

This page is set up for the newspaper, magazine and other editorials including agents I have contacted. The following will provide a peak at the other side of my writing; nonfiction. I look forward to working with you.

I love writing fiction for teenagers. It has become my passion and if I never did anything else with my career, I would continue to make up fun and emotional stories about young teens. I have so many ideas in my portfolio I cannot wait to dive into them. My obstacle is finding the time. With two young children at home, life seems to take front seat most of the time. Even though they are my first love of writing, novels are a big commitment of time I some times cannot find enough of. When life gets in the way, I turn to personal essays that share the every day issues of raising children. If I have a constant in my life it is my kids. I have enjoyed writing personal essays about our day-to-day lives and other quirks about being a mom and a wife.

I have provided a quick look at a couple of the ups and downs of mothering from my point of view below. I would love the opportunity to share more and the chance to continue writing them for a bigger audience.

My hope is to share with viewers the joy and the challenges of mothering young children in a way only other mothers can relate to. My spin to this already accomplished skill would be to hear from the readers too. I thought a welcoming plug at the end of each column would be a great way to invite other mothers to e-mail in about my future topics and I could present their point of view in the future columns along with my own.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further. Please contact me for more information.

Thank you for giving me a moment of you time.

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IN THE EYES OF A CHILD everything is magnified with greatness. Who would have thought that the weekly duty of the county yard debris pick up would stop a two year old in his tracks? You would think the ordain routine wouldn't interest the mind of the young who have much bigger and better hills to climb. Not my son. Not on this day. It might have taken a big truck with loud noise and men jumping around to stop him, but he stood in one place for ten minutes admiring the work as two guys in white picked up the neighborhood yard clippings.

This is how it all began. My son and I were walking our dog around the neighborhood early in the morning. My son, at the time was only two, insisted on tagging along for these morning rituals. It takes a little longer, but you make sacrifices. On our journey my son points up the road spying the weekly trash truck coming down the street. Now mind you, this wasn't just your ordinary city dump truck that picks up the residential trash every week. This was the ultimate, the coolest, the best truck out there. It was the *tree cruncher truck!*

Immediately the original mission of walking the dog was forgotten and we were stopped in our tracks to see what this truck was going to do. Neither of us said anything as we looked on.

The truck stopped in front of a pile of branches left on the curb. One man jumped down and made his way to the site so he could survey the objects to be picked up. Another man got out wearing a yellow hard hat and climbed up on top of the white truck and into the control box, which had different color joy, sticks popping out of the floorboard. Then it all started. A switch was turned on and the truck was put into motion. A large scoop, which resembled a monsters hand swung, up from the trash container and out over the side of the truck. It dropped down to the tree branches and other debris left from the neighborhood mowers. Performing its job, the scoop grabbed the branches and swung them up to the back of the truck where it dropped the limbs into a city sized trashcan.

The men continued this procedure for three or four times until most of the yard clippings had been picked up. The entire time my son and I stood there in amazement. I even think the dog had forgotten what he was supposed to be doing and stopped to watch too. Without warning, as if we hadn't seen enough cool stuff, very loudly the machine started smashing the branches down. You could hear the limbs crack as they broke into tiny pieces. I was quite sure I had never noticed this tedious task take place before, always taking for granted that the limbs just disappeared from the curve. But on this day there was nothing taken for granted as we watched the entire event until the men jumped off the truck and walked over to where the pile had depleted to pick up what the scoop could not. My son stood beside me watching with wide eyes hoping it would not end. He wanted more, I wanted more, I even think the dog wanted more.

Why does it take our children to make us stop and actually see? It is amazing how differently you can vision the world through their tiny eyes. Everything has a purpose and comes vividly alive again. Taking a moment to slow down and see what our children see will bring back the smell of a beautiful pink rose that just bloomed or how blue the sky is today. You are able to make shapes out of the clouds again and are excited to point out the objects flying above you. There isn't a day that passes you can't

recall how many airplanes actually flew over your house or what shape the moon is that evening. A child brings it all back even clearer than you remembered. I was brought back to reality when the truck engine roared to drive away. The men inside were waving goodbye to us. Quite embarrassed by my intentness in their daily job I shyly waved back. On the other hand, my son was proud. He stuck out his little arm and gave the biggest wave I had ever seen. We watched as they drove down the road to the next pile of limbs left behind. My son looked up at me and smiled. I squatted down to his level and gave him a big hug. I never would have imagined such a small task could make me feel so young again.

I had watched the *tree cruncher truck* with the same awe as the first rocket taking off to the moon.

My son still recalls that moment in our lives. I know for sure that I will never forget it. It made me realize I needed to slow down, life is too short. I now look forward to experiencing the same awe with my daughter, she likes trucks too. We all look forward to the next mundane chore we would discover in a different light. Through the eyes of my children.

