

Shining with ADHD by The Childhood Collective

Episode #193: Birds & Bees: How to Talk to Kids with ADHD About Sex, Bodies, and Boundaries

Megan: You know, when you start having these conversations when they're two or three and you say these words out loud and you realize that no one's running away or panicking or, like, you didn't fall over. You know, I think as a parent, it gives you that confidence, so when you do start speaking early to your kids, by the time they're 8, 9, or 10, you're like, oh, I've been doing this for years.

Katie: Hey, parents, this is Katie. Quickly letting you know about what you can expect in this episode. We are so excited to have Mary Flo and Megan from Birds and the Bees on the podcast today. They're sharing incredible wisdom about how to talk to your kids about their bodies, boundaries, and sex with confidence. Just a quick heads up, because we use anatomically correct terms in this conversation, you might want to pop in your headphones or listen away from little ears. Let's dive in.

Hi there. We are The Childhood Collective, and we have helped thousands of overwhelmed parents find joy and confidence in raising their child with ADHD. I'm Katie, a speech language pathologist.

Lori: And I'm Lori.

Mallory: And I'm Mallory. And we're both child psychologists.

Lori: As busy mamas ourselves, we are on a mission to support ADHD parents on this beautiful and chaotic parenting journey.

Mallory: If you are looking for honest ADHD parenting stories, a dose of empathy with a side of humor and practical tools, you are in the right place.

Katie: Let's help your family shine with ADHD.

Mallory: Katie and I are here today with guest experts Megan Michelson and Mary Flo Ridley to talk about a topic that most parents don't want to talk about and that's sex.

Katie: That sounds about right. Megan and Mary Flo are the creators, of Birds & Bees, where they give parents the tools and confidence they need to talk to their kids about sex.

Mallory: In 1986, Mary Flo began presenting a popular parenting seminar in the Dallas area, teaching parents how to talk to their children about sex. Mary Flo walks parents through very specific ways to answer their children's early questions with confidence and she gives parents a simple strategy that allows them to share their values in the preschool and early elementary years.

Katie: And Megan was born and raised in Dallas. Before diving into the world of sex education, Megan was a middle school teacher. Megan is passionate about equipping and empowering parents to have healthy and age-appropriate conversations with their kids about sex.

Mallory: Thank you for joining us today, ladies. We're so excited to have you on.

Mary Flo: Thank you for having us. We're excited to be here.

Megan: We're very excited to talk.

Katie: Yes, always. Yeah. Well, hey, so maybe you could tell us a little bit about, you know, why did you go to Instagram? Why did you start your page? And you obviously created a wonderful online course. What got the ball rolling there?

Megan: So, Mary Flo started this work, like you mentioned earlier, in the late 80's when she was raising her young kids. And so she was, a speaker all over the country by the time I caught wind of this. She taught it at my school one day and so I heard her speak there. And long story short, we partnered together and then I was just trained under her and we both just kind of were continuing on with a speaking business. And I would speak all over Texas, which is where we're based, and she would travel all over the country and we would just do parent seminars all over. And then COVID hit. And so, when COVID hit, obviously live events, were shut down. So, it was kind of like ugh.. And we had already been on this path, of, you know, what in the digital world, you know, like, we need an Instagram. And so we had kind of started that slowly. And then we had just created our online course.

Mary Flo: In 2019.

Megan: In 2019. We launched it in February 2020.

Katie: Oh, my goodness. Good, timing.

Megan: Hit the masses, right? Anyways, and so we had just finished filming it because we thought if we could just film what we do live, we could reach so many more people and they could watch in their homes all this stuff. So anyways, COVID hits we launch literally less than a month later COVID hits. And I was at home with three little kids. My kids were like, oh, gosh, two, five and six during COVID.

Katie: Yes, so were mine.

Megan: So, I did a lot of work that year because it was just like all hands-on deck, surviving online schools and toddlers and all that stuff. So anyways, come 2021, when we was kind of like, okay, regroup. How can we kind of resurrect this business? And so that's when I was like, you know what, I think we just really need to dive into Instagram. And so that's when I just started really taking everything that we share live and putting it into bite sized pieces on the Internet. Reels had just started coming out and so I kind of just decided to get over myself a little bit because the thought this, like, talking head on Instagram was like, what?

