

Episode 43. Kids and Friendships

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SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Kira Dorrian, Future Focused Parenting



Future Focused Parenting 00:03

What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting? They take their listeners from surviving to thriving. I'm Deana Thayer, and I'm Kira Dorrian. Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast brought to you by Future Focused Parenting.



Kira Dorrian 00:23

Well, hi, everyone, welcome to Raising Adults podcast, Deana and Kira here. And today we are going to tackle kids and friendships and gosh, as parents, how do we cultivate great friendships for our kids? How do we teach them to look for what makes a great friend? How do we help them through friend drama? Because I can tell you even in first grade, we were dealing with it, it starts so young, and all those complexities, because it is a complex topic, we've been tackling a lot of complex topics this season, I feel like.



Deana Thayer 00:51

We have and this one, you're right, it starts earlier and earlier, I think. And it's also critical that we help model and teach our kids how to be a good friend, because often you attract the kind of person that you are, and what you're putting off is what you end up surrounding yourself with. And so it's absolutely critical.

K

Kira Dorrian 01:07

Yeah, exactly. So do you want to start with your why?

D

Deana Thayer 01:10

Sure. Well, I can say that, in all honesty, here's one of those times where my why is that I didn't do a great job of this growing up. I chose some friends I ended up really regretting. And I wasn't always, and I definitely don't blame my parents for this, but they didn't really intervene. They kind of let me make my own mistakes in this area, they would let me know if they maybe disapproved of a friend or a boyfriend or what have you. But I don't know that there was a lot of modeling or scaffolding put up around how do you then extricate yourself from a friendship that maybe isn't healthy, or I just, I don't think that part went great. Again, I completely own though, that ultimately, at the end of the day, especially once I was a teenager, those friends I chose, those were my choices. And so it became really important to me to equip my children to do better than I did at identifying red flags in a friend and making sure they were being the kind of person they wanted to attract. And that ultimately, I prepared myself for how to navigate this with them if they ended up in a friendship that maybe wasn't so great. So my why came from some of my own falling down.

K

Kira Dorrian 02:16

Yeah, mine, too. I mean, I think that's, I think that, you know, as generations progress, parenting progresses, and I'm not sure that maybe our parents' generation had the skill set, or knew they needed a skill set for helping us work through these things, you know, up until very recently, it was a, kids will figure it out, they'll be fine kind of attitude. And that's not necessarily wrong. But I think that our generation of parents is more aware of the implications that this has on self esteem, and mental health and all these things, especially with social media in the mix and everything. So yeah, same thing I have, I'm an only child. And so I had this really nasty habit as a kid of getting into triangles. And usually in with best friendships that already existed, where I'd get, in some ways, it was very flattering. It was like, oh, we love you so much. We want... and we were going to be all three of us. But you've kind of infiltrated something that already exists. And it was never quite the same.

D

Deana Thayer 03:12

Did you end up feeling like the third wheel or the outsider often, or...?

K

Kira Dorrian 03:16

Sometimes... it depended. There were several I, when I was in Florida, I had one. And then when I moved up to Seattle, I had one and then I had in one middle school and high school that was very healthy and wonderful. And they're still two of my best friends today. So that, that friendship ended up being really, really great. But for a long time, that was, that was just a dynamic I was aware of it, you know, and that my parents were aware of in that it kept repeating itself. And I had, and I'm not going to share the story. But I had an incident at prom, my senior prom that was pivotal for me around friendship, where I kind of woke up and went, oh my gosh, I'm choosing the wrong friends. Like there was this group of friends that I, that were exactly the right people for me, who treated me well, who cared about me and I was choosing this other group. And we had, there was an incident at prom and I went oh, oh, no. And it was really important. It's actually good. You got to have a wake up call. I think some kids don't get that. Right. It was a huge wake up call. But it was so late in the game, you know. And then from that point forward, I think I made better choices. But my, my whole childhood was fraught with friendship drama. So I just, same kind of thing. I wanted my kids to learn those skills, see those red flags. Think about how do I demonstrate friendship in a way that's positive? And then how do I seek that same kind of friendship from other people?

