



# Growing Alongside One Another

*"Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them." Matthew 18:20*

## Coordinator's Corner by Barbara Roqué

Do you remember your pre-child days? You know, the days of shaking your head in disgust at some kid throwing a temper tantrum? The days when you could stay out late every weekend? The days of uninterrupted romance with your spouse?

All that disappeared with the birth of your first child. You now find yourself feeling sympathetic for the mom of the whiny child at the supermarket. Teething, whining, and lack-of-sleep are now acceptable topics for conversation. I know I find some comfort in hearing that other moms are also experiencing the joys of spilled juice or potty training. Why? Because it helps me to realize I am not alone.

You are not alone either. "Together on Planet Mom" is our theme for this new year of MOPS, and to go right along with that, September's theme is "Together With Sisters". Our theme verse this year sums it up far better than I ever could: Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."

There are two important things we can learn

from that verse that relate to our overall theme and this month's theme:

1. I am never alone because I am together with sisters in Christ, in a community where I can share my joy, struggles and fears.
2. I am never alone because my sisters and I share a relationship with Christ who understands my struggles. Whether discipline issues, marriage problems, or physical struggles, God's love for us is never-ending.

I am looking forward to a great year together with sisters in Christ at MOPS. In September, we will have a special activity called "Speed Friendship". Have you ever heard of "speed dating?" Well, this will be similar, only it will give us an opportunity to find new friends and get to know old ones even better.

In September, we will also be beginning "Secret Sisters". Through this you will be able to pray and connect with another mom all year, however, you won't know who your

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### Today's Agenda: Together With Sisters

- Welcome!
- Brunch
- Introduce Steering Team and Mentor Moms
- Secret Sister Introduction
- Speed Friendship Game
- Announcements
- Closing and Devotional



## Wouldn't Miss It For The World

### Birthdays

Dana Knapp—9/18

Sheri Brownell—9/20

Sheila Fornwall—9/25

And a happy birthday to all “summer babies” and any newcomers to MOPS with an upcoming birthday!

### I'm Expecting!

Erin Angiolillo-Smith—10/09

Dominique Lanza—10/09

Elizabeth Martin—11/09

Stacey Payne—11/09

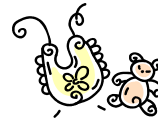


### Welcome, Moppet!

Tom and Wendy Beckett welcomed Hannah Rose Beckett—6/02

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Mike and Rachel Allebach welcomed twins Evan and Caleb Allebach—5/29



### Nice to Meet You!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to any mom joining us for the first time at BranchCreek MOPS!



## Upcoming Events

Saturday, 9/12: BranchCreek Peaches-n-Stuff Festival

Friday, 9/18—MOPS Mom's Night Out Fondue Night at Liz Martin's House

Tuesday 9/29: MOPS Monthly Scrapbooking Night at Liz Martin's House

Saturday 10/3: MOPS Mom2Mom Consignment Sale at BranchCreek

*If you would like to open your home to host a Mom's Night Out or play date -OR-*

*if you have an idea for an outing, contact Elizabeth Martin at [branchcreekmops@comcast.net](mailto:branchcreekmops@comcast.net)*

## Meet the Crew: Barbara Roqué, MOPS Coordinator

**Birth certificate name?** Barbara Anne Anderson

**Where is your hometown?** Philadelphia, PA

**Tell us about your family.**

I've been married for 9 years to David. We have a two-year old son named Nicholas, a 6-year old doggie named Wisdom, and a 17-year old foreign exchange student from China named Echo.

**What is your favorite hobby and why?**

Facebook, because what's better than meeting new friends? Reconnecting with old friends.

**Book or movie?** Movie

**Morning person or Night owl?**

Depends on the day and how much sleep I've been getting..

**What books are currently on your nightstand?**

*My Bible, Love & Respect by Emerson Eggerichs, Bringing Up Boys by Dr. James Dobson, and Growing Kids God's Way by Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo.*

**What is one thing that others may not know about you?**

I love to sing, but people don't love to listen (except David & Nicholas).

**What did you do before you had children?**

Assistant Vice President and Instructional Designer in the banking industry. And I still work part-time for a training firm.