Mallory: Yeah, we can relate

Megan: I don't want to be that person. And jokes on me because now I talk about penises online all the time. It's just part of the gig. But it's allowed us to reach so many more people, in places that we would have never been able to go to live events and that kind of thing. So, it really worked out in an exciting way for us. We've grown a lot on Instagram and so we're very grateful for that. But really, at the end of the day, I'm just kind of resharing everything we've always said, and just putting it out there to a new audience.

Mary Flo: And really, she's demonstrating what we're telling parents to do. Don't do it all at once. Just little of information and she's showing what that looks like on Instagram. And that first year too, when she was, you know, kind of overwhelmed with kids at home and the speaking, we remember we were in a state where it's like, you know, in a few weeks everything's gonna be back. So, we had no really drive to change our speaking business. And

then after the year and we were still not, you know, having any audiences or, you know, schools weren't going to have come in here, you know, come to the school,

Megan: Let's all get together.

Mary Flo: Let's all get together. That didn't happen for a long time. So, it really was, we're so grateful for that timing that we had just finished producing the online course and people were not going to be coming to events. Now that's kind of reawakening. We're doing a lot more speaking engagements, but it's still the most popular way to learn the course.

Katie: Yeah, I love that. We also recorded, actually we had started writing our course in 2019, but we did not record until August of 2020. And it was real crazy. Like the film crew had masks on and we had them on and then we took them off and then we would like touch up our makeup and put the mask back on. I don't know. I look back at that time and I'm just like, how did we all cope? But you know, we do these interviews so often with different people and I feel like so many people's story is like, well then 2020 happened and it took a left turn, you know, and it, that's not uncommon in just the world. I think so many things changed and people just rethought things and reprioritized and so I love that. It's, it's great. And you guys have been such a great resource for us. We've shared your content and I think it's been really helpful for parents because they do have questions and I think a good place to start. So, thinking about, obviously our audience is mostly ADHD parents, but maybe we back up a little bit and just more broadly, what would you say is maybe the biggest mistake that parents make when it comes to talking or not talking, to their children about sex?

Mary Flo: Well, I would say the biggest mistake is not understanding, it's not really so much of a mistake, but thinking that this is not a conversation we have until they're preteens. We've been so programmed for that. We still talk about the talk as if it's a one-time only conversation that is saved, that awkward conversation is saved for the awkward years. And that's like a, you know, a terrible combination. And so, waiting too long and then trying to do it all at once are really like a recipe for, I don't want to say failure, but not the best way to do it. And so really catching young children when they're curious and answering that five-year-old question, mommy, how's that baby getting out of there? Or that three-year-old question, even. Like being ready to answer those early, early questions, starts to establish you as the authority on this topic and breaks down that oh no, I'm gonna have to do it when they're 12. I'm dreading it. I have to do it perfectly because I only get one chance.

Mallory: Yes.

Mary Flo: So that I think is the, if we could reprogram parents to think, no, this starts when you're changing their diaper and you're identifying their body parts or their potty training and they're wanting a little privacy or just all of these things that are building, building, building and it's the same content, but it's just foundational instead of waiting till they're preteens.

Mallory: Yeah. Like you said, there's a lot of parents that anticipate that conversation when their kids are preteens. They dread it for years, but then before that time comes, their kids usually are asking questions and then they're caught off guard and they don't know how to answer them and they're uncomfortable, they give an answer they don't like or they say don't ask that.

Katie: Right. I think it's really a lot of it too goes back to what we were taught when we were being raised, you know. And I know I remember my mom talking to me and my mom is great, but I could tell she was so uncomfortable and made me uncomfortable. And then it starts to feel like, wait a minute, like is there, is this a shameful thing? Like what's going on? You know, but, but I think a lot of us are just doing what we were taught or what we'd been exposed to. So, changing the game is so huge and that's such a valuable tool for parents.

Megan: And I think, I mean obviously we want to talk early and often for many reasons and for our children's sake, you know, for understanding and the natural ease of conversation. But on the flip side, I think as a parent, it gives you so much confidence, you know, when you start having these conversations when they're two or three. And you say these words out loud and you realize that no one's running away or panicking or like, you didn't fall over, you know, I think as a parent, it gives you that confidence. So, when you do start speaking early to your kids, by the time they're 8, 9 or 10, you're like, oh, I've been doing this for years. You know, and to your point, like when you said your mom is uncomfortable, that made you uncomfortable. That's very true. And so, if we can, as parents become comfortable and we have such a leg up if we start doing that and practicing that and kind of getting in our own rhythm of communication when our kids are young, that is just, it's so helpful for us as parents to lead those conversations with ease and our children will really reflect that in our conversations.

