

# Episode 136. Mean Kids, Bullies And Their Parents!

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

bully, kids, bullying, parent, parenting, conversation, unkind, happening, feel, child, people, situation, person, kira, collaborative, deana, receive, app, piece, coping mechanism

## SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, MamaZen, Kira Dorrian, Future Focused Parenting

- D** Deana Thayer 00:00  
So one thing I was really careful about, and I have encouraged my kids to be careful about, is that we don't label someone a bully over one or two harsh incidents. Because once a kid is called that, whether it's when they're not present or to their face, occasionally, and we've seen this in the world sadly, occasionally, someone will lean into that label. And then it becomes a horrible self-fulfilling prophecy. And I think we've got to watch out for that.
- F** Future Focused Parenting 00:33  
Welcome to Raising Adults, the groundbreaking parenting podcast that starts with the end in mind. We're your co-hosts, Deana Thayer and Kira Dorrian. We created Future Focused Parenting to take families from surviving to thriving. So join us as we help you stop raising kids and start Raising Adults.
- D** Deana Thayer 00:57  
Well, hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of Raising Adults. We are excited to be with you, our amazing group of Future Focused Parents out there who so faithfully tune in and learn ways to be more intentional and proactive in your parenting. We salute you. We

are so glad to be alongside you. And today, we're going to talk about bullying but with a little bit of a... not a twist. But an additional piece. We're going to talk about that from the perspective of kids, which I think is what we primarily think about. But also, how can that morph into challenging issues with other adults, particularly other parents, and what happens if you run into a parent who's maybe being a bully or isn't willing to be collaborative in a conversation that you need to have? That's tricky. So we're going to dive into all of that in a moment. We had such a great chat recently with Amy and Margaret from What Fresh Hell - Laughing in the Face of Motherhood. And they touched on this, and it really got us thinking. So we just want to go a little further on some points. That being said, you may have issues that you're facing that need a little bit more unpacking, and we fully recognize we're probably not going to get to tackle all of that. This is a little bit more 10,000-foot view like we say on some other topics. So Kira and I are still separate, but I think for not much longer. So Kira, how are you in the laundry room?

K

Kira Dorrian 02:20

I'm good. I'm hanging in there. I have a sick kid who does not have COVID. And it is bananas to be navigating that after 18 months. I'm out of practice. It's like, I don't remember how to do that. And oh, I'd forgotten how exhausting it is to have a sick child.

D

Deana Thayer 02:38

It's super tiring.

K

Kira Dorrian 02:40

Oh my gosh. And can we just take a moment? Where did it come from? We don't do anything. Where did they get this germ? I need to know. It's fascinating to me. There we are. I'm fine. How are you?

D

Deana Thayer 02:54

Deep thoughts by Kira Dorrian. Where did this germ come from? I'm well. I'm well. Thank you. I'm cozy in the coat closet. Ready to talk about this. And looking forward to you know, this time of year I do find quite stabilizing. I mean, I love, love, love summer. But I also really quite like getting back into structure and routine. And because I'm kind of a structure and routine gal.

K

Kira Dorrian 03:16

Yep, me too.

D

Deana Thayer 03:16

So yeah. So I'm well, I'm looking forward to just the rhythm of life kind of recalibrating, you know, getting on the right timezone, all of those things. So I think that stuff is really important. And I also am at a new month. So I want to let our audience know what I'm going to be working on for September. And it's kind of a big one for me because I'm a little bit haphazard with this, and I need to clean it up a little bit. And that is having a consistent bedtime. So I don't know how many of you out there also have this issue. But I feel like I'm a little bit better at it during the week because I know I have to get up early, blah blah blah, and then the weekend just becomes this slippery slope of like, maybe I got up, but then I took a nap. Or I just slept in, or I got roped into some late-night TV, or as often happens in my house, random late-night conversation with a teenager. And then, all of a sudden, my circadian rhythm is like, "what happened?" when it gets back to Monday morning. So I'm going to work, and I'm going to try and be gentle with myself. My goal is to be in bed at the same time every night. I've picked 10 o'clock. But it doesn't mean I have to be asleep by 10. So I'm just going to like ease into, like, just get in bed at the same time every night and see what that does. So there you go. And I know you have something to share too because we've had some new listeners, which if you're newer around here, thank you and welcome. We're so glad that you're on board. But that means you might be catching up or binge listening to some past episodes. And we've had some folks ask about the attribute of the month because we definitely did mention that in earlier episodes.