D

Deana Thayer 04:35

And you get the unique experience where it's kind of a bummer that you had your wake up call so late, but you get the chance then to lay a foundation nice and early for your own kids.

K

Kira Dorrian 04:45

Absolutely. And I think too, I'm you know, I'm a very passionate person. I know, we're going to talk with Wendy Gossett, who's the temperament specialist, and she and I, we've chatted, and we're the same personality type, which is interesting. Oh, and our personality type, we don't really make friends, we make family. Like when we meet people, we, we make them ours, whatever, you know, and we don't, we don't want to just do small talk, we want to have deep, meaningful relationships. And so I think that sometimes my expectations of myself are so high as a friend that I put unfair expectations on other people. And that's something I've been working on my whole life. And that is definitely getting better and better as I get older. But that was the other piece to it. What I didn't want was for my kids to, in an effort to teach them to be a great friend to also then raise their expectations of other people where there's no empathy, there's no compassion, there's no room for the grace of hey, we're all humans, we all make mistakes. So it's it's a very, it's a tricky business, isn't it?

D Deana Thayer 05:42
There's some delicate balance there.

K Kira Dorrian 05:44
Absolutely. So tell us your how.

D Deana Thayer 05:47
Well, there were several things that I did right from the beginning. And the first time I think we really encountered this, of course, my kids came across kids at the playground, or in Gymboree or art class, even when they were pretty little. But those people tended to maybe stay in the sphere of acquaintances, because we only saw them at that class or it was once a week and you're just not developing. So I would say this kind of started for us once my kids went to the Montessori School, because now they're seeing the same children five days a week for long hours, right. And so we got to talking about how you choose a friend. And I am not again, I'm admitting I didn't do this when I was younger. But I actually had my kids watch people and taught them to be observers of, how does that person that you enjoy playing with on the playground, what are they like with other people? Have you watched them talk to their parents at pick up and drop off? How do they speak to their parents? Are they respectful? Are they kind? And so teaching them to kind of do a little more watching than I did, I think I kind of jumped in with both feet. I like people. And I was pretty social. And even though I've learned as an adult that I actually lean toward being an introvert, I can be an extrovert with the best of them when needed. And I think I leaned more toward that as I was younger and came more into my true self as I got older. And so what would happen is, I was just, I'm all in, it's great. And not always seeing things in advance. So I tried to have them do a little bit of watching. You know, they were little, when Marc started the school, he was three and a half. And so of course, I had to really bring this down to a pretty young level of, watch your friends, see what they do. It wasn't a big discussion that was super high level, I want to be really honest about that. But I think that was one of the first things I did is had them watch and listen. And it didn't mean I said don't play with them until you've watched and listened. I mean, enjoy that. But take a look, take a listen. And then another thing we did is we tried to set up some playdates with people they were interested in hanging out with, and we usually did it first in a neutral location. So one of my hows that was related to my why was making sure that I wasn't sending them off to an environment I didn't know about. And I never had this happen. So I'm not saying I was unsafe. But there was just a freedom I think even a generation ago about you just go to someone's house, and it's fine. And there were even

drop off playdates when you're quite young. And now I think often parents are still there, even at birthday parties and things. You don't necessarily drop off until later than I think we did when we were small, at least for myself. And so I would start with a neutral location, which then required both parents to be there. And so I also got to watch the interactions. And so we would maybe meet at a park or a beach or do a class together. Cienna had one friend invite her to a belly dancing class. I mean, we did fun things like that. And I think that was another thing I set up early that just kept everything neutral. It was, nobody was on anybody's turf. And I didn't have to wonder what was going on in another home, or have a super uncomfortable conversation with the other parent about how they do things in their house until I knew, is this friendship really going to go the distance because with little kids, friends definitely come and go somewhat, sometimes in pretty short order. So those were a few of the things early.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:04