Mallory: Yeah. And I think this is getting out of question that I wanted to ask, which is why is it so important to start talking to our kids about sex early? And then maybe we can process through a little bit too about why this is especially important for kids with ADHD.

Mary Flo: Well, I think it's especially important to start when they're young because that's when they're curious. That's actually when, you get a lot of questions, but you shorten your answers. You make them almost too short. Mommy, how's that baby getting out? Well, I'll go to the hospital and bring home a baby. You know, you don't really, you'll answer something, but you had an opportunity to dazzle them with words like birth canal and umbilical cord and really draw a picture for them. Marvel at what a woman's body can do. You know, marvel, not overwhelm them, but on the other hand, don't underwhelm them like, oh, it's no big deal. No, it's a pretty big deal. I can explain to you exactly how this happens. It's pretty amazing. And we, you know, little things like, I know it looks like the baby is in that woman's tummy, but it's actually in a place called the uterus. Like, get them out of the digestive system and over to the reproductive system. You know, just being scientific and real and letting them know this information then brings them to you. Also, you're setting up a pattern when they're young of circling back like, well, you know, I told you a really short version of that when you asked me this a couple of months ago, but I feel like I didn't give you all the information. So, I want to go back. So, when they're young and they're used to just, they're in your car, they're in your bathroom, you have no privacy. This is when people are walking around and body parts or probably hanging out somewhere, you know, it's just a very raw part of life. If you don't talk about what's right there in front of you, then later on when it's a lot more buttoned up and they're preteens and they're modest and they're very aware, if you're uncomfortable, then you've missed this really great chance to just dive in.

Mallory: Yeah. And I think one reason that starting these conversations early is so important for kids with ADHD is like you said, then we can have lots of many conversations over time. And this is great for ADHD brains who struggle to have a long attention span, really digest information. We know that kids with ADHD learn best and these small repetitive bits. So, the earlier we start and the more we can kind of repeat these concepts and as you said, Mary Flo kind of elaborate on these concepts over time as our child gets older and is ready to process more of this information, it's really helping them kind of learn and master these concepts more.

Katie: Yeah. And I think that's also so important when we think about kids with ADHD understanding boundaries around bodies and some of that impulsivity, which all kids have to some extent. But kids with ADHD can really struggle to understand, like where's my body, where's your body? And how close should we be? And they might even have, you know, kind of like pushing or hitting or things like that. And so, thinking about just setting up those conversations and having them frequently feels like a great way to also just address some of those specific ADHD needs.

Mallory: Yeah. And especially establishing early which areas are private and having a common language, a common and accurate language about how we talk about that and how we set boundaries about our own and other people's bodies is so important for kids with ADHD.

Megan: And something we say a lot is to be frequent and frank when talking about body parts. And so obviously one of the reasons we have all these early conversations is to establish ourselves as the authority to start opening this pattern of communication, but also for their safety. And there's lots of safety aspects involved with young kids. And just to kind of echo what you were saying, particularly with kids with ADHD, is it's not effective for most kids, but particularly ADHD kids, to sit down and talk for 30 minutes about all these important things and have such a heavy conversation when really just to, you know, be frequent and frank those conversations. When your kids are getting out of the bathtub, oh, yep, that's your penis. That's a private part. Nobody can touch that. Okay. Boys no wrestling. I mean, little conversations like that, I think it's just much more effective and it's really important to protect our kids.

Katie: Can you actually talk a little bit more about the safety issues? And for parents who maybe haven't thought about it in this way or aren't aware, like what, how does that play into it? Like giving those labels and teaching them the language for safety.