**What's your favorite Bible verse?**

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” --Proverbs 3:5-6

# Out of This World

## MOPS Top 10: Fun Fall Family Activities

1. Branch Creek's Peach Festival - 9/12
2. Pick your own apples at a local orchard.
3. Peddler's Village Scarecrow Festival—9/12 and 9/13
4. Collect colorful leaves and iron them on a low setting between 2 pieces of waxed paper.
5. Bake a fresh pear, peach or apple pie or cobbler.
6. Freddy Hill Farms Fall Fest—all weekends in October
7. Savor seasonal fall ice cream flavors at your local shop or chain (pumpkin—yum!).
8. Check out the local Home Depot, Lowe's, Michaels and AC Moore for free weekend parent/child workshops.
9. Glue sticks + construction paper + summer vacation photos = fun personalized scrapbooks for kids to show-and-tell at school.
10. Buy some fresh apple cider at your local farm!

## Rainy Day Fun

### Spongy Bungee Man (Family Fun magazine)

*What better way to clean up after a rainy day spent jumping in mud puddles than with this cute bath-time friend...who serves a purpose as well!*

- Scissors
- Rectangular sponge
- Permanent marker
- Nylon rope cord
- Suction cup hook



1. Using scissors, cut a gingerbread-like man with his arms up from a sponge. Make two 1/2-inch horizontal cuts in his sides to hold his bungee rope in place.
2. Draw a face with the markers.
3. Tie the nylon rope onto the suction cup hook. Trim any excess rope.
4. Slip the rope into the slits on Spongy's sides. Stick suction cup to the wall alongside the tub.
5. When time to wash, slip him out of the rope and lather up. After, reattach him for jumping fun and to drip dry.

## Bathtub Art Reviews

My toddler and preschooler love to bring out the inner-Picasso in themselves, so if I'm up for a little extra clean-up, they look forward to using some of their favorite bath time art supplies while soaking in the tub. So, here's how we feel some well-known bath time art supplies stack up:

- **Alex Rub-a-Dub Paint in the Tub Finger Paints**

Price: \$12 for five plus a sponge and a palette

Pros: Simple clean-up, easy to use, soap-like consistency

Cons: Get used up very quickly by younger artists.

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌🍌🍌

- **Alex Rub-a-Dub Draw in the Tub Bath Crayons**

Price: \$6 for six assorted colors

Pros: Long-lasting, fun colors, easy to grip for little hands

Cons: Hard to raise color up via lever, leaves residue on walls until scrubbed more thoroughly.

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌🍌

- **Crayola Bath Time Crayons**

Price: \$13 for nine assorted colors

Pros: Long-lasting, fun colors, easy to grip for little hands

Cons: Leaves residue on walls until scrubbed

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌🍌

- **Pottery Barn Kids Star Bath Crayon (by Alex)**

Price: \$10 for a six-sided star-shaped crayon

Pros: Easy to grip, bright colors, no hard-to-raise lever to use

Cons: Less volume than other crayons, leaves residue

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌🍌🍌

- **Crayola Bathtub Markers**

Price: \$8.50 for four assorted colors

Pros: Bright colors, close via cap for neat storage

Cons: Only work if on a certain angle so difficult to use

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌

- **Baby Einstein Bath Time Finger Paints**

Price: \$10 for three assorted colors

Pros: Simple clean-up, easy to use, larger tubes than other brands

Cons: Expensive

Overall Mom Rating: 🍌🍌🍌





## Light Years Ahead: Darlene Garis, MOPS Mentor Mom

**What name is on your birth certificate?** Darlene Jane Kennell

**Where is your hometown?** Souderton, PA

**Tell us about your family.** My husband Joe and I celebrated our 34th wedding anniversary on October 4. We have 4 children: Julie, Joe Jr., Jaime & Jeffrey and 4 grandchildren: Savannah, Talya, Chase & Koen with 1 more to arrive in January.

**What occupies your time?** My family, cooking, reading

**What book would you recommend to all MOPS moms?**

'In His Steps' by Charles M. Sheldon

**What is one thing that others may not know about you?** I

learned to sew as a teenager and made most of my own clothes during my school years.

**What do you and your family do for fun?** We have family day on Sundays when our children and grandchildren come over. We enjoy 'movie night' with popcorn and milkshakes (Orange Julius).

**What Bible verse speaks to your life the most?**

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer." Psalm 19:14

### Bringing Out the Best in Our Children *By*

*Glynnis Whitwer, submitted by Darlene Garis*

I threw up my hands in despair, and sighed with a dramatic and disgusted exhale of breath. At that moment, all five of my children were the focus of my frustration. I was tired of correcting the same behaviors, the same tones of voices, and the same irresponsibility from the same children. It had not been a good day, and I told them so –individually and collectively – in not-so-nice terms.

The lecture ended and they all went their own way, as upset and annoyed as me. Instead of changing their behaviors and attitudes, the negativity went underground. We were like a simmering pot, ready to blow its lid. My angry response only exacerbated the problem, not helped it. What I wanted was for them to get along, speak kindly to each other and do their chores respectfully. What I got was more of the same.