K

Kira Dorrian 03:19

I think it was like season two.

D

Deana Thayer 04:56

Yeah, I think so.

K

Kira Dorrian 04:57

Yeah, we had some people reach out like, hey, where's this attribute of the month thing? And so if you're new, and you've heard about it, and you want it, guess what, we still have it for you. So it actually comes FREE when you sign up for our newsletter. And so if you go to [bit.ly/RaisingAdultspodcast](https://bit.ly/RaisingAdultspodcast), or if you go to our website, [FutureFocusedParenting.com](https://FutureFocusedParenting.com).

At the bottom, you'll see like, sign up for our newsletter. If you sign-up, it comes right away into your inbox, and you get the entire calendar, all 12 months of attributes and character traits. And then you also get a video, and then you get a whole bunch of other stuff that comes over the next four weeks. So you get like, a list of age-appropriate chores and how to build your family's values. So actually, it's kind of worth doing. It's a ton of stuff. And then we only send out one newsletter a month. So it's really like, low involvement.

D

Deana Thayer 04:58

Yeah, we are not the people who are going to clog your inbox. So don't be scared of that because we don't appreciate that. So we don't do it to you.

K

Kira Dorrian 05:59

Yeah, the first like four weeks, you get one once a week or something like that. But then, after that, it's just the monthly email. And every week, you're getting one of those freebies I was talking about. So it's kind of worth it. So yeah, check it out.

[bit.ly/RaisingAdultspodcast](https://bit.ly/RaisingAdultspodcast) or go to our website, [FutureFocusedParenting.com](https://FutureFocusedParenting.com), you can get your hands on that whole 12 months of attributes and character traits.

D

Deana Thayer 06:18

Awesome. Okay, well, I suppose we should dive in.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:22

Let's do.

D

Deana Thayer 06:24

I mean, it's a big one.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:26

Yeah, it is. It's a sad one. It breaks my heart that this is such a thing and has been.

D

Deana Thayer 06:33

Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:33

You know, for such a long time. And it's morphed and changed over the years, right? Because it used to be like, kids will be kids. And then it became like, all kids are bullies. And now we're sort of, I think, trying to find this middle ground that Margaret and Amy were talking about of like, well, what's the difference between mean and bullying, right?

D

Deana Thayer 06:53

Right. You can be rude and not be a bully. Like, you know all of that? Yeah. So there's a lot. So I guess I can just start with my why. And I just have two and they're short. My first one is, I went through the earlier years of parenting with a why of I really wanted to be preventative around this in terms of my kids becoming a bully. So I knew I wasn't in charge of what other kids did. But I wanted to equip my kids with the skills to be kind and gracious, and learn how to handle even tricky, confrontational situations without going over into this kind of targeted, I'm constantly unkind with my words or my actions. And so my first why was around really making sure, in as far as I could, because I get we aren't in full control of things, of preventing creating a bully. And then my why shifted as my children grew into also, and I was doing this kind of dual track, but I feel like the shift once I was pretty confident they weren't bullies, then it became more this other one is what I'm saying. So like the scale slowly tipped, if that makes sense, into really equipping them with the skills to deal with it if they were ever a target, or if they witnessed it. And how do you not be that bystander but be that upstander? So my whys were both like preventing a bully and then helping my people navigate if they interacted with a bully, and I think those skills carry into adulthood, as we're going to hear soon.