Megan: So obviously this is, safety against sexual abuse. So just get the elephant out of the room, that is what we're talking about. And so, we want to protect our kids from crossing body boundaries. And so oftentimes abuse is a very high, statistic, I think it's one in four. anyways. And so, I think as parents, what can we can do to protect our kids is empower them and let them know. I think so often body parts and private parts especially are so, into this gray area. Their parents are either kind of secretive about it and so it creates shame and or

kids are super silly about it. And so, what we wanna do is teach our children how to be in the middle and be medical and respectful, but also set those clear boundaries. And so, what happens so often, unfortunately, is those lines are crossed in an abuse situation or an inappropriate touch situation or a game or something like that, But our kids don't have the language to verbalize what just happened or even the clear distinction of that felt wrong. But I don't, was it? I don't know. Or the discomfort of like, I don't know how to tell my mom that. And so, we are kind of just turning on the lights in this dark topic and saying, hey, listen, this is what it is. This is your vagina. This is your vulva. This is your penis. It's a private part. Okay. That's why we put our underwear on. These is where we go to the bathroom. Nobody can touch this. And we can't take a picture of this. We don't touch other people's private parts. And to have those conversations often. Remember, this is not like a sit down family meeting. This is just something we're talking about all the time. Oh, what a cute swimsuit. Yep, we're gonna cover up our vagina because that's a private part. You know guys, I saw you all being silly when the neighbors were over, but we always keep our clothes on when we're playing with friends. You do not look at somebody else's private parts. And to just speak into this. And so, I think it empowers our children to let them know that this topic is not taboo. And that is something we can really do with our young kids, is kind of give them that voice like, oh, this is something we talk about in our house. You know, my six year old came home the other day and said, oh, so and so touched my penis at school. I was like, I'm so glad you told me. I'm so sorry about that, but I'm so glad you knew that that wasn't okay. Now am I really worried about this scenario? No. I think it's probably a situation of a boy being stupid. But that's still not okay.

Katie: Right.

Megan: And so, I was like praising him for knowing what to do and coming to me knowing that that wasn't okay, knowing that that's something you tell your mom. And then I can loop the teacher and like, hey, I'm not, this is not a huge deal, but just FYI, this is happening. And so just be mindful of that and make sure they're separate or feel free to say, hey, we don't touch people's private parts. You know, and I told that to my son. And now I'm mindful of like when this little boy comes over again be like guys, we're not touching private parts, we're gonna play downstairs. Let's keep the door open while we play. Because I think oftentimes our instinct is to kind of avoid it, right. My son told me that, we'll we're never playing with

him again because that's a predator. So, I just to continue those frequent and frank conversations.

Katie: Yeah.

Mary Flo: And you probably noticed her tone was not shock. So that they think I don't want to experience that again, so I'm not going back. It's not scary. It's like, tell me about this. This is, oh, you know, oh, give me all the details. It's more like, I'm so glad you told me. You know, I'm glad you know that's not right. And you know, you follow up. But your tone of voice in your facial expression, it's an unnatural thing. You kind of have to make yourself do it. It's important that they see, okay, that was, it worked out well for me to tell mom.

Mallory: Yeah.

Katie: Yeah.

Mallory: I think that's so important. And just kind of circling back to this, like just speaking about these things in a very matter of fact way is so important for kids with ADHD. And I'm imagining all of these ADHD parents who are like, I don't want to talk about a vagina or a penis or a vulva to my child. Because one thing we love about ADHDers is they love to entertain and they love to be silly and they feel like their child armed with these terms is going to be saying them all the time, using them to make jokes. And so, parents don't wanna say those words, right. Because they don't wanna take the chance that their child is gonna start saying penis all the time at school. But when we talk about it in a very matter of fact way, and we talk about it often and we talk about it like very atomically correct, it kind of takes the silliness out of it because it's not taboo anymore and it's not like a hush hush thing and we're not talking about it in a silly way which might be another parent's approach. So, taking that matter of fact approach I think is going to kind of help parents who are worried about is my child going to take these words and run with it and be the class entertainer and then I'm going to get calls from other parents.

Mary Flo: Yes, exactly. And just know they will. But they're not, it's not just because they're ADHD. You know, that is just, that's part of the package. It's sort of pick your pain. Do I want a family where we can't talk about things because I can't use those words and that's just too painful to what if they say it out lot at the grocery store? That's this painful compared to

we're a family that can't talk about this. So, you do you have to constantly remind them. You know, we can also use the words when we're out in public of just privates. We can, we don't always have to use that word. There's a manners element. There's a reason, you know, we cover up those parts of our body to protect them. Also, there's a manners element that for whatever reason using those words in public is not always appropriate. So, but they're going to do it just so you know.