Mm hmm. Yeah. Early on, for us, I think it was a lot of talking about how a friend should make you feel. And we still talk about this. But this was big in preschool. I remember like, oh my gosh, even the girl drama started in preschool. It was maddening. You're not invited to my birthday party. You know, this kind of nonsense. And so we talked a lot about how should a friend make you feel and should they make you feel good about yourself? Or bad about yourself? And you know, I'm a questioner, right. Should they make you feel good about yourself? All of the time? Or some of the time? Probably most of the time, right? And, and a lot of thinking about okay, well, when you play with this person, how do they make you feel? Oh, they made me feel really good. Okay, when you play with this person, how did they make you feel? They made me feel good sometimes, but sometimes they don't make me feel good. Okay, well, what do you think, is that a good friendship? And we will kind of talk it through, even when they were three or four, you know in a three or four year old way, but you know is a, is a friend someone who's always there for you? And I would also talk a lot about my own friendships because I have now cultivated some amazing friendships and people like those two best friends I was talking about that I've been friends with since I was 12. And the kids have, have relationships with them too. So we'll talk about you know, when Santi comes over, that's their aunt Sandra they call her Santi when Santi comes over, you know, do you see Santi and I speak to each other kindly? Do you ever see Santi make me cry? Do you ever see Santi say anything mean to me? No. Okay, that's interesting. Well, tell me about your friendships, which ones look like mine and Santi's? Which ones maybe look different? And starting to just, I think it's, it's an observation in a different way. I love that idea, though, of watching and listening, I kind of wish I had started that younger, that's so smart. Ours was more sort of reactive, like looking at, you know, what, what's happening? And how is it making you feel. And then also, of course, when I would catch them making a choice that I maybe thought wasn't a

kind choice or wasn't a good friendship choice, talking through, okay, so if we think what it means to be a good friend, is that that person makes us feel good about ourselves, we enjoy spending time with them, you know, they make us feel happy when we're with them. Do you think when you said that to that person, that you were being a good friend, that you were making them feel good about themselves and lifting them up? And you know, those kinds of things. So that was a conversation that is still ongoing, even to this day, looking at, you know, who are the friends that really make you feel good all the time, you want to lean into those friendships. And it's tricky, because I do think kids have to make, they actually have to make poor friendship choices. They have to learn this on their own, you can't save them from bad friendships. But I do think it comes back to, you know, cultivating the tools for them to observe, to learn, to process what they're experiencing, and start to make critical thinking decisions basically, around friendships.

D

Deana Thayer 11:58

Absolutely. And then they hopefully will know, hey, something isn't quite right here, and be bold enough to do something about it. Because I agree with you, we can't always just swoop in and rescue just because we're not a fan of the friend. I think we have a little more control for lack of a better word when they're younger, even just about saying, oh, you know, for that friend, they're gonna, we're gonna invite them to our house or whatever. But I think as they get older, in particular, it's really good to teach them how to do it. So they're their own barometer of what's a good choice, what's not such a great choice. And I love that you used your own friendships, that's really smart, because then they had something to look at and see. And it was, it's interesting, because my kids and I still talk about my friendships, and we were just having a great conversation over the weekend about how, even with your closest and dearest friends, it doesn't mean you're going to love everything about them.

K

Kira Dorrian 12:53

Right. That's so true.

D

Deana Thayer 12:55

And so to help them also know that the minute it's not perfect doesn't mean jump ship, oh, it's, all is lost. And to not get this idea of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. If you come up on a hard point. Or maybe you have a friend where oh man on this area, I just maybe don't love how they do that or how they operate in their life, or I don't agree with this piece of it. But they're wonderful to me, they're loyal, I know that they're fiercely on my side, they invest in me. Well, that's not someone to throw away just because there's

this thing over here you're maybe not a huge fan of. So I think it's smart. And I love that you're so self aware. It's one of my favorite things about you that you know enough about yourself and how you did it to be talking with your children about this in an ongoing way. I think this is much like the sex talk or any of these other things where it isn't a one and done. It's an ongoing conversation because their friendships will change. Not only who they're friends with, but the level of those friendships and what they're able to handle. And it's one thing to have that mean spirited, because that hurts even when you're little, the mean spirited oh, I'm not playing with you today, or I've decided we're not friends anymore. I mean, my kids had that even in early grade school. They're just so fickle. And kids can be really unkind. But there's a different depth that then comes with what happens when someone maybe betrays a confidence, because then you run into things like gossip in those older years and, and or loyalty. Can I, can I like this person if one of my dear friends doesn't like them? I mean, there's so many things, right? So I love that you said it's an ongoing conversation, because they'll have maybe not new because I think all of these things happen with little kids but just at a different level. So it's there'll be new things to navigate, or at least different layers of the same things to navigate.