K

Kira Dorrian 08:16

Yes, they do. I love that. My why was really around the mental health piece. And I should share, I was bullied as a kid, verbally. I moved to Seattle in fourth grade, and I had a couple of kids in that class who were really unkind every day. I came home crying every day. And my parents talked with the teacher, and she didn't really care, and nothing was ever really done about it until they switched me to a new class the next year. And I mean, it wasn't like, upon reflection, it wasn't like the most horrendous thing that could have ever happened to me. I mean, some kids really deal with awful, awful bullying. But it affected me, and I would say it shaped me for the rest of my life. So my why was really around, not putting my kids through that and doing as much as I could to prepare them and prevent it. And I got to be honest with you. I don't think it ever crossed my mind that my kids would be bullies because I was so focused on like, they might have that experience. But also I think that's a wonderful point. I mean, you know, part of why I parent the way I parent with all of the emotional intelligence and compassion and empathy was to create

compassionate, empathetic kids and I don't know that compassionate and empathetic kids lean into bullying as easily. So I think, did I say anything?

D

Deana Thayer 09:33

No, you did. I love that. Did I say anything? That's the best.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:39

Did anything come out of my mouth?

D

Deana Thayer 09:40

Did anything coherent occur? Yes, it did. No, that was lovely. And I think you're right. You know, when you parent that way, that is in itself preventative because you're giving this buffer of that.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:50

Or you're trying to be because, again, I know some families that have been shocked and appalled. Like how did this happen? I parent so beautifully. And so, I mean, there's an element of personality and also coping skills and all that.

D

Deana Thayer 10:01

Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 10:01

That's not to say it's a guarantee. But I think I felt like those skills were going to make it less likely that my kids would bully.

D

Deana Thayer 10:08

No, but you're right to acknowledge that there's always like the X-Factor and, you know, there are pieces of this we can't control, and plenty of parents have been surprised by their own children's behavior at times. I mean, that definitely happens.

K Kira Dorrian 10:21  
Oh, yeah.

D Deana Thayer 10:22  
So, you know, I think with this 10,000-foot view idea, there are just a couple of points I wanted to say. And then I know you have one as well, kind of on this empathy piece, actually. And unsurprising to anyone who has been a frequent listener. I'm kind of into words, you know, kind of care about that.

K Kira Dorrian 10:42  
What??

D Deana Thayer 10:42  
I know, shocking, right? And I just think vocabulary, again, this is an area where it really matters. And labels can be so hard to shake once they're given. So one thing I was really careful about, and I have encouraged my kids to be careful about, and this is what I appreciated about what Amy and Margaret said, too. Is that we don't label someone a bully over one or two harsh incidents. Because once a kid is called that, whether it's when they're not present, or to their face, occasionally, and we've seen this in the world, sadly, occasionally, someone will lean into that label. And then it becomes a horrible self-fulfilling prophecy. And I think we've got to watch out for that. Does that make sense?

K Kira Dorrian 11:31  
Oh, yeah, I think that's very well said, with all labels.

D Deana Thayer 11:35  
Absolutely.

K Kira Dorrian 11:36  
Let's just take a second for that. All of that is so common with kids that suddenly see themselves as a bad kid. And guess what it's like, well, I'm never gonna shake that. So I might as well be that. Thank you for saying that.