Mallory: Oh, I know I'm a mom to two boys.

Katie: I know I'm thinking of my own family and I'm like, I have one kid that would be mortified to say vulva or any other word in public and then one that would just, just absolutely love to get those reactions and teach all of his friends his new word that he learned. But I think that's, that's really helpful and I love what you said Mary Flo. All kids or most kids are going to do that. And it takes so much of the burden and pressure off of ADHD parents that we feel because it's like oh gosh, I don't want my kid to be the one that teaches another kid a word that his parents do not want him to know. I've also had the conversation with my kids that you know, not every family talks about this in this way. So, this is something we talk about at home and with our family. I don't know if that's something you recommend or am I breaking a rule by doing that?

Megan: We really encourage parents with are explaining things in more detail to establish that clarity of this is a parent to child conversation.

Katie: Okay.

Megan: And this is something we can talk about. You can talk to dad about it if you want to. We will always answer your questions, but it's not your job to go back to school and tell everybody. Just to kind of set that clear boundary of like this is not your job to do that. And sometimes depending on your kids ages and where they are, we compare that to like the Santa Claus conversation. You know, you kind of elevate that a little bit. You, you're old enough, we think you're old enough to know this information. Kind of make it feel a little special to them. But it's not your job to tell your brother and sister. It's not your job to go to fourth grade and tell all your friends in the playground. So, to be mindful of other families' boundaries but to kind of help your child see maybe it's a privilege that they get to know this information because we trust you. I think all kids kind of can rise up to that a little bit.

Mary Flo: They might not be able to help it, you know, in certain situations. But on the overall it's just good to point that out, remember this parent child conversation.

Mallory: That leads nicely into a question that I had is how do parents know what level of information their child is ready for? Like what they can handle developmentally? Like do you only answer questions that your child asks or are there like indicators that they're ready for more information and how do you share that?

Mary Flo: Well one thing that we do say is watch your child's maturity for sure. But that's part of the beauty of the strategy of the Birds & Bees is that we're building. And so, we're starting with actually very small words and very small phrases and seeds and eggs. We're starting with some very benign concepts, not concept. I mean the concepts aren't benign but just very easy, simple conversations and you kind of follow the trajectory of your child's curiosity. But there are some children who never ask and it doesn't mean that they're not curious, it just means they haven't verbalized the question yet or they somehow sense that's going to make my parents uncomfortable. Or they've heard it somewhere else and they've never heard it discussed at our home, so they're waiting for you to bring it up. But in that case the phrase we like to give parents is sweetheart, have you ever wondered how that baby got in there? You know, you know about birth, but have you ever wondered? If you think, I feel like it's time and this is a good opportunity to share this with them, then I think you can sort of invite them into the conversation whether they ask a question or not. Have you ever wondered about this? And they may say no and you can say, well you can start because you're about to find out. But I think we as the parent, if we only leave it up to our child's asking of the right questions to give them the right answers, then they're in charge of the topic and we want to take back that topic as the parents. We're kind of, we are moving towards you with information that you need, so if we feel like this is information you need and you've never asked about it, that's not an excuse for us not to talk about. But so many parents have been told only answer what they ask. And there's an element of truth to that, but honestly that's just putting them in charge of the whole, you know, here's what we're going to do, this is the plan and they've got it and we want to hand that back to the parents.

Mallory: And it increases the chance that you're going to get caught off guard by a question that you're not ready to answer. So, when you kind of take control of it, when the power is back in the parents' hands to bring up these questions, have you ever wondered, then we

know we're ready for it and we can speak about it in a more eloquent way, a way that feels more comfortable.

Mary Flo: And a timing too. You know, this is good time. But honestly, I feel like giving them information that you think they may not be ready for to say we're just, you know, I would just dive in a little bit. Once again, it's not going to be one conversation so I would just dive and see how that goes. And then you can say, you know what, I feel like we'll circle back with this in a little bit. Yeah, just be casual about that.

