

PRACTICAL PLAN

While this made-over main floor looks like it's only seen cocktails and canapés, it's actually filled with smart toddler-friendly solutions.

TEXT IRIS BENAROIA | PHOTOGRAPHY DONNA GRIFFITH
STYLING ANN MARIE FAVOT





For a couple of years, Amanda and Brad Jewson grappled with a typical parent problem: how to co-exist with the diapered set and still have an adult-friendly space. The couple's home in Toronto's Corso Italia neighbourhood just wasn't cutting it. After living in it for four years they considered moving, but since they loved the location they decided to stay and renovate. "The kitchen and the living area were separated," says Brad, which made for poor sightlines. "The idea of keeping an eye on the kids in the living room while preparing dinner in the kitchen was very appealing to us. We were also desperate for more storage." So Amanda and Brad enlisted Meghan Carter of Meghan Carter Design to turn their 900-square-foot main floor into a chic yet child-friendly space for their daughters, Winnie, 5, and Norah, 3, as well as a dog-friendly home for their golden retriever, Cece.

"The challenge was fitting the entire wish list into a relatively small space," says Meghan, who worked with LB Construction & Design on the four-month-long revamp that entailed gutting the



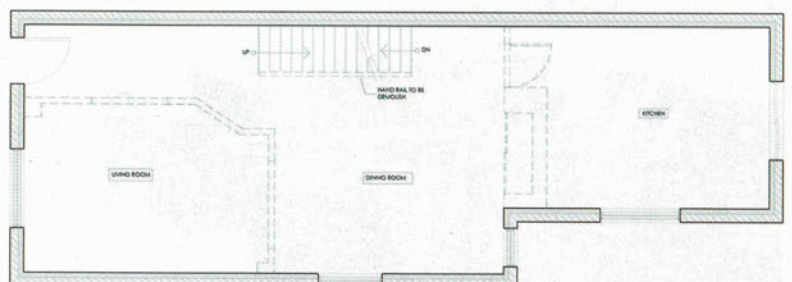
Marble-trimmed millwork acts as an airy divider in the entryway. "I don't like walking into a house, and finding yourself standing right in the living room," says designer Meghan Carter. The new front door's translucent glass panel keeps the space from feeling boxed in. The cabinets hold shoes on one side and toys and electronics on the other.

DESIGN, Meghan Carter Design; **CONTRACTING,** LB Construction & Design; **MILLWORK** (throughout) Colclo Custom Woodworking; **PAPER WHITE OC-55 WALL PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; **MIRROR,** CB2; **RUNNER,** Elte

BEFORE



FLOOR PLAN





ABOVE It would be easy to connect the spaces with a single hue, but instead the designer did it with a range of intriguing cabinetry. "Because there's so much of it in a small space, I didn't want the cupboards to feel matchy-matchy," she points out, noting, "and I wanted a mature feel." Clad in grasscloth-textured vinyl, the cabinets add richness and depth to the space.

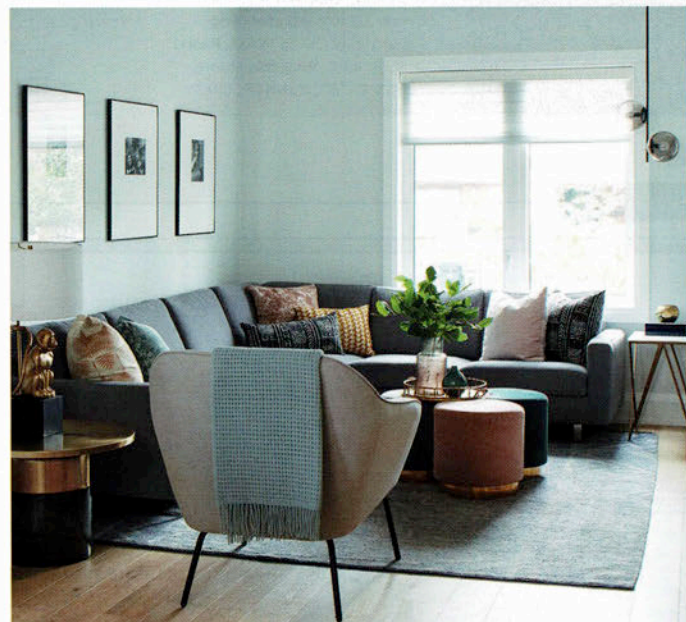
Stonington Gray HC-170 **CABINETS & SHELF PAINT**, Benjamin Moore; **CABINETS FRONT FABRIC**, Kravet Canada; **CABINETS HARDWARE**, brass **BOWL**, CB2; black and white **BOWL**, brass-coloured **TRAY**, **BASKET**, **TOP AND BOTTOM BOXES**, off-white **GINGER JAR**, Pimlico Design Gallery.

