

## **Shining with ADHD by The Childhood Collective**

### **Episode #194: ADHD and Hygiene: How to Problem-Solve Daily Struggles Together**

Mallory: In all of this, we really encourage you to work collaboratively with your child. This is not, you know, you against your child when it comes to hygiene. It's you and your child against the problem. So, talk with your child. Figure out where is the struggle. Why are they resisting this routine? Is there some kind of sensory sensitivity? Is there some part of this routine that they're really struggling with? Is it that they're getting distracted? Talk with your child. Work with your child. It's you and your child against the problem, not you two against each other.

Katie: 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: I'm really excited for today's topic because hygiene is something we always get a ton of questions about in an area where we know ADHD families really can struggle.

Katie: Yes. I think that hygiene is one of those topics that most parents can really relate to, but I know that it can be even more challenging when you're raising kids with ADHD.

Lori: Absolutely. From the early years, battling with your child about teeth brushing and hair washing to the teen years where you just want them to care about basic hygiene more, we get a lot of families asking if this aspect of ADHD parenting will ever get easier.

Mallory: Yeah. And hopefully today we give you some ideas and tips that will make it easier, will help it be a little bit better. But before we dive in, I want to ask a really quick favor. If you've been enjoying the podcast, please take a moment to leave us a review on your favorite podcast platform. Your feedback really helps us grow. It helps others find our show. It would mean so much to us.

Katie: I love that. So, getting back to hygiene, let's start with the why. Okay, so we always love to talk about this, but when we understand why hygiene is a challenge for so many kids with ADHD, it really helps us approach the situation with a little more empathy, and it empowers us to do some problem solving for our own family's unique situation and needs.

Mallory: Yeah. So, I know for my own family, getting my kid to brush his teeth without a huge fight has really felt impossible. Some days it's like no matter how many times I remind him, it just doesn't click. He's like, I have to do this every day for the rest of my life time. He's like, does is that the same as infinity? He like, my boys are obsessed with the number infinity. I'm like, yeah, that's infinity, basically. I'm sorry. Like, I don't know what to tell you. And it's not about the reminders that we keep having to do. There's a whole other layer to why this happens. Why ADHD family struggles with this? Why ADHD families struggle with this? And it has a lot to do with ADHD and you probably guessed it, executive function.

Lori: Kids with ADHD struggle with a lot of the skills that help them manage their daily routines. So, things like time management, impulse control, being able to prioritize things, and hygiene involves a lot of those steps, and it involves consistent effort and doing the same thing every day.

Katie: Which we know is super helpful to ADHD brains to do the same thing every day. And also, the worst thing in the world to ADHD brains to do the same thing every day.

Mallory: Right! The ultimate ADHD paradox.

Katie: Yes, it really is. So, I mean, just taking that a step further, Lori, like, thinking through those different executive functions and how they impact hygiene. So, let's start with initiation. So, initiation is where we actually need to use initiation to get started on a task. And you know, what feels like it might seem really small to us might be enough to derail our kid's initiation. So, it might just seem like such a big project, especially if we have to stop

doing something else and go get started on our bedtime routine or go get into the shower. We always tell the story of the kids that, you know, they get in the shower, they don't want to get in, and you finally get them in and then they don't want to get out, right. But that's that initiation. It's moving towards the next thing and getting started. And that's a huge executive function that can be really challenging.

Lori: Yep. Or working memory, where they have to hold all of those steps in their mind of teeth brushing, brushing their hair, washing their hair, putting conditioner in, washing their body. Like, there's so many different steps that we kind of take for granted that we can kind of visualize in our own minds that our kids with ADHD have a very hard time remembering what those things are, and holding all of those steps, you know, together to make all of those tasks happen.

Katie: I mean, I struggle with that too, working memory. Like, there's times I'm like, I think I just washed my hair two times. I'm pretty sure because I was not thinking.

Lori: Yeah because you go into, like, automatic mode and you're like, oh, my gosh, time has passed and I have no idea what just happened.

Katie: Yeah, absolutely. Being able to regulate our attention. It's so easy to get distracted when you're doing other tasks. I know I'll start to do, like, brushing my teeth or something, and then I see, like, dirty laundry on the floor, and then I'm picking up the laundry and then like I'm just going to run this into the washing machine. And now I'm standing in the laundry room with my toothbrush. You know, it's, it can be really hard with those executive functions.

Mallory: Yeah. And another executive function that makes hygiene hard is the executive function of planning. So, seeing the big future picture, seeing like what the end goal is and kids with ADHD struggle to see that future picture. They struggle to see the end goal. And again, this can make it feel overwhelming to even get started and stay on track if you don't really know what you're working towards. What's the end goal here?