Let a child show you the world in a different light

MOMMY AND ME PLAYGROUPS

*SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO WONDER -
IS IT WORTH ALL THE TROUBLE GATHERING ALL THE
NECESSARIES TOGETHER TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE
ONLY FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS?*

After my first child was born I had the opportunity to stay home instead of return to the working world outside. It was very nice in the beginning, but once the first six weeks were over and the fog began to clear, I wanted to get out of the house. I had thankfully kept in touch with a few of my old work buddies, so we tried meeting for lunch here and there. But as the weeks went by, I realized I had become an outsider. My interests had become different than theirs. I only had the baby and how much weight I still needed to lose to talk about. When they were discussing the same old problems the work force brought on. So after a few months, everything that involved my old job slowly made its way to the back burner of my life.

Babies are wonderful we all know that, but after weeks of solid baby talk and soap opera's, not to mention I was quite tired of listening to Kelly Ripa talk about her own baby, (she and I were pregnant at the same time with our first child and she unlike myself was back in her size 4 clothes and looking very polished every day) I was in need of *real* adult conversations. I had heard about a mommy group in the area that involved mostly new moms who stayed home with their young children. It was a chance to reach out and connect with other women in my same situation. Not only could I get out, but the play groups would allow my son the opportunity to socialize as he got older. This sounded like the perfect thing for me, so I signed us up. This group became my lifeline. I was able to gossip again, to laugh with females, discuss parenting issues and just plain have a purpose other than being a mom, wife and housemaid.

We became very involved with the group and my son and I would look forward to attending the weekly playgroups that were planned. But one day my views changed a little. My son was around sixteen months and a very active little boy. He strived on *getting out* just as much as I did. We had been looking forward to this playgroup. It was going to be outside. The weather was finally warming up and everyone was tired of being cooped up all winter long. So, I gather all the necessities for a two hour outing and wrestle with my son to lock him in his seat belt and we head out to our play date.

As soon as we arrive, my son spies the sandbox and runs happily over to it. I hadn't even gotten myself and our *stuff* out of the car yet when things start to erupt. Excitement overpowers my son and he begins throwing the sand and all the toys out of the box. I run over before speaking to the host so I can explain to him how he should play and then I am allowed a few moments of greetings. The sandbox seems to be the highlight for a while because as each child arrives they head over to it while the other moms and I sit back and watch with delight. Soon the joy is interrupted. There isn't much time to catch up before someone is crying. Instinctively, we all jump up and run to see what

happened. Determining if anyone got hurt, we try to separate some of the children by sending half toward the other toys in the yard.

Feeling comfortable about the kids again, we are able to settle down for a quick moment of “how’ve you been” until yet another scream. This one is coming from the plastic doll playhouse. A couple of the moms run over to see what has happened and to help referee. Then once again we settle back down for some refreshments. We each have one eye on the children and the other one on the group of us attempting to have a conversation. But it never fails; conversations get put on hold while one of us is running over to the play area every few seconds. The day is warm, and the refreshments are not doing the trick. I notice my son has tired of the sandbox and has happily moved on, but not before he has thrown the better half of the contents outside the box.

You can hear discussions of our kids ringing through the back yard. *At least we aren’t alone in this madness.* I hear conversations involving current potty training issues, discipline problems, and other hot toddler topics while we run back in forth to pull our children away from hurting each other or their selves. I try talking to one mother for a brief moment about decorating, but the conversation is cut short because she has to go and remove the sidewalk chalk from her daughter’s mouth. I look over to see my son walking into the playhouse with three other kids and immediately put on my “alert” mode just in case he causes trouble in the little house. By the time we get back to our conversation, the point has been forgotten and we listen in on another topic under way.

There is a cry from inside the playhouse and my eyes widen hoping my son did not cause any harm. Instead, someone has slammed his finger inside the door. We escort the remaining ones out and over to sit down for a snack. Once seated for a total of three minutes my son gets up and runs over to where the balls have been left behind. He starts playing with them and I hear immediate echoes from two of the kids snacking, “mine, mine”. My son chooses to ignore their pleas and proceeds to toss one of the balls over the fence into the neighbor’s yard. I go over the fence to retrieve it just in time for him to toss another one over. At this point I decide it is time to go. I am tired and I haven’t sat down for more than three minutes the entire time.

The better half of the two- hour event has passed. We were able to touch base on many issues, but never finishing a complete thought. However we did get our children out and they gave us our exercise for the day. I try to remember why I wanted to leave the house in the first place that morning. Why do I bother to get dressed? I wonder if my son would have just as much fun in his own back yard. I help clean up a little and grab my son to put him in the car. He has a fit about leaving and while struggling with his car seat; I contemplate again why I come to these events. Then I hear as the mom hosting next week’s playgroup yells out to everyone not to forget it is at her house. I smile back and wave as I am jumping into the driver’s seat thinking to myself I might have to sit that one out. Is it worth all the trouble I go through for two hours of free time with others?

Then before I know it, it is the next week and my son and I excitedly head out again for another playgroup.