K

Kira Dorrian 14:43

Yeah, and I think that it's, as a parent because you love them right? And essentially, anyone who hurts your kid you kind of want to punch in the face. Like you're like you hurt my kid.

D

Deana Thayer 14:51

Mama bear. Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 14:52

And so as a parent, it's really tempting to want to like, fix it for them. And I think there's room for meddling in terms of maybe meddling in that you're promoting a conversation or a dialogue between the children, but we have to be really careful that we're not solving it for them. That we are having conversations where we're not telling them what to do. We are questioning and helping them come to these realizations on their own. And that can be really stressful as a parent, because, gosh, you want to fix the problem right now, you want to solve the hurt right now. But actually, what you're doing is slowly but surely allowing them to come to these realizations, and it might take longer than fixing it right here right now. But that's that long game, right? That's that Future Focused Parenting mentality that yes, it's, it's going to mean that they're hurting a little more right in this moment. And maybe they don't actually solve it in this moment. But then when they're 13,

wow they're gonna have the conviction to know, this is a relationship I'm not interested in. And I've seen this already, even at seven I mean, Rhiannon is a female and has had all the female drama at school. And I watched her. There was some drama this year that she avoided. I mean, she like went out of her way to be like, I want nothing to do with that. And I thought that was pretty great. Yeah, especially since that was not her M.O. in preschool, she really sought out the approval of the person who didn't want her. And that's been changing. And I really fingers crossed, I'm hoping that's because of the conversations that we're having. I've also watched her really be kind to the underdog, she is really, really a fan of the underdog. And even when, like there's a girl at school right now that is challenging and Rhiannon really took this kid under her wing. And even though she actually wasn't a huge fan of this girl, she was aware that this girl needed a friend, and she was going to show up and be that person for this girl so that she wasn't alone. And I think that's amazing, you know, for a seven year old to have that awareness. But I think she's also aware, and we talk about a lot. What does it feel like when you're alone? What does it feel like when someone comes to get you and shows up for you? And how can we be kind to each other in that in that same way? Because I think even though that drama is out there, there are kids that are drama free. And I have to, I want my kids to find, find the drama free kid, please, because you're gonna have a much better time with the drama free kid.

D

Deana Thayer 17:16

And let's be honest, their drama becomes ours. So it also saves our sanity to encourage drama free friends. Absolutely. One thing that what you said made me think of about her choosing to stay away from that. Is that, what, isn't that also great that you got to see how she grew in the time from preschool where she maybe would have sought out and kept trying and and then was able to say, well, you know, I'm not interested in that. I think that's a lot of, I'm sure it's in large part to the things you've discussed at home, but also says a lot about her as a person. And I think this is what's great, we get to watch, we get kind of the front row seat to watch our kids have these developmental achievements, where it's like, oh, man, a year ago, there's no way she would have responded that way. And the other thing that you said that triggered something for me was the questioning. And I just want to say to our listeners who might have older kids, that even questioning can sometimes be seen as intruding when they're older. And so I'm always careful now that one of the only questions I ask is, are you interested in my thoughts? I mean, because sometimes even me just saying, oh, tell me more about that. Or why do you think that happened? I just wanted to tell you about it. And so I have to be so careful. I don't know how many times I've stepped into, even this summer, you know, everyone knows it's my last summer with Cienna before she goes off to college, and I, I kind of feel a little bit of pressure to get my last thoughts in to impart to her. And I'll sometimes say, well, here's

what I think or what. And then I'm like, just kidding, may I make a suggestion? It's so easy to want to do, especially when I really feel the clock ticking in such a different way. But I just wanted to say that because I think overall questioning is the most lovely and gentle tactic, but to be aware that with all the emotions and hormones that come with those older years, sometimes even that is seen as almost an affront, or you're meddling or oh, just don't get in my business. I just wanted to tell you about what's going on. And we don't ever want to risk having them not want to share. So that's just my little like caution flag that, be so thrilled if your kids are still talking to you about their friendships and these relational dynamics and ask to be invited into that. And then if they say no thanks, then okay. It's still a privilege to get to listen.