Katie: Especially really long-term ones like brushing your teeth, it kind of has this immediate reward of feeling like your mouth is clean. But really as parents, I think most of us are worried about cavities. And that is so abstract and so far away, right. We go to the dentist

twice a year. So, I tell my kids, let's say our dentist appointment isn't until June, but it's February and I'm like, hey guys, we gotta brush our teeth so we don't have any cavities four months from now. And again, for ADHD brains, we live in the here and now. It's very hard to think about how this very boring task is going to somehow benefit me in four months.

Lori: Yeah. And speaking of boring tasks, it's also very hard for our kids to shift their attention and focus from maybe a fun activity where they're watching screens or they're playing a game outside and all of a sudden, it's bedtime and we have to start the nighttime routine of teeth brushing and I hate this. So that transition can be really hard and a lot of parents are faced with meltdowns over that.

Mallory: Yeah, it's so hard. So really understanding how these differences in your child's executive function may impact their willingness and their ability to do these hygiene tasks day after day, despite a million reminders, is really important. And another really big underlying reason that we see kids with ADHD struggling with hygiene is their sensory differences, their sensory sensitivities. So, for them, and we hear from ADHD adults too, who chime in on some of our posts, some of these tasks hurt. They experience physical pain, the bristles of the toothbrush on their gums or they're so uncomfortable with the feeling of the shower water rushing over their head. And so, the sensory experience that comes along with a lot of these hygiene activities really can push your child over the edge and make them just completely avoid these things altogether. The flavor of the toothpaste is unbearable. The new clothes you bought them are so scratchy you haven't ripped the tag out yet. So, there's a huge sensory component for a lot of kids, too, about why they're avoiding or really struggling with these hygiene tasks. And another quick soapbox of mine, if I may just really quick. When we're working with our kids on being more consistent and diligent with their hygiene, it's so important to avoid shaming your child. And I know it's really quick and easy to jump to some phrases like if you don't, you're going to be the stinky kid at class or no one's going to want to sit next to you. It's really because, again, we want our kids to see that end goal of, like, if you don't shower, you are going to be stinky. Kids will notice, and they won't want to sit next to you in class or whatever. But please do your best to avoid the shame, because shame is not going to motivate. Shame is not a motivator to encouraging our kids to practice better hygiene. So, we're going to have a lot of tips for you today of what you can do instead to have hygiene going a lot better.

Lori: Yeah. So, let's talk through some of those fundamental strategies to help your child with hygiene. And we're going to mix in with some of our strategies, some of our listener tips. So, like, we shared that we were going to be doing a podcast episode on Instagram, and we asked for everybody to kind of give their best hygiene tips. So, we're gonna mix those in there and let me tell you, there are some amazing ones. So, hang in there, because we got some things that I think are really gonna help at home with us.

Katie: I know we were going through the list and we were laughing. We're like, gosh, these guys are pretty good at this, actually, so.

Lori: I know. Yeah. Put us out of our job.

Katie: I know, exactly. But hey, we're here to consolidate it all for you in one place. So that's important, too. So, our first strategy is breaking down the hygiene tasks into smaller and more manageable steps and really trying to establish consistent hygiene routines that happen approximately at the same time every day. So again, a hallmark of ADHD is getting overwhelmed by the number of steps in a routine. So, when we think of, like, my kid knows how to brush his teeth and he just doesn't do it, right. He won't go up there. Our bathroom where we brush teeth is upstairs and all of a sudden, my son will just disappear. And I'm like, oh my gosh, I need to go up, walk up the stairs now and manage this. So, when we think about it, brushing our teeth isn't just picking up the toothbrush and brushing the bristle, brushing your teeth. It's you've got to find the toothpaste, you've got to put the toothpaste on, you have to get it wet and if you're a kid in my family, that's a very important step. Then you have to stand there and brush for two minutes, which feels like, as Mal said, infinity.

Mal: Infinity!

Katie: Infinity minutes. And then you have to rinse, you have to put your toothbrush back so you can find it again next time. You know, ideally, I'm just saying we could put the lid on the toothpaste and rinse out the sink. But, you know, who knows?

Lori: That's a little too hard for all of our children.

Katie: I know. If anyone has any strategies for rinsing the sink, please, please comment below. But the point being that that is a ton of steps. So, what we simplify in our mind as just

brush your teeth is actually quite a few steps. But we know that our kids can really thrive when they do have structure. And so, by putting them at the same time every day, maybe let's say after we eat breakfast, we always go upstairs and we try to brush our teeth. It can really help to build it into a natural part of the day. And the more that we do it consistently, the less resistance we're going to get. And I can personally attest to this, the more that I'm able to build things into my routine, the more likely they are to get done. And I think a lot of us can probably relate.

