

MOON TIDE MEDIA'S

# westside

DEPT OF BEACHES AND HARBORS

## THE FAMILY ISSUE

Grab the kids and head for the beach. Summer's here!

\*Following the footsteps of giants: Randy Stoklos and protégé at Lifeguard Station #18

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Daughter Esther reads to Goldie on the day bed in the children's reading nook while Abra relaxes with Judah, an Australian Shepherd, on his velveteen dog bed. Facing page: A collection of animal prints in son Levi's bedroom.





# *A Family Home*

Abby and David Kohl's Brentwood home is inviting, relaxed and playful. The décor is chic but never too precious for the couple's four active children—and the dog.

WRITTEN BY CHRISTY HOBART • PHOTOGRAPHED BY LAUREN DEVON





## INSPIRE & CREATE

"While our whole house is accessible to the kids," Abby says, "the crafts room is where they go to find something creative to do." Tidy baskets and shelves are stocked with watercolors, colored pencils and crayons. There's clay and playdough and a Mac for creating music. More baskets are filled with ribbons and glue, stamps and fabric.

A giant corkboard displays the children's work (which is rotated monthly) and the floors are covered with a plastic woven mat that can be hosed down should paint or glue spill. The kids are free to make a mess. "We all spend time in the crafts room," Abby says. "It has great light and a spacious, functional feel."

**Top:** Two beds in Esther's room are fun for sleepovers. **Left:** Good organization is important in the much-used crafts room. **Facing page, top:** Judah is allowed on Esther's bed.



# KIDS SPACE

The children's bedrooms got just as much design attention as the rest of the house. "I went everywhere with Sasha," Abby says of her scouting expeditions with decorator Sasha Emerson. "Wertz Brothers in Santa Monica, Liz's Hardware on La Brea, the Santa Monica Flea Market. It was a great experience for me."

In Esther's room, opposite, the beds were custom designed by Emerson while other furniture is vintage. "We decorated this room when Esther was 4, but it still looks fresh," Abby notes. "It's a little girl's room that can be easily updated with more sophisticated pieces to become a great teenager's room." A family outing to the Long Beach Flea Market landed the Levi's sign that's now in Levi's loft, right. It's rigged to light up and turn off with a clap of the hands. Levi's desk is tucked underneath, between two closets. Goldie and Abra play with dolls on a vintage bamboo settee in their bedroom.

"The kids really love to be at home," Abby says. "That makes me feel successful—not as a mother, so much, but as a family." The house, despite the liveliness of four young kids and a dog, "is peaceful. I don't know how that is, but it is."







## TABLE TALK

"The joy and happiness happens in the kitchen," says Abby. The décor by Abby and interior designer Sasha Emerson is cheerful: orange print roller shades, bright stripes on the dining banquette, colorful Czech pottery and a piece of art made from a collection of painted lids. But it's the bustle that only four kids can create that turns this room into the heart of the house.

"I know not everybody has the luxury of cooking and eating together," Abby says, "but we make it a priority." The kids all help: Goldie, almost 5, loves to chop vegetables (with supervision); Abra, 6½, is the washer and peeler; Esther, 10, is the sauté chef; and Levi, 12, "is really into presentation." A recent meal had the kids choosing herbs and vegetables to wrap up with fish in parchment paper. "If the kids cook it," Abby observes, "they'll eat it."





Above, clockwise from top: Abby and Goldie in the vegetable garden. The Kohl family cooks and eats most meals together, like this lunch, top right, of quinoa, arugula from the garden and eggs. Squash in the garden. Opposite page, from left: Goldie, David, Abra, Abby, Levi and Esther.

## GARDEN FRESH

The Kohl's vegetable garden, designed by John Lyons of The Woven Garden, plays a vital role in the family's life. They all plant, weed and harvest. "We have six kinds of tomatoes; chard; lots of basil; poblano peppers; eggplant; all our herbs," Abby says. "I marinated 12 artichokes last night from our four plants." Abby maintains the compost heap. "John got that in order for me. I have a system now."