K

Kira Dorrian 19:31

Absolutely. So one of the other things that I have tried to impart to my kids is, is ultimately a future focused mentality for them. That on the other side of kid friendship, is adult friendship and adult friendship is pretty great. Most of the time we figure ourselves out. We gravitate toward people that we click with, we invest in relationships that make us feel good and, and that like you said, yes, we all have friendships that... every single one of my friends has something about them that I love them in spite of, but also, let's be honest, love me in spite of my, you know my boatload of issues. So I think that's really important for them to know. And I say over and over again and I validate, kid friendships are hard. And I'll say that guys, you are in a hard season of friendships. Friendships at this age are challenging. So this is normal. But on the other side of this is what I have with Santi or what I have with your auntie Laura, or what I have with your auntie Christina, you know, like, and I'll talk about what they are seeing. This is on the other side of that. But this is the time where it is going to be challenging and not to be shocked about it. Even though it's so hard. I don't think it helps them at all. If I'm being totally honest, I think it will help them later. That oh, that's right, mom said it would be good. And look, here it is, it's good. But I keep trying to keep them focused on the end goal. Because it's really easy with depression or sadness or anything hard to feel like it's always going to feel this way, it's never going to feel better. And so keeping their eye on the later prize of you are going to get to a point where the people in your life make you feel great. And that's the end of the story.

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Deana Thayer 21:05

Wow. And you just dropped a life lesson bomb in general, not just about friendship to hold on and really remember that everything is transient, yeah, the hard stuff, but also the good stuff. You can't just rest on your laurels and assume everything is going to be great forever. So even a friendship that's going beautifully will probably hit a speed bump. Or you might have a time where you have a rough argument or hit an impasse. And that's

going to happen. And I think that's a great perspective you're imparting to them. And you're right, that apparently doesn't do much right now. But I think it's so important that we're kind of, in a way planting a lot of seeds. Yeah, that will grow later. And they'll be able to look back and remember, and by then those seeds will actually have pretty deep roots. And they'll think oh, yes, yeah, Mom, Mom and Dad talked to me about this. And now I'm seeing it in action, because some of the things we're telling them they're not going to see for a long time, right?

K

Kira Dorrian 21:55

Well, and then my hope is, you know, even with broader topics like teen suicide, and those kinds of things that, that we're leaving this constant impression of, yes, this moment is really hard. And what is amazing about life is that those moments do pass. And when you get to the other side, you realize, okay, I moved through that. And so, in fact, recently, I was just talking about this yesterday, and I was like, you gotta remember, buddy, that, even in those moments that are really, really hard. Have you ever had a season of hard that you didn't come through to the other side? So you might not know how long that season's gonna be, you might not know how long you're going to feel that way. But you can trust with enough life experience, that you will come out the other side, and there will be joy again. And that's what you have to hold on to.

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Deana Thayer 22:39

So good. And it's so important. Because I think with kids, and I see it even and almost especially with teenagers, I'm sure where you talk about even just a sports season, they're having a hard sports season. You're like, it's three months of your life. To them, it feels like an eternity. And we know of course, it's a blip on their radar. But reminding them and talking through the fact that it is a window of time; it will end. Really the old cliché, this too shall pass is never more applicable than we're trying to, when we're trying to teach our children about perspective on the hard.

K

Kira Dorrian 23:12

So let's talk really quickly about having to extricate yourself from friendships, because I think that happens too, where you've built a friendship, and then suddenly, it becomes really clear that either we need some space, because I remember a friend gave me this great advice. She was like, sometimes, kids just need time to developmentally shift. And you might just want to take a break from the friendship, allow that developmental time to shift, and then you can return into the friendship and see if things are different. And that was really helpful. And it has continued to be helpful. But when it's become clear that we

need to extricate from a friendship, or and here's a further complication, when the parents are friends, but the kids aren't. And how are you navigating that, you know, when they're little? They're friends by default, because you're friends. So you show up at all the playdates and really it's a mom play date, let's be honest. So, but at a certain point, maybe those kids don't get along anymore. And how do you as parents maintain your relationship and allow it to be okay that the kids aren't friends? Or if that's not the case, how, how do we extricate from a friendship?

