathers or a ribbon tied on a stick (touch), fruit, cookie or candy (taste), and saffron water (smell). Along with these offerings you can also have candles and incense, which your mentors can be responsible for lighting and putting out. Last but not least, there should be a good, loud gong.