

PROFILES

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ORADELL

HEALTHY DOSE OF CARING

Ask Dr. Lawrence D. Rosen what strides have been made in the last decade in pediatric medicine with regard to sustainability, and the physician suggests a field that's still in its infancy.

Eight months ago, Rosen and colleague Dr. Maja T. Castillo opened The Whole Child Center in Oradell with green ideas in mind. The 4,000-square-foot Kinderkamack Road office is believed to be one of the first green pediatric offices in the nation. The plan? To have an integrative medical practice as ecologically sustainable as possible, that complements the holistic, family-centered model. "We wanted to practice in a space that reflected the kind of work that we do," explains Rosen, a consultant at Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC) and the chief of pediatric integrative medicine at the Deirdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology at HUMC.

The Oradell office was gutted, then redone with non-toxic paints, ceiling tiles of recycled mineral content, linoleum of natural linseed and paperless informational systems. The examining rooms are larger than most, with as much natural light as possible, and exam tables are constructed of non-toxic materials. Fiberboard bookcases are made from recycled wood and sealed with formaldehyde-free resin.

The cost, Rosen says, was not prohibitive – just 3 to 5 percent more than the conventional alternative. "That extra outlay was not overwhelming, because it's the right thing to do," Rosen says. "It's time this field stops taking baby steps with regard to sustainability."