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Deana Thayer 24:13

Yeah, and I think in the mom friendship example for us that got to start happening organically, is then they were old enough that maybe I could meet that friend for coffee while they were at school. So the kids weren't even a thing. Or as they got older, of course, that, that was less of an issue. I could maybe have girls night with that friend or go meet her for happy hour and the kids just aren't part of that. But it isn't always an organic thing. And sometimes a friendship needs to be all done. I, for my part, I've been pretty fortunate that I haven't had to actively assist my kids to get out of a friendship. I know that some families do come up and kind of butt up against that where they actually have to intervene. And I've been really grateful to not have to do that. My kids have been able to handle it themselves. What we came up against, and perhaps you can speak to the other example, but what we more came up against was I have two kids who really care about how do I be all done without being mean. Right? And that is such a balance. And it's definitely, I have to take some ownership for that, because that's my personality, too. I have a hard time feeling like, oh, that's not kind, though. And so one of the things we did and thankfully, most of the time, this did kind of help end things organically, was we talked about, well, we're just going to have you stop initiating. So it doesn't mean if the person reaches out to you, you ignore them, or don't at least say hello if they text you, but you're not going to be initiating reaching out to them, being the first communicator or the inviter. It meant sometimes they were still the invitee. And then we had to handle those things with either them...I've literally had this happen, where my kids are like, I'm about to ask you something, and I'm okay if you say no.

K

Kira Dorrian 25:56

Yeah, use me. Yeah, I've done that before.

D

Deana Thayer 25:58

Let me, let me be the bad guy. And so I've done that for them. But it really helped to just give them the boundary of, I'm not being unkind if they say hello, and just ask how I am in

a text, I can respond. But I'm not going to go hey, do you want to get together? Because I don't, this person has proven to be unhealthy to me or not loyal or betrayed my confidence, or whatever. The reason is, that really helped them put up a little bit of a fence that felt safe without being unkind.

K

Kira Dorrian 26:26

I love that. I love that. Yeah, we've never had to truly remove ourselves yet. Luckily, I mean, they are seven. So it's coming, I'm sure. But we haven't had to do that. But we are in a little bit of a pickle, with a kiddo at school with one of my, one of my kids. That I don't even have an answer to this yet. I've been kind of chewing on it and asking, you know, my people for advice, but one of my kids has become friendly with a kid who has twice now made outwardly racist statements at school. And it's really tricky, because I don't think the kid's a bad kid, I think the kid's getting this from home. And I, it's a kid who's had a tough year. So I also don't want to make that kid suffer and lose a friend at the same time. There's a part of me that's like, well, what might they learn if this is the reason that they've lost a friend? And I've talked to my kids. And I mean, you and I talk about this all the time. And when I was talking to this child about the situation, because they were saying, like, well, why can't we have a playdate? And why aren't we having a playdate? And I was saying, you know, I am all for having friendships where I don't agree with the, with the person. I mean, you see that all the time, mommy and daddy have lots of friends where we don't agree. We don't agree on the President. We don't agree on politics. We don't agree on religion. There's all these different places where we don't agree. And that doesn't bother me at all. But there are a few topics where I'm not sure I'm comfortable that we disagree. And this is one of them, like racism, to me, that's kind of a deal breaker for me in my friendships.

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Deana Thayer 27:55

It's a no from you. Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 27:57

So it becomes really tricky, because like I said, I don't want to punish this child, because they're just a child. At the same time, I do not wish to condone the behavior and say that I'm ok having a relationship. But that, that breeds a then bigger conversation, should the parents reach out and say, hey, why can't we have a playdate? It puts me in a situation where perhaps I would have to be very honest, because honestly, this is also and this is where it gets tricky, right is like, if I'm not honest. Well, let me put it this way. Honesty in this situation is an opportunity to stand up for what I believe in. And being quiet in a

situation like that is condoning, right, because it's...

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Deana Thayer 28:37

Silence betokens consent.

K

Kira Dorrian 28:39

Exactly, exactly. So it's a little bit of a, we're still trying to figure out. Luckily, it's summer. But we're trying to figure out what to do about that next year, because it does that, you know, like I said, I'm all for a difference of opinion. This is one area where I don't know that I can, I don't know that I can be gracious with that difference of opinion.