As I returned to my own chores, I realized how ineffective my tirade had been in achieving my true goals. While I got them to stop bickering momentarily, I hadn't really made an impact on their hearts. In fact, I'd done more harm than good by not modeling gentle and respectful words. The rest of

the day confirmed the truth: I'd not brought out the best in my children. I just stamped down the bad for a while. My children are not so different from me. I know how I feel when someone speaks in an angry tone to me. It certainly doesn't spur me on to show kindness to them. In fact, I tend to take my frustration out on someone else. That's just what happened in my family that day. We had a domino effect of irritation.

In Hebrews 10, verse 24, the Bible encourages us to "spur one another on toward love and good deeds." In my experience personally and with my children, showing love and good deeds spurs others on to show more love and good deeds.

The Bible also tells us that we reap in greater measure than what we sow (Hosea 8:7). Which means love multiplies more love, and kindness multiplies more kindness.

As a mom, I have an opportunity to bring out the best in my children. But it consistently means I have to bring out the best in me. I can't model impatient behavior and expect my kids to learn patience. I can't model a self-focused lifestyle and expect my kids to learn how to serve others. Nor can I model an ultra-busy schedule and expect my kids to find time for God in theirs. Spurring my children on to greater love and good deeds means they need to learn it by watching and listening to me.

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"secret sister" is until the year's end.

Looking ahead, our theme for October will be "Together With Self" (in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month), and will include great activities like learning to do proper bra fittings and making potpourri sachets.

I would also like to encourage you to invite a friend to attend MOPS with you this year. Perhaps you know someone who is struggling right now and needs support. Feel free to bring her along to one of our meetings so she can meet some sisters to share with, and get to know our caring God in the process.

The 2009-2010 season marks my first year as coordinator for Branch Creek MOPS, although I've been an

attendee for a few years. I'm so thankful for the sisters who have walked along side me, supporting me in prayer and in tangible ways (meals, cleaning help, and more) at times when our family needed it the most. I'm also grateful for our wonderful Steering Team who worked hard all summer to make sure you have an out-of-this-world experience this year "Together on Planet Mom".

During the coming week, as you are transporting your children here and there, to doctors appointments or soccer games. . . as you are dealing with the normal parenting struggles. . . as you are "doing" the normal mundane things of life like laundry or dishes, remember, YOU are not alone. We have other Christian sisters to encourage us, and we have a great God who is always there for us.

*Sincerely, Barbara Roqué*

## An Olive Branch: Inspirational Stories

**I Don't Usually Dance, Mostly for the Safety of Everyone** by Brad Herndon, submitted by Michelle Kirkpatrick

A few nights ago, my 5 month old son was having trouble sleeping, which in turn meant that our whole house was having trouble sleeping. It was my turn to get up, so I crawled out of bed and stumbled through the dark hallway into his room. After a few moments, I realized that all of the tricks I had acquired as a young father weren't going to get him to fall back asleep. The only thing left to do was to pick him up from his crib and hold him on my shoulder, hoping he might calm down. Over the next fifteen minutes or so I carried him around his room in what became a sort of waltz—an intimate and peaceful dance between father and son. As we swayed back and forth, a lyric in a song we've sung in church came to mind. It's a lyric that is a beautiful portrayal of God's love, but it's one that I've sung without really being able to grasp the meaning of until that evening.

*"You dance over me, while I am unaware. You sing all around and I haven't heard a sound. Lord I'm amazed by you, how you love me."*

I was telling Allison about this the next morning. She said it reminded her of a scripture verse from the old testament book of Zephaniah (I'm not one that can usually recall verses from obscure parts of the bible off the top of my head, but my wife is, which is why I married her...). Zephaniah 3:17: *"The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."*

He will take great delight in you. He will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing. As I enjoyed that late-night dance with my son, I realized that even in our most unaware moments (which can be most of the time), we are immersed in the depths of God's love. It's a love that rejoices over us in dancing, that delights in us, that quiets us. It's a love that sings over us. It's nothing that we've done—our role in this picture is that of an unaware, helpless infant content upon the shoulder of a father. As in the case with my son, the joy and pride I feel for him is simply because he is mine.

# God Gave Us Food

## Baked Apples by Elizabeth Martin

*This is a fast and easy dessert that is perfect in the fall when apples are at their best. It is (relatively) healthy and is never turned down by my kids!*

- 4 apples of choice
- 1/4c. brown sugar
- 1/4c. raisins
- 1/4c. chopped nuts
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon



Preheat oven to 350. Core all apples and place in a baking dish. Mix together all other ingredients and fill each apple center, lightly packing the mixture in. Any extra can be placed around the apples in the dish. Cover loosely with foil and bake for approximately 1 hour, until soft and mushy. Baste a few times while baking. Let cool until warm and firm. Serve alone or with a dollop of yogurt, whipped cream or ice cream. Yum!