We did get a lot of great listener tips around breaking things down, making it feel more manageable. One of my favorites is for the families that have a lot of shampoo and soap bottles in the shower, which we definitely do this, one family suggested just simplifying it and getting one of those dispensers like you see in a hotel and having just, you know, one for shampoo, one for conditioners, and one for soap. And I love this because it just simplifies everything down to these are my three steps, you know, and you're not getting distracted or picking up bottles that fall down and all those kinds of things. Just keeping it really straightforward.

Mallory: I think that can help with kind of the visual overwhelm of stepping foot in the shower. There's 20 bottles. I feel like I need to use all of them. One which ones am I supposed to use? Especially if your child doesn't read yet. So yeah, I like that idea of using that hotel style dispenser. Especially if they're put in the order you just put 1, 2 and 3 on them. Do this one, then this one, then this one. Done. I love that.

Lori: Yeah. And one of the things people suggested was brushing their teeth in the shower. So, this is when we do in our family. Just because I feel like a lot again, you're kind of stacking habits. You're already in the shower, it kind of is an easier process. Might as well just get it done. So that's something we do too.

Mallory: I think that helps with avoiding also the toothpaste mess on the counter. My biggest pet peeve, the sink doesn't get rinsed out. Somehow toothpaste makes it all over the counter. From now on we're gonna just do it in the shower.

Lori: We don't shower morning and night so you still have that issue in the morning.

Mallory: But that's a good point.

Lori: I haven't solved that one.

Mallory: Yeah, well, one less battle a day, I'll take it! Similar to using those hotel style shampoo conditioner dispensers, a lot of people DM'd us and said that they switched to those all in one shampoo conditioner body washes. So, they really only need one bottle and that has really kind of helped their kids. Just one product, clean your whole body good to go. That's helped them.

Katie: Yeah. I can see my daughter gaining really spicy with me if I told her that she wasn't going to have her own separate conditioner. But I do think my 8-year-old, my son would love that. So, I feel like that's going to be specific again to each kid. Another one that people said is really adding things onto the nighttime routine to simplify the mornings. And this is going to be dependent on your family. But I know for us we're always running behind in the morning. So, an example would be like having your child put deodorant on at night.

Lori: Yeah. And we got another recommendation actually from an occupational therapist in our community and this is one I'm definitely going to try also which was putting a mirror in the shower, to help your kids with hair washing. So, if you're anything like me, my youngest is still kind of learning how to wash her own hair. And a lot of times she still has lots of foam in her hair after she's gotten out of the shower. And I'm like, oh, shoot, she didn't. She missed a whole spot, so we still have a bunch of shampoo in there. So, I love this idea because then she can look in the mirror and see, oh, there's soap in my hair and I still need to wash it.

Mallory: I love that idea. We might have to try that one out too.

Lori: I know.

Mallory: I love all these listener tips. This is really helpful. So Katie's tip, break hygiene tasks into smaller manageable steps and make it a consistent routine that you're doing every day. I love it. Our second kind of fundamental step to helping hygiene go more smoothly is using visual aids like checklists or charts to keep that routine very clear and then using some kind of reminders like timers to help with the memory and the time management. So again, these supports here are getting out a lot of those executive functioning challenges that kids with ADHD have. So, if you've listened to our podcast or followed us on Instagram for any length of time, you've probably learned that we love visual aids. We love making things visual for

kids with ADHD because a lot of times, out of sight, out of mind, we want to make things visual and readily apparent for kids. So, you might also know that we have printables that you can purchase in our online shop, to help with different routines. But we really recommend using some kind of check, for younger kids especially, some kind of checklist or chart that has their routine broken down into steps. So maybe it's their morning hygiene routine. Each step of that process broken down to kind of help keep them on track, know what sequence to do these things, and they can check them off as they go for that little dopamine hit. And then using some kind of timers to help you stay on track. So how many times have you sent your kid upstairs to get, to do the hygiene routine? Twenty minutes later you come up, they haven't even gotten in the shower yet, right. So, setting some kind of timer, whether you're using Alexa or you have a Time Timer, we love Time Timer, to really help them visually see the passage of time or give frequent check-ins to make sure they're staying on track towards that end goal of completing the hygiene routine.

Katie: And just a quick note on that, because I think parents will sometimes, you know, say, well, I tried the timer and it didn't really work. And I get that because just sticking a timer near where your kid is showering is probably not going to have any sort of impact on how they shower. So really with all of this, with the visual supports, with the timer, you have to teach it. You have to teach your child. Let's check your schedule, let's check your timer and then you teach them how to manage it. Do you want to set it? How long do you think this is going to take? Let's see if we can beat the buzzer. And you're training them, you're teaching them how to do it so that they can be successful. And in a minute, we're going to talk a little bit about rewarding them too when they do well at this. But this is a teaching process, so we don't recommend just getting the visual and sticking it to the wall. That's where parents are like oh we did it, it didn't work. So, thinking through kind of what are those principles of teaching, like how does my, what does my child not understand about this and how can I help make it more clear, too?