D

Deana Thayer 11:47

Yes, I 100% agree this is true with all labels. I just think this one's kind of particularly damaging if we're not careful. And so throwing around the word bully or bullying, we have to be careful. That said, I agree with you. I think bullying has morphed over time, and it's taken new avenues. I mean, now you can be bullied online. You can be bullied through social media. It isn't just kids on a playground anymore. We need to be aware of that. There are some insidious ways this can take shape. So I just wanted to at least mention the word piece. And then it's been like, a lot of Deana for several minutes. So I promise I'll be quiet. But the other thing I think is really important is equipping kids with those coping tools and the wherewithal and discernment to know how to respond and what kind of level of response is necessary. So last week, we were talking about when to be "that mom," and I think this is a little bit like when to be "that kid." It's like I have to decide, is this worth maybe just walking away this time? You know, it doesn't require going to that next level, and then knowing with the help of us, I think, there's got to be a rehearsal in the home, practice in the home, a lot of conversations in the home. But to also know when does this rise to the level of, you know what? This is a pattern, this really isn't safe for me, and I need to have some intervention, I need to get help from a grown-up or a teacher, whatever that might be. So I think we've got to be talking to our kids about that discernment of figuring out those choices. What are the buffet of choices available to you in response? And then, how do you know which one to choose at which context? Right? So I just think that's really important. And I think it's one of those areas where it's not a one off conversation. It's like this ongoing series of chats.

K

Kira Dorrian 13:37

Yeah, I totally agree.

D

Deana Thayer 13:39

Yeah, it's hard because we're really fortunate. We didn't deal with this a ton. But I was bullied in middle school. I mean, it wasn't great. It was a lot of thinking nobody liked me. And it was a group on one, which I think was the more old school like, traditional sense of bullying. Now, you can definitely have one on one, you can have computer screen on one. I mean, you can have all kinds of versions of this, but it was very group ganging up, so to speak, on me, and I really am fortunate that I haven't seen that with Cienna and Marc. But it doesn't mean there weren't incidents where we had to talk through how to respond or how to deal with an unkind comment. You know, it just, you can't insulate them from everything, things like this are going to crop up, and then they have to be equipped with the tools to respond.

M

MamaZen 14:33

Hey FFPS, I just want to tell you about a really incredible new app that I had the opportunity to try recently. It kind of fell in our laps and it was really kismet because this is an app called MamaZen. And it's really an app for helping moms find mindfulness in their parenting, reduce their anger and stress if they're having trouble sleeping, helped me sleep better. And it is so closely linked to the work that I used to do in my private practice, helping people find that Zen state and get back into their bodies and just feel better. And so I was really lucky to get an opportunity to try it. And I've actually been having trouble sleeping lately, which is totally unlike me. But it's been that way for about a year now. And so, what's cool about the app is you actually get to plug in, like what you're struggling with. And then they tailor the recordings to that. So because I was struggling with sleep, a lot of what was coming up for me were things to help me sleep, and I have been using it and really enjoying it and definitely seeing the benefits. I feel much more calm, much more present and connected to my kids, and I'm sleeping better. So I highly recommend that you check it out. Well, I know for so many moms finding Zen can be super challenging. So if you're one of those and you experience things like impatience, anger, anxiety, irritability, or you feel like you're starting to have hardly a day go by where you're not yelling at your kids, then this app is definitely for you. The MamaZen app specializes in helping moms change their motherhood habits so they can become patient and more mindful, calmer and happier, and raise those happy and mindful adults. The other great thing about the app is it gives you the flexibility you need so you can work at your own pace from the comfort of your own home. It's super simple. Once you download the app and sign up, you receive your own customized program that fits your journey with specific solutions for your family. And MamaZen has a promo code for our listeners. Just use the promo code FUTURE, all caps, and that will give you full unlimited free access to MamaZen for 30 days. We definitely encourage you to go to your App Store and download it today.

K

Kira Dorrian 16:49

It's so hard because I feel like this topic, is a topic I don't see as clearly as I would like to because of..

D

Deana Thayer 16:57

Why do you say that?

K

Kira Dorrian 16:58

Well, I think partially because of my past experience, I'm so sensitive to it, you know what I mean. Like, I'm such a mama bear when it comes to this, because of the combo pack of how I know it influenced my life because it had a major influence on my life. And how I've seen it influence client's lives when I was in private practice.

D

Deana Thayer 17:20

Sure.