## Kids in the Kitchen

### Pencil Snacks (courtesy of Family Fun magazine)



- Cheese Sticks
- 1/2" thick bologna
- Mustard
- Bugle corn snacks
- Raisins

1. For each pencil, cut off one end of a cheese stick so that it's flat. Use a paring knife or apple corer to cut a 3/4-inch circle out of the bologna.
2. Dab one end of the circle into the mustard, then attach it to the flat end of the cheese stick.
3. Snap off the end of a Bugle so that its edges are even, and gently press it onto the other end of the cheese stick. Slide half a raisin onto the Bugle for the pencil tip, and you've got a snack that's just write!

## 20-Minute ABC Chicken Soup by Elizabeth Martin

- 2 raw chicken breasts
- 3 quarts chicken broth
- 2 c. assorted frozen vegetables (carrots, peas, green beans)
- 2c. ABC pasta (I prefer Trader Joe's tri-color ABCs)

1. Fill a medium pot with water and add the raw chicken breasts. Cook on med-hi temperature for 15 minutes, or until no longer pink inside when cut with a knife.
2. Meanwhile, bring chicken broth to a boil in a large pot. If you do not have broth readily accessible, you can use chicken bouillon and boiling water to make your own by following the directions on the bouillon container.
3. When boiling, add frozen vegetables to broth and reduce to low heat after boiling for 3-4 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, cook pasta in a medium pot of boiling water for approximately 9 minutes. When done, add to the

pot of simmering soup.

5. When chicken is done, take it out of the water and let cool for a few minutes. Cut into bite-size chunks and add it to the pot of simmering soup.
6. Let the soup simmer for 5 minutes and serve!

*This soup is always very popular at my house for lunch-time and often gets two picky toddlers to eat their veggies and meat. We just love the large size and different colors of the Trader Joe ABCs, although any ABC pasta could be used. Enjoy!*



# Attention, World!

## MOPS Swap

The MOPS Swap will begin on September 10<sup>th</sup> and continue until the end of the year. This is a place to bring in any gently used children's clothing, ladies clothing, maternity items, toys, books and household items or any unused diapers, etc. that you would like to share at no cost with other MOPS moms. You may also bring a photograph and/or description of any large items instead of bringing the actual item in and outside arrangements can be made for pickup. This is a great way to get rid of things you don't use or don't know what to do with and allow someone else to enjoy them. If not taken, it is your responsibility to either take the item home or it will be considered a donation for a local women's shelter. Any leftover September items will be sold at October's Mom2Mom consignment sale. Happy swapping!

To advertise your business here, please contact

Elizabeth Martin at [branchcreekmops@comcast.net](mailto:branchcreekmops@comcast.net)

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**Attention, Consignors and Shoppers!**  
BranchCreek MOPS will be having a Mom2Mom Consignment Sale on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are looking for consignors of gently used children's clothing, toys, books and other items. It is \$10 for a round table/ space. Admission for shoppers (not sellers) is \$1. MOPS will benefit from table rentals and admission; sellers benefit from sales. If you or anyone you know is interested in consigning or have any questions, contact us at [branchcreekmops@comcast.net](mailto:branchcreekmops@comcast.net). Otherwise, mark your calendar and come out on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and shop!  
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## Like to Walk?

Join some fellow MOPS moms at Franconia Park every Monday and Wednesday morning in the fall at 9:30am to walk with our strollers for 30-60 minutes. Meet at the pavilion near the Godshall Rd. parking lot. No cancellations will be sent, use your own judgment in weather.



## DO YOU USE FACEBOOK?



Visit the BranchCreek MOPS group for more information on the latest happenings at BranchCreek MOPS. Our group is a closed group and requires administrator approval. Email us at [branchcreekmops@comcast.net](mailto:branchcreekmops@comcast.net)

To discuss this or post your own question, log on to Facebook:

*How do you handle a temper tantrum that breaks out in the middle of the supermarket?*

## Food Reminders

A special thanks to all Steering Team members for providing brunch today. Today everyone will sign up for a chance to bring food to two meetings of your choice. Our hospitality team will remind all volunteers via email each month and you will also be reminded in the newsletter the month before it is your turn. Thanks for helping us to make our MOPS brunch the best it can be!

### Steering Team Contact:

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