Katie: I love that. And I do think, you know, so many kids with ADHD are very curious and they do have lots of questions and so by opening the door for this to be, you know, a non-taboo topic, I can see that that can create more opportunity. Like we did the books I think it's, 'It's Not the Stork!' or something with my little, my youngest and he was six when I first started reading it to him it's the one that's for four- to seven-year-olds and he absolutely loved that book. But I think about him, he loves books about outer space. He loves to learn about planets and dinosaurs and volcanoes. So, ovaries were just like another science thing for him. And I think that that is really cool. I will be honest, like my husband walked in when we were reading it and I had told him about it but he was like afterwards he's like what did you just read to him? What is happening? So, we had to have another conversation and I actually said like you should look through this book and read it. And I think for parents who maybe haven't had this conversation or if it's not, you got to get your spouse or your partner on the same page because it could be very shocking to them to overhear some of these conversations. But again, like you said, it's small doses so you know, you can get more comfortable as you go along. Can you talk for just a minute, I know you've already said, talked a little bit about you know, using correct, anatomically correct terms and things like that but I feel like there's a lot of, I don't know if analogies is the right word but like metaphorical language around sex, like a flower or whatever. And thinking of kids with ADHD in particular, they need literal language, like they need direct terms and language. So, can you talk a little bit about that and what you share with parents about some of those metaphors that they might have grown up with?

Megan: We don't use metaphors. So, when we are teaching parents, we always say we teach you, you teach them. You know, so we are teaching the parents what to say to the kids and everything we share is pretty direct, because I do think to your point, flowery pun intended,

dialogue is really confusing. You know, I think all kids are pretty black and white and so particularly ADHD kids, you need to kind of just say this, it is what it is. You know, and so I think having these ideas of oh, it's this beautiful flower or oh, there was some story about like a suitcase that was too heavy to pick up. All these beautiful stories and languages, I feel like they're more for the adults than they are for children. You know, I think the adults hear these stories and analogies and think oh...

Mary Flo: I could say that. Oh, a flower oh, how meaningful.

Megan: The reality is like what? I don't have flower anymore. What? Or like oh, the whatever analogy where I wasn't sticking anymore, you know, there's just so much. But I think adults do that for adults to be honest, because I think they're lovely and they're easier to talk about. But the reality is, to your point, I think it's just more confusing for the kids, because they're not connecting all those dots like we are. And with all these conversations I think it's very important for the adults to remember they are not thinking the way that we are thinking. So, they are not digesting this information in the same way that we are as adults. We are post pubescent. We are, we have emotional baggage, we have history and experiences and all this stuff. And so, when we say these phrases and words whoosh, like a lot comes to the table. When our 10-year-old hear it, they like huh, what? That's gross. You know, and it's kind of like yeah, that's age appropriate. You know, that's an age-appropriate response. And so, I think sometimes we have to remember when our, we're talking to our prepubescent children about the basics and kind of shooting them straight about this is how it works. Here's how the baby's born. Here's how the baby's made, here's how things work, here's how your body is, you know, these are the clear boundaries. They're taking it in as pretty much fact. They're not thinking through the dangers or the pleasures associated with sex like we are as adults because we are over here. And so, I think it's helpful to remind yourself that as you're starting to have these conversations and they're not taking it in in the same way that we are understanding things.

Mary Flo: Right. They just want the basic biology. And then, and your values. Like you can frame this up the way you want to frame it up, but I do think it's important for them to just get the basic biology first. If later on in life you want to pull an analogy out and compare it to sexual intercourse or whatever, then that's fine as long as they've got that foundational core material.

Megan: You just don't want to start with those metaphors because they are confusing.

Mary Flo: Yes, yes.

Katie: That makes a lot of sense. You guys are just a wealth of knowledge. I feel like we could stay on here for a very long time. But let's just summarize, if you could leave parents with one tip when it comes to sharing about sex with your kids. If you just had like one tip, maybe you could each share one if you want, but what would you say?

Megan: Oh, that's hard.

Mary Flo: I know, it is hard. We want to give you all of it!

Megan: We have so much to say!

Mary Flo: I think one was where we started, start young. But I also think as a parent, to remember this is not about you and your past. It's about your children and their future. You want them to grow up respecting and honoring other people. You want them to grow up in this certain way. And so, you don't want them to be afraid of periods or you don't want them to be afraid of these things. So, but if you were and you end up passing that fear along, that's not helpful. So, at Birds & Bees we want you to carefully think through what do I need to leave behind so that my children can move forward. And it's not denying your past, it's just saying it's not about me anymore, it's about them.