K

Kira Dorrian 17:20

So it's like, this can be so unbelievably damaging to kids, like long haul damaging. And yet, my logical brain is like, but it's true. Everything we're saying is true that, like we, you know, we can't protect kids from everything. Not everything is actual bullying, you know, like, so there's this logical part of my brain that's like, here's all the things that I know are true. And then, there's my mama bear that's just like, you know, just really sensitive to this. Um, so I guess that you know, I have worked very, very hard and not always successfully, um, to help my kids if they've been in situations where kids have been unkind or have been mean. I mean, we haven't really had proper bullying, we've had a pattern of behavior once, but it was small. And it was, you know, just something we talked about. But you know, the thing I want to say about kids who bully is that it comes from somewhere. And we got to look at the compassionate, empathetic piece of this. Kids bully because it makes them feel powerful, it makes them feel in control, it makes them feel not like, it's the wrong word, but like they matter. And so we have to kind of at least have a moment for what is making that child behave that way. Right? We have to come from a place of kids are good, they're kids, they're little people, you know, they're trying to figure it out. And they don't have all the skills. And not all kids have parents who are parenting with emotional intelligence and are parenting from a place of empathy and compassion and all these things. So there's a lot of stuff that can swirl here. And so I have tried, and as I said, not always succeeded. But I have tried in those moments where it's been harsh, or unkind, or there's been a pattern to at least help my kids try and go, okay, I wonder what's happening for that child that they feel they need to treat you that way. Like what's going on for them in that moment, it doesn't excuse it by any means. And we still have to do something about it. But to allow my children to get a glimpse into how this might not be about them. Because that's important, too, I mean, that's the thing about bullying is that the person who's being bullied, and I can say from experience, you do internalize that you think it must be I'm not lovable. I'm not worthy. I'm not enough, right? And so, the more that we can do to help our kids recognize this might not have anything to do with you. In fact, it probably has nothing to do with you. And look at you know, what's going on for that kid that they felt they needed to behave that way. And what do you think it makes

them feel? What are they getting out of it? Again, though, I think, then after that conversation, we bumped right into what you just said, which is, and then we say, what are we going to do about that? And that's where those conversations that, you know, Amy and Margaret were talking about come from. And when do we need to actually step in and say, hey, this isn't okay, where's the line for them? Where are the coping skills that we need to give them before that? Etc, etc?

D

Deana Thayer 20:20

Yeah. Because I think as they decide when to be that kid and when to get help, it is also a line for us as we're talking through the situations to know oh, you know what, actually on this one, I need to step in. I can't just leave this to my child. So yeah, you're right.

K

Kira Dorrian 20:36

I would caution parents. I mean, I think I just said this, but I guess I feel it bears repeating. You know, we talked about resilience on the show and the fact that kids are not as resilient as they appear. And I would say this is an area where that's particularly true. So even though yes, kids are kids, and yes, because here's what's happening, right? All that's happening is that different kids are trying to sort themselves out. They're trying to figure out what they need. How do I get my needs met? What are my coping mechanisms? And for some kids, their coping mechanism is bullying or being unkind. That's what's happening, right? And so we have to recognize that yes, their kids are being kids. But please don't think that you can throw it away on your kid's behalf. Does that make sense? Like, we still have to, at the very minimum, be having conversations with our children to help them pull apart what is this, you know, what of this is about me, what of this isn't about me? And make sure their self-esteem stays intact. Because I think this is something where if we overlook it, we run the risk that it won't.

D

Deana Thayer 21:37

Well, and what you said about bullying sometimes being a coping mechanism for the bully. I think we need to be very vigilant to pay attention to the fact that someone who's on the receiving end of bullying can develop unhealthy coping mechanisms.

K

Kira Dorrian 21:52

Yes!