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Deana Thayer 28:57

So I think we all have those deal breaker things. Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 28:59

Yeah. So yeah, complicated, complicated little topic. Oh, I thought of one other thing. I'm really careful about checking what's happening in the TV shows that my kids are watching in terms of how the characters speak to each other. Because what I found and it's less so with today's TV, but certainly like from when we were kids, they would often try and teach a friendship lesson by kind of showing how people shouldn't treat each other. And actually all that's doing is just giving people the dialogue and the words that, that they would use to be unkind to someone. So I'm very careful. My kids even know sometimes if we're watching something together, and two people are mean to each other. Rhys will even kind of look over at me with these big eyes to see like, oh, is mom gonna shut this down and, and not let us watch. But then also, you know, when those moments come up, we talk through them. So like, wow, what do you think about what that person just said to someone who's their friend? Or what would you have done in that situation? So again, just kind of like using the TV as an opportunity to teach those friendship lessons, even when the TV show itself might not be teaching it. Any other thoughts?

D

Deana Thayer 30:06

Those are my main ones. I'm still, I'm still in this, but I'm kind of getting to a settled place, which is really nice. And my kids are pretty great at navigating things now. And so I think it's, it's, how do you lay that strong foundation? So I love what you've shared today. Because having kids who are more in the trenches and doing this in the early years, I think

it sets them up well for what's to come. I will say it's very worth it. Because I do feel my kids were set up well, and as a result, have overall just chosen fabulous friends and have been good friends.

K

Kira Dorrian 30:35

That gives me a lot of hope.

D

Deana Thayer 30:36

You get to see the fruit of that.

K

Kira Dorrian 30:37

You know what I also just, I think is interesting on this topic? And I know this was really important to you. And I wonder if there's research out there about this. But you know, you were also very passionate, as am I, about the sibling relationship. And I do think if you, you really are teaching this first in the sibling relationship, how are you friendly to each other? How are you participating in a friendship, even though it's a sibling dynamic, it still mimics friendship very, very similarly, and hopefully becomes that absolute. And so what you're allowing at home, if you're allowing your kids to beat each other up and speak in nasty words to each other, that is going to translate out on the playground, because that's been allowed at home.

D

Deana Thayer 31:17

I'm glad you said that. Because earlier, something you were saying made me want to say that and I forgot, so thank you that, that one of the first ways I taught the, how does this make someone feel, was with things like sharing a toy. Or you hit your sister. How do you think that made her feel? It gets taught first in the home. And hopefully the sibling will be the first friend in a lot of ways. And I also have taught my kids that they're going to be together even once their mom and dad are gone. So when I'm gone, dad's gone, step parents are passed away, you still have each other. So they also are almost first and last friends in a lot of ways. And so that is the breeding ground for learning how to treat someone in an environment. Also, what I love is that it's in an environment where it's so safe to make mistakes, because we're in a family and we love each other. And there's really a lot of room for that.



Kira Dorrian 32:03

I love that. That's a perfect way to end and you have the most beautiful quote.



Deana Thayer 32:07

We love this quote. This quote is wonderful. It's by an unknown person. So I can't give a name credit. But here's what it says. A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you forget the words.



Kira Dorrian 32:22

Oh, I love it. Well, thank you. Thanks for being with us today. I am sure we will tackle this again. I feel like there's several topics that we've talked about where it warrants more. So I'm sure we'll come back to this but we appreciate you being with us today. For more information you can go to futurefocusedparenting.com. If you have a question for us info@futurefocusedparenting.com. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram, @FutureFocusedParenting and @RaisingAdultsPodcast, and we have a YouTube channel now. So make sure to subscribe. We're releasing videos of the recording so you can see bloopers and everything. I'll tell you audio listeners, you are not hearing what happened in this episode. But there is more on YouTube so be sure to check it out.



Deana Thayer 33:05

Raising Adults podcast is produced by Kira Dorrian and Deana Thayer, and recorded in Kira's laundry room. Music by Seattle band Hannalee. Thanks for listening.



Future Focused Parenting 33:05

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