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# Working Mama Spotlight on Dr. Katie Wippermann McHugh



**Where are you from:** Greenwood, IN

**Where do you live now:** Indianapolis, IN

**Education:** Center Grove High School, University of Louisville (college), Indiana University (graduate school), University of Kentucky (first half of medical school), Indiana University (second half of medical school and OB/GYN Residency)

**Career:** Board Certified Obstetrician Gynecologist faculty at Indiana University. I practice mostly at [Eskenazi Hospital](#) but spend time every week at Indiana University Hospital and Methodist Hospital. I also work with the American College of Obstetrics and

Gynecology's national office to represent young OB/GYNs . My passion is advocating for women's health and reproductive rights on local, state, and national levels.

**Family life:** My husband, Patrick, is a nephrologist at St. Francis in Greenwood. We have two kids: [REDACTED] We have a miniature zoo with two old, cranky cats, Myrtle and Pinky, and three dogs, Myra (14 years old), Isla (7 years old), and Henry (5 months old). It is never dull or quiet at my house!

**Favorite Indy Eats:** We love family date nights at Tomo for sushi, Patachou for brunch, and Aristocrat for dinner. My husband and I can be found at Northside Social, Open Society, or The Libertine on nights without the littles.

**Favorite family fun spot/activity:** We love the new Tarkington Park! The designs are great for creative, active play for the kids. We often run into neighbors and friends and meet new friends every time we go. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis is a tried and true classic, but we've been exploring other spots recently. The Indianapolis Museum of Art and the 100 Acres as well as parks and hiking trails around Indy are new favorites.

**Favorite "me-time" activity:** I always have several new projects I'm working on. Whether it is a new curriculum for medical students or a way to help my patients through their medical issues, I enjoy developing those ideas. I am always inspired when catching up with my friends and family.

**What are you reading right now?** I read the news obsessively. I try to vary my sources so I get a wide variety of information and can make my own judgement, but my mainstays are The Hill, Reuters, and BBC News. I recently read "We Should All Be Feminists" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian author who beautifully argues for gender equality. Because of the constantly changing nature of medicine, I also spend a lot of time keeping up to date on the newest technologies and treatments for my patients.

**Best Mom Moment:** Practically speaking, anytime I can get through a week without missing an event, forgetting something at work, or ignoring my mother's calls is a success. However I take particular pride when I can get all that done and have some spontaneous fun with the kids while we're at it. Recently, we managed to get all the homework done, everyone fed and bathed, dogs walked, and clothes laid out for the next day without anyone melting down and with enough time for snuggles before bed. Best day ever, may never happen again.

**Career Highlight(s):** Caring for a woman throughout her high-risk pregnancy and handing her their newborn daughter after she'd lost her last two babies. I have many career related achievements that I am proud of, like being published in The Washington Post and serving on the Executive Board of ACOG, my profession's national organization, but I will keep that moment and the look on her face with me as long as I live.

**What you love about being a Hoosier?** The people. We have such interesting, lovely people here. My family loves traveling and we make friends everywhere, but there is nowhere like home when it comes to friendly, helpful, warm people.

**As a child, what did you want to be when you grow up?** In chronological order, a paleontologist, an astronaut, a basketball star (that was short lived), a performer on Broadway, an opera singer. I pursued opera in college and graduate school and even worked as a professional operatic soprano for several years before deciding to go to medical school. When I decided not to continue as a professional musician, the patient-physician relationship was what drew me to medicine.

**Where you want to be in 10 years?** I expect to be catching babies, performing surgery, and taking care of women in Indianapolis. I hope to still be engaged in leadership and medical advocacy, which keeps me refreshed and motivated during the long hours of being a physician. Additionally, in 10 years my son will be done with high school and my daughter will have a driver's license, so I hope to be spending more time snuggled with my dogs and a good book.

**My biggest mistake:** There are so many mistakes that seemed so huge at the moment (I forgot the Tooth Fairy - twice. I got the date wrong on an important soccer game and we missed it. I could go on.) but in retrospect they are just a part of life. My biggest mistake is when I forget to take a breath and enjoy my family and life. Things get busy and my Type A personality wants things to be done perfectly and on time. But things are so much more fun when I relax.

**Career/Parenting advice you would like to share with other working mamas:** The term "work-life balance" is a trap to convince women that we should excel at everything all the time. The truth is that we have many, varied, complex roles in our lives and sometimes things slip through the cracks because one of those roles requires more attention. That's okay. That's normal and happens to every one of us. Instead, give yourself permission to NOT FEEL GUILTY. If your child is sick and you have to miss work, that's what needs to happen. If you have a deadline coming up at work and you need to skip soccer practice to work on it, do what needs to be done. Give yourself the gift of flexibility to adjust to your life's needs and forgiveness for what isn't exactly perfect. All of us, moms and families alike, will benefit from a little grace.





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