D

Deana Thayer 21:53

That might look like they're fine because we never see it. Like for me, that was where my lying came from. Because I was bullied so much, I thought, well, the real Deana is obviously not great. So I would like, fake injuries. I would do all these weird things because I wanted positive, friendly attention. And so then you have years of dishonesty, which I had to like, really work my way out of, and that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Right? So I think we have to be watching both ends being sensitive and empathetic to the fact that this may be a coping mechanism for the person doing the bullying, but also be watching for those things that develop as our kids try to cope maybe in ways that aren't super healthy if they are being bullied.

K

Kira Dorrian 22:37

Absolutely. Thank you for saying that. So it's really just about making sure that we're working on our kid's coping mechanisms, working on their self-esteem without jumping the gun to a label, because you can do that without saying that kid's a bully, right. So I think that's kind of maybe how it all comes together.

D

Deana Thayer 22:55

So what happens, though, if someone didn't have a Future Focused Parent, or maybe somehow got to adulthood, and you know, doesn't have these same skills? And then you have to interact with them? I mean, first of all, what might that look like? And then are there things that we can or should be doing? I know this is one that you're passionate about because you have some experience with it. So I'd love to hear your wisdom.

K

Kira Dorrian 23:23

Yeah, I mean, I think that I am learning as my kids grow, that there are some parents where I can be "that mom," right? Or I can come to them with a problem, like, hey, this is what I'm seeing between our two kids. And we can collaborate, and problem solve together. And those are my favorite interactions, because they're collaborative. And I feel like most of the people in my life know that I'm always open to hearing what's going on with my kids that I need to be talking with them about, like, I don't expect my kids to be perfect, I know they're going to mess up. I know that my job is to coach them through that. So I'm always coming from a collaborative problem solving perspective of like, tell me what you're seeing, how can I talk to my kid about that? Here's what I'm seeing. How can you talk to your kid about that? How can we help them work it out? Right. But I've had a couple of experiences, one very recently where it became really clear in the conversation

that that's not how that other parent handles these conversations. And not that I was being bullied or anything, but it just became clear that for whatever was going on for that other parent, they could not have a collaborative problem solving session with me. And they just really needed to, I don't even know how to say this, like kind of just poop all over my kid. Like that was their way of collaborating was I'm going to just poop all over your kid. And you know me, I'm sitting there going, oh, yeah, I can really see that. That makes sense. I'll make sure to talk with them. Like, here's what we're working on at home. But the more I did that, the more I was actually being really vulnerable with this person. And then it just became clear like, they're not doing that about what their kid's doing. So, oh, wow, I need to pivot. And that was really eye opening for me, like not everyone is going to want to have a collaborative problem solving conversation with you. And unfortunately, there are other parents out there that are kind of bullies themselves, right, and kind of mean and kind of unkind. And so I think we also have to look at, once you have that aha of like, oh, I see what's happening here. This is not a collaborative problem solving session. This is a poop all over my kids session. What do we do to protect ourselves and our kids in that situation? And so for me, it's, as hard as it was, it was a moment where I had to stop and go, okay, what must be going on for this other parent that they can't hear this, you know, like that, there must be something, whether it's their family of origin or whatever, where hearing any kind of feedback about their child, they literally can't handle it. And I don't mean that in a judgy way, just in a like, that triggers all sorts of stuff for them. And so they can't have this conversation. And that helped me because it helps me calm down and not be quite as, like, upset about the situation to be like, this isn't about me. You know, I did everything right here, I was very open and totally willing to own what my kid's responsibility was. And that's, I think, at that point, all you can do is walk away and sort of say, okay, I'm going to keep parenting the way I'm parenting, I'm going to keep encouraging my kids to grow and learn and be better. But I'm not going to accept that the situation was all them and I'm not going to have to, that doesn't mean I have to poop all over my kid if that makes sense.

