

# Switching Planets

This year, I've decided to join my local MOPs group (Mothers Of Preschoolers). We've only had two meetings, but so far, I really like it. At this last meeting, we had a video speaker who discussed the move between "Planet Me" and "Planet Mom". It was discussed how important it is for moms to maintain some of their personality traits and hobbies, even though time might be lacking. After all, as the video pointed out, the word "Mommy" sounds like "Mom" and "me" put together. After the video, one of the discussion questions was "What are some of the activities you gave up when you moved from Planet Me to Planet Mom?" Most of the women at my table agreed that we can no longer do our crafts, but we didn't really have time to be more specific. The crafts I used to enjoy before I really lost the time for them were oil painting and Legos. True, I don't really have a natural artistic knack, but I would get those paint-by-number kits (back when they were a little bit higher quality than they seem to be nowadays); I would complete them and they'd turn out so pretty that I'd hate to have to tell people that I painted-by-number.

Another thing I enjoyed before I had kids was sorting and building with my extensive Lego collection I amassed over the years. It took just one curious toddler to make me abort that hobby, and the Legos got packed away years ago when my oldest began to toddle. Little pieces are the most fun part of the collection, and we couldn't risk her putting those little pieces into her mouth or who-knows-where-else. So I packed away the Legos, and somehow the entire collection followed me throughout our moves around the midwest and resides with me today, albeit packed away in the basement. There hasn't been a shortage (blessfully) of little ones in our house for the past 10 years, so the Legos probably won't see the light of day for at least a few more years – gotta wait until the little dude is old enough to play rather than destroy or get

hurt with them. So let it be known that I miss my Legos, but I am thankful to still have them and even to be adding to the collection whenever I can catch a cool set on a great sale – usually after Christmas. Many empty-nesters turn their kids' bedrooms into something of their choosing when the kids grow up and move away, like a gym, an office, or a rec room, but I already have plans for a Lego studio, where I hope to one day be able to build super-cool things like this:



I'd also like to build a replica of my house as well as a local historic building:



Now that would be cool, but very difficult. But if I had more time, the sky is the limit! My favorite sets are house or city-themed sets, and I also really like vintage Lego sets. Does anyone remember [Fabuland](#)? It was a series of more

colorful Lego sets that featured animals as characters rather than the popular and better known Lego “mini-figs”.

Just because I don't have the room now to be able to spread out and work with my Lego collection, doesn't mean that I can't look at cool things other people have built online, especially now that I've officially and publicly declared myself a dork on my blog!

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## Many MOPs Are SAHMs

I'm not going to pretend to know the latest texting lingo. I know ASAP and TTYL and even oic, but that's about the extent of my in-house texting-acronym dictionary. Not that I care too much – it doesn't even make me feel old or out of it because texting itself is amusing to me; not when texters are behind the wheel though, that's just scary. I saw that graphic UK public service video with the girl who was texting and crashed her car. Awful stuff, I DO NOT recommend you watch that; it was incredibly disturbing. But anyway, I **do** know the acronyms I need to know for my chosen profession as a SAHM = **Stay At Home Mom**. And last night, I officially became a member of MOPs = **Mothers Of Preschoolers**.

It was really different and very nice – after dinner I left the house **alone** for a change. Poor hubby got left with all 4 kids and a messy room to get cleaned. I didn't feel guilty; I knew he could handle anything without getting so frustrated he would melt down for the rest of the night, which is more than I could promise for myself. And after all, I had been waiting for my turn to go out ever since Hubby was in his last community theater production and I got stuck home with kids during his rehearsals. But that was a year ago, and in the

meantime, there was just never anyplace to go that would have not been more fun with my entire family.

So last night, Hubby fared well; the room was cleaned (sort-of), but the most important thing is that no one was stressed out, and 2/4 kids were actually *asleep* when I got home – BONUS! As for the MOPs meeting itself; it was different than I was expecting...

I was expecting a few women from our church who I know have young children, but when I showed up, the parking lot was full. I went in, feeling a bit intimidated since everyone else seemed to be with a friend or two. And there were about 60 women, dwarfing my prediction of 5 or 10. Not only that, but there was a sign-up table, where I learned that you were supposed to sign up ahead of time in order to be assigned to a group. Oops – guess who hadn't signed up? So I crashed a group, but I knew at least a few of the other women from church, so it wasn't really like crashing. Our poor friend Jeremy, the teaching pastor at the church, was there to make a church-related announcement, and I've never seen a man look so out of place. He stood before 60 women in a room *oozing* with femininity – an endless sea of scrap-booking supplies, flowers, chocolate, and scented candles... And he looked like there was *anywhere* in the world he'd rather be; it was hilarious. He gave his spiel, left in a quite a hurry, and then we snacked, chatted about our families, and made our scrap-booked our place mats which will be at our tables every month during our meetings. Overall, a very fun evening, and we even got to take home some cute little fall trinkets. I found out that childcare is available, so next month Hubby can have a break too while the kids play. I learned that many MOPs are also SAHMs like me, so we have kind of a girly little community. And that reminds me; I was really amused when the coordinator asked, "Does anyone have any special announcements? We have gifts for any of our members who are expecting or adopting." I guess in a room full of dozens of

women in their child-bearing years who already have young children, asking if any are expecting doesn't really come from left field. So of course, not one, not two, but *three* women came up to share their blessed news. Then we also heard from two who had recently had babies and brought them to the meeting – talk about a dose of baby-itis! But for now it's fun to talk about our kids and our lives – I'm the only one in our group with more than 3 children; which surprises me – I thought large families were making a comeback? But for any other moms out there who want to join a fun Christian-based peer group, check out [this link](#) for a MOPs group near you!