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2017 DESIGNER SHOWHOUSE

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Libby Barnes

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Libby Barnes started Piper Gray Designs, a Denver interior design company, in 2002 as a side project. "When I was 27, I was diagnosed with cancer," she says. "I finished my master's in clinical psychology and got a job in a children's cancer center. I loved it, but I began to do design work on the side. As time went on, my 'side business' began to grow. Then, when I had my first child, I left my job, which wasn't an easy decision since I enjoyed the work—but one I knew I had to make. One thing having cancer taught me was that life can be short. You might as well do what you love and surround yourself with people and things that make you happy." Now Barnes, who specializes in maximizing every square inch of her clients' homes, is inspiring smart design on her own HGTV pilot, "Saving Spaces." We asked the mother of four to share images from a few days in her life.

Follow Barnes on Instagram at @pipergraydesigns



SUPER TIMES My kids make me laugh every day. I swung back home after lunch and walked into our play area to find my 6-year-old son, Kieran, and our dog, Summit, dressed as superheroes with cape and all. I assume my older kids didn't feel like playing caped crusaders again! #buddies



READY FOR LIFTOFF My morning coffee is a green smoothie with kale, raw garlic, tomato, lemon juice, a pinch of salt, and a few peppercorns. Sounds gross, but try it—it's so good! I don't drink coffee or caffeine. And I figure if I can make it through the baby stages of four kids with no caffeine, why start now?



DREAM IT, BUILD IT My design motto is nothing is impossible. Sometimes you have to think outside the box to create the space that works for you. If you can dream it, we can build it! Like this bunk bed nook, for instance. A guestroom with four walls would not have fit in this finished basement.



TAKE IT OUTSIDE I love Denver because of the abundance of outdoor activities, the sunshine and, most of all, the mountains. We love to hike, bike, kayak, paddleboard, ski and more.