D

Deana Thayer 26:33

Yeah. And then is there also kind of a protective mechanism for yourself as the parent? Because I think sometimes other parents who are maybe leaning toward I just need this to be all your kid's fault and saying things about that. I mean, we have to a little bit have the bounce back of knowing what is worth receiving, like, oh, I can see that about my child. And knowing what is like, you know what, that's patently false. I don't have to receive that, you know, mentally, like, there's gotta be some internal dialogue about like, well, I know, that's not actually accurate.

K

Kira Dorrian 27:06

Well, and I think that's exactly it, there's a balance. So if you feel like all you're ever doing is saying, well, that's not my kid, my kid doesn't do that, and you aren't having moments of owning it.

D

Deana Thayer 27:16

Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 27:17

You might need to consider that. But if you feel like you do a pretty good job of recognizing that your kids are human and continuing to help them grow and get better and all of that, and that there are some moments where you're like, huh. Like in this situation, the way that my kid was described as behaving, I was like, I know for a fact that they would never do that. So this is maybe the way this person is perceiving what's going on. Right? And that happens too where people perceive something totally different in the same situation. It's too true. Right. So we have to leave some space for that. But I think for me, what became really clear was two things. One, once you realize that you can't have a conversation like that. Don't seek them out with that person. This was actually a situation where we came to that person to collaborate together.

D

Deana Thayer 27:49

Yeah. Oh. And that backfired.

K

Kira Dorrian 28:06

And it backfired. It was like, okay, that's cool. Now, I know that that's not what I should be doing. But the other thing I think that I forget sometimes, and I think collaborative problem solvers sometimes are guilty of forgetting this. Is that not everyone receives that as collaborative problem solving. Some people receive it as confrontation. I don't think I was confrontational at all. But I think for some people, again, based on how they were raised, and their childhood experiences and all this stuff that is so uncomfortable for them, that they would actually rather we just don't talk about it. And I think that in our home, we can't brush things under the rug. But I actually think, you know, what, there are times where when it becomes clear that you can't collaborate with that person, it's okay to honor that and be like, that actually makes that person really uncomfortable. So I better pick my battles, right? I mean, if there's a real hardcore bullying issue, right, or a hardcore dangerous issue, then you're forced into having that conversation. But maybe if there are

smaller things that you can just work out with your kid, and you know, that it's gonna, like cause harm to that person. Maybe you wait and hold off, knowing that you're probably not even gonna get what you need from that conversation.

D

Deana Thayer 29:17

Yeah, it might send you into a tailspin where you're replaying the conversation.

K

Kira Dorrian 29:22

I can't sleep. I was stressed about this, you know.

D

Deana Thayer 29:27

Maybe that's not a positive outcome.

K

Kira Dorrian 29:29

Because I didn't get what I needed from that, you know, and so all I ended up in was the exact same situation I would have been in. Which is, I better talk with my kid about their role and what happened and blah, blah, blah. You know, I still have a responsibility here. But actually, I walked away from that worse for wear.

D

Deana Thayer 29:45

So then yeah, so that's a great point, you have to maybe decide, is this going to be worth it? If you've had an experience where you've learned that person really doesn't come to the table in a collaborative manner.

K

Kira Dorrian 29:55

Right.

D

Deana Thayer 29:56

And it's going to be seen as confrontational or they're going to get defensive.

K

Kira Dorrian 29:59

Right, and to have compassion for them too.

D

Deana Thayer 30:02

Yeah. Right. As you said, unless it's a safety issue or something, maybe you skip it.

K

Kira Dorrian 30:07

And the thing is, I think most people, you know, that most people are not trying to be terrible, right. And they don't think that they're being that way. And maybe they aren't even being that way. My perception could be, you know, it's very, as I said, I have a very sensitive perception when it comes to this stuff. So I think it's just really important that the more that we can do to kind of go, okay, I'm guessing something's happening for this person over here, I'm going to just make the best decision I can make over here. And sometimes that best decision is actually I'm going to still have to have this conversation because this is a safety issue or a real bullying issue. But being able to sort of realize that we're all kind of different in the way we handle this, and what feels like confrontation to someone else might not to someone like me, who's kind of more naturally assertive, and hey, let's fix it together. You know, not everyone sees it that way.

