

# Back To School!

Well, summer is officially over – school starts **tomorrow!** I could be like everyone else and say “where did the summer go?”, but for me, it actually didn’t go as fast as I would have thought. We were so busy; though it was good-busy; not like so-much-work-to-do-busy. But much fun was had and I enjoyed every minute! Last week was spent at school open houses and orientations, as well as a training event at our church to allow us to volunteer with our church’s student ministries. That was an interesting evening – it began with us volunteers breaking off into groups of about 15 and making lines. We were given a spoon tied to a string which was wound around a “spool” ie, an empty tube of toilet paper. The first person in the line (me) was to put the spoon down their shirt and pants and give it to the next person who was supposed to put it *up* their pants and shirt, then to the next person who was supposed to put it down the shirt and pants, effectively “threading” the line of people together. Kind of strange, I thought, but what’s going to happen once we’re all “wearing” the string??? It was a little scary, but luckily, the threading was the entire ice-breaking activity, and the rest of the evening was pleasantly spent listening to a guest speaker while munching on all kinds of orange snacks (orange was the theme for the evening – I never really thought about how many party snacks are orange before!).

Today we had so many activities and volunteering planned for church that we were on the go from 8:30 in the morning until about 3:30 in the afternoon. Busy, but it was time well-spent, especially since we finished up the day with Kidstuff (a cute show with a wonderful message for the kids) and then a carnival with LOTS of treats and fun for the kids; they had a blast. Good thing too – we need to get settled down early tonight in order to get our oldest to school by **7:30 in the morning!!!** She is starting middle school, and yes, to those

of you who have asked – she will be switching classes, kind of like the “block” style they had when I was in middle school. My daughter has a homeroom, but then she switches for language arts and math and perhaps other subjects as well. And they do gym class strangely – there are 4 classes: gym, music, technology (typing, etc.), and art, and they take one of these 4 classes every day for 9 weeks and then switch to another. That sounds pretty cool to me! I would have LOVED it if I only had to worry about gym for 9 weeks of the year! But, being in middle school also means that she has to change for gym class, poor thing – I remember that aspect of middle school making a lot of kids really nervous. And at orientation last week, the principal gave us parents a talk about making sure we wash the gym clothes – the kids are getting to “that age”, she said, which prompted me to whisper to my friend nearby, “I’m not ready!” But my daughter IS ready for middle school, and she seems to be making her way from tween to teen in no time – UGH! Poor thing got her first pimple just in time for the first day of middle school, but she doesn’t seem to mind too much, so we’re not making it a big deal. It’s not like we’re publishing it on the internet for the entire world to read or anything... But what are moms for? She can thank me when she’s older and finds this through some sort of google search or something.

Our second oldest is starting Kindergarten. This is our “difficult” child; our strong-willed one. Samantha has a mind of her own, and some of the things she says leave us in stitches – others leave us shaking our heads, but we’ll stick to the positives here. It seems that Samantha has the same Kindergarten teacher that her sister had a few years ago, and my husband and I are chuckling to ourselves about the unintentional “joke” we’re about to play on our local school system. We are wondering how many years it will take for word to spread amongst the teachers in town about how much of a... well, *difference* there is between Samantha and her big sister... No need to go off about it here, like I said, we need

to call it an early night, but it will suffice to say that any teacher of Taylor's who gets Samantha 4 years later will probably be surprised ☐

I was going to write about the younger two as well, but it's bedtime already and this post is long enough – that's what I get for not blogging regularly, I guess, an über-post!

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## Veining Victory

All my life I've had to deal with a less than optimal anatomy. In Kindergarten, my teacher wrote on my report card, "lacks hand-eye coordination." Not *lacking in* hand-eye coordination, she definitely wrote LACKS – as if I didn't have any at all. My vision hasn't been the best and neither has my hearing for that matter; due to the multiple ear infections I suffered as a toddler. The LACK of hand-eye coordination followed me all throughout school. There were all those skill tests we would have to take every year in gym class... you know, the mile run, flexed arm hang, shuttle run, 50 yard dash, long jump (the long jump was only a clever name for when people like me tried to take that test and could barely get off the ground, much less produce a long jump), etc. The weeks we did those tests were the most dreaded weeks of the year for me. Not only would I look pretty stupid trying to do them, but I would always fail miserably. They actually based your grades for those tests upon your scores and not upon how hard you tried. Mine were always off the scale F's. Luckily, they weren't enough to bring my gym grade down too low because I was always a pretty good student and to have that ruined because I LACKED hand-eye coordination, now that just wouldn't be right.

Now, as an adult, it doesn't really matter how fast I can run back and forth between 2 lines on the floor while stopping to stoop and touch them. Not that I've tried, which only proves how unimportant something like that is... but it seems that all those years of falling physically behind my peers has been made up for me by a "gift" my adult body has bestowed upon me: huge, viable veins! Every time the lab people at the Dr.'s office have to draw my blood, they are **extremely** impressed by my veins. In fact, I am often the talk of the lab – *hey, Karen, come over here, look what I've got to work with!*

Today I had a student drawing my blood (oh, great, just what I wanted to see, someone about to pierce my skin with a needle who is **in training to do so!** I realize they have to learn somewhere, but why do they have to learn on me?), and the nurse jokingly told her, wow, you could draw that one in the dark! Haha, hehe, but please, let's not try that!

Anyway, I don't mean to brag to anyone who is less endowed in the vein department, but it's just nice to finally get my due after falling so far behind physically in every other way for so long. And it may seem unimportant to you, but I make a lot of friends at the lab this way, and also, my veinly gifts are very useful in my life. Having had four pregnancies and 2 cases (hopefully only 2; I will find out soon if there will be 3) of gestational diabetes, that means there is lots of blood being drawn from me! I get poked and prodded so often that I'm starting to think that my veins are actually *fun* for the lab people to draw from... or maybe it was no coincidence that the student lab technician had me as a patient to draw from today – maybe they've secretly made me the lab student assignment for the hospital!