

Designer Kathryn Scodro chose elegant furnishings for the living room that are surprisingly durable and family-friendly.



From top: Photographs by Gray Malin add some soft color to the neutral walls; the island pendant lights are from Hudson Valley.



# LET THERE BE LIGHT

A Lincoln Park reno relies on a white color palette and texture to update a single-family home.

*By Zlata Kozul Naumovski // Photography by Mike Schwartz*

At just over 10 years old, the Lincoln Park home purchased by clients of Kim Scodro ([kimsodro.com](http://kimsodro.com)) was already outdated. Ebony hardwood floors and an ill-placed kitchen peninsula didn't dissuade the couple with one child and another on the way from purchasing the 5,200-square-foot home. They adored its location—only blocks from their current home—and knew the layout and finishes just needed some strategic changes.

Like many Chicago houses, this one is long and narrow, with the main rooms on the first floor. “How do you translate the same layout everyone has and make it unique to these clients and their lifestyle?” asks Kathryn Scodro, design director of Kim Scodro Interiors. Their first priority was an open-concept main floor, augmented by a neutral color palette. Bracing themselves for the construction process, the clients instructed her to “do it once and do it well,” according to Kathryn. “So we took it down to the studs.”

She started by reorienting the kitchen, which had an extra peninsula that boxed it off from the family room. She removed the barrier and opened sight lines so the parents could keep an eye on the kids in the family room. She also did away with a ceiling-lowering soffit,





Greg Williams  
at Custom  
Woodcraft built  
these bookcases  
as well as the  
kitchen cabinetry  
and most of the  
home's millwork.

From top right: The grass-cloth wallpaper in the son's bedroom is by Thibaut; in the master bathroom, the light fixture is from Visual Comfort and the stand-alone bathtub is by Fleurco.



which allowed her to install off-white cabinets closer to the ceiling. To save space, she installed a built-in banquette covered in stain-forgiving vinyl, while counter stools upholstered in a textured indoor/outdoor fabric offer additional seating at the island. She even managed to squeeze in a large butler's pantry for additional storage. "The change is pretty striking," she says.

In the nearby family room, Kathryn coffered the ceiling to differentiate the space from the kitchen and added built-ins to flank the fireplace. A color palette of mostly whites unites both spaces. The sectional is upholstered in a Crypton fabric, and, although it's very light, it's extremely durable and surprisingly lovely to touch. "Previous incarnations of indoor/outdoor fabric weren't as soft," she says. "Technology has come a long way. You don't have to be afraid of living with light colors anymore."

Wallcoverings with lots of texture add interest while being practical. "Texture hides everyday wear and tear better than a flat fabric or surface," she says. The wallpaper in the powder room is a barely-there blue vinyl with a tactile surface. "The wife was drawn to it and loved it, but it has the durability that two small kids require." Kathryn installed a deeper blue grass cloth by Phillip Jeffries on the wall leading upstairs. "It's in a high-traffic area and has held up well."

Upstairs, the children's bedrooms are as sophisticated as the master bedroom in finishes and materials. The son's room has a grass cloth on the crib wall with the rest of the walls painted a soft gray, while the daughter's bedroom is blissfully white save for a pop of color in the art. Peaceful grays and neutrals reign supreme in the master bathroom and bedroom.

A departure from the neutrals seen throughout the home comes in the form of a green bar, located on the top floor between his-and-hers offices, and a bathroom with a green vanity. "They took some risks in smaller rooms, and it shows their personality," Kathryn says.

After enduring months of construction and bringing a second child into the family, the clients are loving their newly remodeled home. Kathryn notes, "They're still so happy there." ■