D

Deana Thayer 30:59

That's really true.

K

Kira Dorrian 31:00

So saying all that, I mean, you notice how I said all the right things today, but like, inside, I want to be clear, like all the swirly swirls and all the feels and all that, you know. And I had to spend some time looking at it too. And going, alright, Kira, you know that you're pretty heightened around this stuff, and you know, that you're sensitive around this stuff. So you have to get really honest with yourself, you know. So I think as parents, we do have to get really honest with ourselves. Are we receiving feedback about our kids well? Are we really, you know, open to hearing the areas where they need to grow and nurturing them in those ways? And then if you feel like you can honestly say, yeah, I really did, then you get to go, okay, this might not be about me.

D

Deana Thayer 31:41

Yeah, absolutely. Wow, that's such a key distinction to make, right? Where we have to, we have to be able to parse out when it isn't about us. And that's a skill we have to teach our

kids too.

K

Kira Dorrian 31:51

Exactly.

D

Deana Thayer 31:53

Well, this was not a deep dive, but at least you got to dip your toe in the deep end. Like this was a bigger conversation about bullying, since Amy and Margaret were so amazing to just touch on it last week and give us a little framework for those differences between hey, this is just rude versus this is bullying. It just really got us thinking. So we hope talking about it a little more was helpful. And if you've had to have an interaction with a parent who maybe isn't as able to be collaborative, or you've literally dealt with an adult version of bullying, we hope then you have walked away maybe with some tools to put in your tool belt too and that it was helpful for that. We look forward to sharing more with you this fall as we get back into the school year and get all of that into full swing. And the other special thing, and I think the actual day is still a few weeks off, but this month is our third birthday. So Raising Adults launched in September of 2018. And it's exciting for Kira and I that we're still here three years later. That's thanks to all of you. So thanks so much for listening. Make sure, if you haven't yet, that you do follow us on your favorite podcast platform, so you don't miss an episode. And we also have social media for you. We're now everywhere. I mean, almost everywhere. So Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest is @FutureFocusedParenting that handle we've been giving you for so long. And now we also have Twitter and it's FF\_Parenting. I also really want to encourage you to check out our website, especially if you're newer to the FFP situation. You can learn all about Kira and I and the work that we do. And you can also check out membership and kind of about joining with us in a little bit more meaningful way and getting to interact with other Future Focused Parents, which is super fun. So that's all just at our website FutureFocusedParenting.com. And if you want a peek at those membership options, there's a membership tab there as well. So thanks so much for joining us in the bullying conversation. And we truly hope you don't have to deal with this in an icky way in your parenting journey. But we want you to be equipped for handling these tough conversations with your kids or the situations that come up. So reach out to us if you have any questions. And we always love when you comment on social media too. So we hope you'll just enjoy interacting. We love getting to kind of hear where you're at in your parenting journey. Whether it's about this or any topic, that's always fascinating to us. And of course, if you have episode ideas, we're always up for those to. You can email us at info@FutureFocusedParenting.com



## Future Focused Parenting 34:19

Raising Adults is produced by Kira Dorrian and Deana Thayer, and produced partially in Kira's laundry room and partially in my coat closet. Our editing is by the incredible Allison Preisinger and Music by Seattle band Hannalee. Enjoying these transcribed episodes of Raising Adults? Consider receiving the Future Focused Parenting newsletter, where you'll receive sneak peeks, parenting tips, special offers, exclusive early access to podcast information, and more! Simply go to [bit.ly/raisingadultspodcast](https://bit.ly/raisingadultspodcast) to sign up. You can also connect with us on social media! We're on Facebook Pinterest, and Instagram: @futurefocusedparenting. Our channels include podcast episode announcements, so you'll never miss new topics. We look forward to sharing more Future Focused Parenting content with you!