Megan: And I would add to that, or I would just say for my short thing that came to mind, there's so many things to say, obviously, but I would just say start talking and keep talking. Because I think sometimes parents are just so afraid of saying the wrong thing that they're paralyzed by that. But the beauty and the freedom in having the talk, I'm using quotation mark if you're just listening, the beauty of getting rid of that is there is so much freedom in if I do mess up. Circle back, go back. O sweetheart, earlier today you asked me about this baby thing and I was just so distracted by the cars and I'm going to give you a better answer. Because this pressure is gone from a parent point of view of like, I have one shot to do this. I've got one amazing weekend that we've got to have on this camp out to tell them everything I've ever wanted them to know. You know, it's like is not helpful, you know, and some people are like, well, can I still do that? Do whatever you want, I don't care. But the reality is you

need to be talking before that camp out and after that camp out. You know, whether you do it that way or not, the point is start talking when they're young and just keep talking. And we talk about all different things on our course, but it's like birth and boundaries and body parts and babies and periods and pornography. You know, there is conception, consent. There's so many things that we talk about that there's not time for one conversation. I mean, particularly an ADHD child like, what in the world you gonna sit down and for 90 minutes, like, well, get ready, make some notes.

Katie: Oh my gosh, I can't even imagine.

Mallory: Every parent's worst nightmare.

Megan: Even as a non-ADHD child, they'd be like, are you kidding me? You know, no one would pay attention. Yeah. So, it's like you just they need these reminders and it gives us, takes the pressure off us as parents to not get it perfect. You know, because something we do say a lot of Birds & Bees is our goal is for you to be purposeful parents. The goal is not to be perfect parents. Because we're all gonna mess up. But that's okay because you can talk about it tomorrow.

Mary Flo: Right.

Megan: You know, go back like, this is not a one and done.

Mary Flo: They're still with you.

Megan: Yeah. So, I would say start talking, keep talking.

Mallory: Yeah, I love that. And so ,for parents who want to learn more, they want more help in this process, you have your online course, Birds & Bees, we will link that in the show notes. I'm sure that our listeners are going to want to stay connected with you, continue to learn from you. Where's the best place to find you and stay connected?

Megan: Instagram is the best place to get your daily dose, if you will, if you just can't get enough. And so, our handle is at birds__bees. So maybe you could tag us on there.

Sometimes those two underscores can get crazy. And it's actually become a really great community, we're very grateful for it. A lot of really thoughtful parents in kind of sharing

their own stories and hits and misses on conversations or things that happened, things that were helpful. So, we share lots of talking tips on there. But our most comprehensive resource is the online course. And that is just start to finish 75 minutes. Parents have access, lifetime access. And so oftentimes parents will watch it one year and like a year or two later when their kids are now in third grade. Refresh. Or now that younger kids coming up and I didn't quite do those questions. I mean, so just to watch it again and again, I think it's really helpful. And that is at birds-be.com.

Mallory: Awesome. And we will link all of that in the show notes.

Mary Flo: Yes, I was go going to say you can invite your friends over. Like if you think, okay, here we are, we're all in first grade, let's all watch this together. They can go in different directions. This parent can take it this way, this parent another. You don't have to, it's not a cookie cutter thing. You do personalize it for your children ADHD or for your family. So, it's not, it's not a one time. And it's also best done in community love.

Katie: I love that. And that might also open the door for those conversations when you're like, so my kid learned a new word. So, everyone is on the same page. I love that. Yeah. And I mean you just briefly touched on it, but as you mentioned, there's so many more topics with this. Like, we didn't even get into consent and pornography and these types of things. And so yeah, I definitely encourage our listeners to go check out your Instagram because there's just so much great information on there and lots of resources to share. But ladies, thank you so much for being here today. This has been incredible and we're really grateful for you taking the time.

Megan: Of course. Thank you for having us. This is really fun to connect. We've loved following you guys and I know you're just really helpful for your group of parents and we're happy to be a part of it.

Katie: Thanks for listening to Shining with ADHD by your hosts, Lori, Katie, and Mallory of The Childhood Collective.

Mallory: If you enjoyed this episode, please leave us a review and hit subscribe so you can be the first to know when a new episode airs.

Lori: If you are looking for links and resources mentioned in this episode, you can always find those in the show notes. See you next time!