RIGHT & BELOW Swanky modern furnishings and a mix of boho toss cushions give the new living room a curated feel. Plush jewel-toned ottomans can easily be pulled apart for extra seating, while the lack of sharp corners make them toddler-friendly. A fresh coat of white paint brightens formerly dark grey walls.

SECTIONAL, EQ3; **monkey TABLE LAMP**, **PENDANT LIGHT**, West Elm; **rectangular SIDE TABLE**, **OTTOMANS**, Structube; **custom FRAMING**, On The Wall Framing; **TOSS CUSHIONS**, Tonic Living.



The monkey table lamp provides the living room with an unexpected quirky charm. "[Homeowners] Amanda and Brad said yes to everything we presented and really embraced colour and interesting details, making the project lots of fun," says Meghan.



main floor. "The new space had to function as a living/dining room/kitchen, as well as a great play area." The house – boxy, detached and brick – was built in the '80s. That meant it had good bones and no scary knob-and-tube wiring or asbestos to contend with. But honey-toned wood and mirrored closet doors made the interior feel stuck in the *Flashdance* years.

To modernize it, Meghan introduced gorgeous millwork, dynamic colour and smart solutions that make the house function better and improve the flow. "We used cabinetry to delineate all the zones," says the designer. For instance, sleek storage-packed units in the entryway divide it from the living room. And beyond that, a bank of sophisticated grey cupboards by the dining room holds a surprise – open the bottom doors and you'll find blocks and Lego. The surface is clad in vinyl, making it impervious to the mess little fingers leave behind. At the rear, a dramatic blue kitchen has replaced a drab one with dark built-ins.

It's an incredible transformation that feels grown-up yet child-friendly. "I'm thrilled with the results of this reno," says Meghan. "It's functional and organized and there's such a great sense of space."

Built-in banquettes rule in small spaces. This cool set-up, enhanced with a tasseled pendant, is elegant for the adults yet totally relaxed. "The banquette is faux leather and the chairs are plastic, so they're easy to wipe down," says Meghan, who designed the corner cabinet as a hidden bar. She also included extra storage by adding drawers under the banquette seat.

Hale Navy HC-154 **CABINETY PAINT**, Benjamin Moore; **CHANDELIER**, Anthropologie; **FLOORING**, Fuzion Flooring; African **BASKETS**, Pimlico Design Gallery; **BANQUETTE SEAT CUSHION SEWING**, Silva Custom Furniture; **BANQUETTE SEAT CUSHION FABRIC**, Threadcount Textile & Design; **TOSS CUSHIONS**, Tonic Living.



ABOVE Before the renovation, the dark and dated kitchen was cut off from the dining room. Each room had different flooring (tiles and strip wood), which were all replaced with engineered white oak to beautifully link the spaces.

STOOLS, EQ3.

BELOW A blue kitchen and brass accents give the kitchen an ageless twist — and lots of attitude! The pantry wall is packed with storage. "The sliding door is the primary entrance," says Meghan, who made the area as spacious as possible so there's room for incoming groceries, kids and even outerwear — that's a narrow coat closet beside the fridge.

RIGHT A mash-up of materials gives the kitchen dynamic edge. The hood vent is made of rich walnut, the scalloped backsplash is ceramic, the faucet and hardware are brass and the sleek countertops are durable Caesarstone.

COUNTERTOP, Caesarstone Canada; **BACKSPASH TILES**, Saltillo Imports; **FAUCET**, Roman Bath Centre; **CABIN-ETRY HARDWARE**, Emtek.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

