

KINDNESS Matters August, 2026

Tunnels, Tips, and OT



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KINDNESS MATTERS

Your Monthly Connection to All Things KIND!

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105 (ESV)

KIND REWIND



Tunnel Lessons

A few weeks ago my family joined some dear friends to ride the Hiawatha Trail on the border of Idaho and Montana. The fifteen mile path weaves bikers through ten long, pitch-black tunnels and across seven train trestles hovering over 200 feet in the air. The picture above was one of the tunnels we entered, and it reminded me of rolling into a new school year with a KIND kid.

You can't see what's ahead, you don't know how long the trail stretches, whether there are curves, or how cold it will get inside before you reach the other side. (Temperatures in these tunnels can drop to 40 degrees, even on a hot summer day!)

From this perspective, the path seems daunting, as does a new school year with new teachers, social pressures, academic expectations, and more. Fear of the unknown makes you want to flip a U-turn in search of an easier way to your final destination, but the only way through is *through*.

What you can't see in the photo is what's attached to our handlebars. We each had a high beam lens which allowed us to see far enough ahead to avoid hitting the walls, potholes, or each other. We couldn't see all the way past the darkness, but we knew how to steer for the few feet in front of us to stay safe.

Psalm 119:105 tells us God's word provides just enough visibility to help us take the next step. I often wish He would provide recessed lighting in all my metaphorical tunnels so I could see clearly to the other side. But our bike trip reminded me my job this school year is not to focus on the end of the tunnel, but to provide Brady with enough light to get through each day.



Back to School Tips: Executive Function

Executive function refers to cognitive processes that support many behaviors our kids need to successfully complete tasks. Deficiencies in executive functioning are the reason behind many of the struggles our kids experience at school and at home, and are common with many different KIND diagnoses including autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, to name a few.

Executive functioning encompasses organization, planning, working memory, following multiple-step instructions, and more. When these skills are lagging, the result can take many forms: missing assignments, messy backpacks, project overwhelm, time blindness, and lost lunchboxes. (I would be able to retire early if not for all the waterbottles we've replaced.)

Here are three quick tips to jumpstart your year, which I learned from my friend **Debbie Tipton, M.Ed**, Brady's executive function coach in elementary school.

1. Place visual reminders everywhere. Keep a list on the wall near the door with all the things your child needs for school. Attach a tag to his or her backpack with a similar list of what needs to come home. For younger children, use pictures instead of words.
2. Create reward systems for achievements, such as a week without forgetting a water bottle, or a month of turning homework in on time. Don't require perfection at first. Set achievable goals to build habits and drive improvement.
3. Break up big assignments into smaller sections, and celebrate the completion of each piece with a small token - 15 minutes extra screentime, a small treat, etc. Long projects can seem impossible to kids who struggle with executive function, so creating small victories helps.

This is just the tip of the executive function iceberg! For more practical advice, listen to Debbie's full interview on [**The KIND Families Podcast**](#) [HERE](#).



More than OT

Brady started Occupational Therapy (OT) when he was three to help him develop better fine and gross motor control, and to help his brain better process space and sensory inputs. However, after years of weekly appointments, his handwriting was still nearly illegible. When he

was seven, we took him to [Scribble 2 Script](#) in Phoenix for an evaluation, and we learned there was much more than a possible future as a prescribing doctor behind Brady's chicken scrawl.

Megan Eldridge, an Occupational Therapist, started Scribble 2 Script over twenty years ago, and now has two locations. Megan created programs to improve Brady's handwriting, but she also looked for the root developmental cause behind other delays and behaviors. She's created a fun, impactful, child-centric model that produces incredible results, and not just on paper.

In Megan's own words, "we help parents understand what's really going on developmentally, and we help kids master the tools they need to step into the truth of who they really are—confident, capable, and worthy of celebration." Megan is a champion of KIND families, so if you are in the greater Phoenix area, I encourage you to learn more at <https://scribble2script.com>.

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