



THE CARSON COLLECTIVE

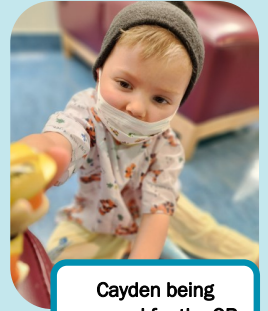
A December Update from the Carsons!

Graduating on Mission

When we disciple students, we have several goals: teaching them how to share their testimony, faith, and get plugged into a local church. As I was re-connecting with my graduated students, I realized that they also hadn't connected with the college ministry of Cru! I called Matt, on Cru staff at Cal State Long Beach, and asked for him to meet with our students. I didn't realize so many of them went to CSULB, and they didn't either! Amber, John, Youssef, Carina, Ashley, and Byron now all have another connection point as they continue their journey with Jesus! In addition to that, half of them currently volunteer with us!



Our Cru meeting at CSULB



Cayden being prepped for the OR

Prayer Requests

- As of now, (May 2023), our family has fully recovered! Our only concerns are now for Cayden and Selah Grace. With their accessory lobe, we're not sure what their health will look like in the long run.
- Selah Grace also might need a pacemaker, so we will be returning yearly for check-ups.

Hospital Visits



2022 was a medically hard year for our three kids. Cayden and Selah had both been having respiratory issues that were being monitored and managed, but couldn't be explained. On Halloween night, Andren was admitted for RSV complications. The day Andren came home, was the day Selah was admitted to the PICU for multiple viral infections. It was during this hospitalization that the Lord revealed a possible heart condition (which we later discovered to be an issue with her heart's electrical currents). Following her week-long ICU stay, she picked up the flu that turned into pneumonia that led to a meningitis scare.

On December 16, Cayden had surgery to find the root cause of his respiratory issues. The doctors discovered that his left lung had not developed properly, and a big surprise to his team... he has an "accessory lobe"-- an extra lung that shouldn't be there! This condition is so rare it wasn't caught on previous scans. This led to several serious concerns: a lack of drainage in the lung, and the risk of putting pressure on his heart. January 23rd we met with his team and will never forget what one of the doctors (A professing atheist) said. She turned to Cayden and said to him, **"Cayden, your God has made your body so wonderfully!"** In pure shock, the team explained that though his lungs are not as they should be, they pose no threat to surrounding organs and are functioning BETTER than they would have thought! We now have an answer for his respiratory issues, and we believe it is likely that Selah has the same abnormality. We are so thankful for the unique and WONDERFUL ways God has made both their little bodies. Throughout the many difficulties, God's name has been glorified. He has provided in the most unexpected ways, and His hand has been so evident in the lives of our kids.



Andren in the ER recovering from RSV



Contact us at:

Brandt.Carson@cru.org

(423) 667-3239

Jessica.Carson@cru.org

(951) 501-9787



THE CARSON COLLECTIVE

A January Update from the Carsons!

Reconciliation at Fastbreak

Four students from Garden Grove HS came to our winter camp, Fastbreak. Shortly after arriving, Max and Ben got into a disagreement. Frustrated, Max came to talk with me. He shared, "I think I'm just done with him. He is always making fun of my weight, my intellect, etc..." When I asked Max if he had thought about how to talk it out, he responded, "Nah. He wouldn't listen. I had been planning to fade out for a while now. I think now is the time."

For the next hour, I encouraged him on how to embrace manhood and not run from conflict. Persuaded by our talk, he asked to get Ben so they could talk. Within 45 minutes, they had hashed out their differences like respectful young men. When they stood up to leave, they paused, then embraced in a strong hug through tears. Max refused to pray because he didn't think God would help. After this, he had a lot to process. Pray for both of them as they consider a relationship with Jesus!



Our Garden Grove Team



Prayer Requests

- Pray for Max, Ben, and the rest of their friend group. They actively come to Cru, but don't have a relationship with Jesus. A mix of fear and trauma are currently holding them back.
- Please pray for Leo as he seeks to grow in his emotional iq. Pray also as he daily reengages with a father that has deeply wounded him.



Our Cru from FVI

Emotional Competency

During our cabin talk at the end of the day, one student was angrily sharing of the pain that he had experienced from his parents. While they were sharing, Leo was laughing and smiling. The boys were confused. "Hey, Leo. This is a long shot, but are you feeling jealous right now?" I asked. "YES!" he exclaimed. The rest of the cabin

was even more confused. "I wish I could be angry like you" Leo added.

As the conversation continued, we learned that Leo grew up as a pastor's kid to an angry, emotionally-absent father. Whenever he was sad, his dad would say, "Suck it up. Crying won't change anything now." If he felt angry, his father would condemn him for sinning against God. Eventually, Leo decided to try to stop feeling altogether. The problem was that Leo couldn't live with this anymore. "How do I feel... emotions? And are emotions a sin?" he asked. I've had the joy of coaching Leo through his story and his feelings. It's amazing to watch his heart come alive in real-time! Later, Leo would share his testimony in front of 50 students at Fountain Valley (FV)! In a lesson titled, 'Why does a good God allow bad things to Happen', he shared of the deep hurt left in his soul from his father... and how that shaped his character. He closed his talk with this: "While it hurt, God used the pain in my story to grow me as a man. I forgave my dad, and I pray for him daily. I look forward to one day having a relationship with him."



Jessica's Missions Leader Conference



Contact us at:

Brandt.Carson@cru.org

(423) 667-3239

Jessica.Carson@cru.org

(951) 501-9787