Mallory: I think that's a really important point, Katie. We have to expect that we're going to need to help our kids more at first and fade our support over time as they become more independent and really gain success with the routine. So let's talk about some listener tips, some DMs we got about helping with things like using visual aids or using timers. So, a lot of people, a surprising number of people said that they use smart speakers with regularly scheduled alerts. So, if you have like an Alexa, as I say that I'm like expecting my Alexa to



start listening in. I probably triggered a lot of people's Alexis too if they're like listening without earbuds and then I just did it again. If you're using a smart, you can use a smart speaker to set kind of regular check-ins. Like it goes off every five minutes and it's like a reminder for your child to like check-in with themselves. Am I doing what I'm supposed to be doing? Am I still on track? I really... Oh go ahead Lori.

Lori: My kids love music. They are super motivated for music. So, one person recommended having a playlist that was specific for those hygiene activities. So, they would again put on specific songs to kind of time each activity. So that, that was kind of the reminder of where they were supposed to be in that.

Mallory: Yeah, I love that. So, like in the shower maybe there's a shower playlist. And the first song, this is the same song where you wash your hair. The second song, you do conditioner. The third song, you wash your body. And it kind of keeps your kids on-task. And if they've chosen the songs, then you add a little bit of personalization and motivation in there with it too. Another thing that people mentioned, was writing rather than having, especially for older kids, rather than having like some kind of visual schedule, just writing notes on the mirror. Ideally things that they've written to themselves that are like their reminders for the morning. The things or not necessarily the morning, any hygiene routine they've written kind of the steps on that they need to do on the mirror. Visual right there, they're in the bathroom, they're doing it. Some people use waterproof timer in the shower or they have electric toothbrushes. I most, I feel like most electric toothbrushes do this now where they buzz every 15 or 30 seconds to tell you move to the next section of your mouth.

Katie: Yeah, we have that too and I tell my kids, I'm like, oh, you didn't get to four buzzes. Because that's how we know it buzzes every 30 seconds. And they'll be like, no, no, it did. It buzzed four times. And my son figured out that if he kind of bites on it a little bit, it'll sound almost like a buzz. So, we'll have these little debates. I'm like, buddy, that was the fake buzz. You did not really buzz it. It's so funny. I'm like, for the effort you're putting into tricking me with your electric toothbrush, we could be done with this activity by now. But we'll just debate and then we'll start over. So yeah, the electric toothbrush though is great. And, and that was really motivating for us. We switched from a manual toothbrush to an electric and it was honestly so awesome for maybe like the first six months. And then they lost interest in it and now it's biting on the toothbrush.

Mallory: Something that we heard from several people that they do is they place, and this is a great idea, is they place the hygiene products at different places in their house where it might be needed. So, for example, if you have a multiple story home, you might have toothpaste and toothbrush upstairs and downstairs because maybe at night you're using the toothbrush and toothpaste upstairs before bed, but in the morning, it might be the last thing your kid is doing before they head out the door. So rather than all the effort, and you know, it takes a lot of effort for our kids to go up the stairs to brush their teeth, they don't have to do that. It's just downstairs right by the door, ready to go.

Lori: And they're not going to be distracted by a hundred things that's upstairs and really fun on the way up there, so.

Mallory: Exactly. And another listener, and I loved this idea, said they have kind of a hygiene basket that literally sits right by the door that they leave through in the morning that has flossers, it has wisps, like those little disposable toothbrushes, it has deodorant. And it's like that final visual reminder as her daughter leaves for the day. Like, oh, did I do all of those things this morning? And if I didn't, I can do those things really quick or grab them and finish them on the way to school or whatever. So, putting those things at the point of need also gives the opportunity for your child to engage in those hygiene practices more easily if the mood strikes. So, some people actually commented saying that their kids brush their teeth twice a day, but it's not necessarily in the morning, at night. Its, oh, your kid is transitioning from playing in the front room and they decide they want to brush their teeth. Well, there's an available toothbrush and toothpaste sitting right there, they can use it. So, kind of when the mood strikes. Especially if you have a lot, especially if it's a particular part of your routine that's really challenging, making those things available to your child might increase their willingness to do it.

Katie: I honestly can't picture my kids being like, I just feel like brushing my teeth. So, if that's you, if you sent us that DM, like, you need to really count your blessings. Okay. Because that's, that's pretty awesome. I love that one.

Lori: So, the third point that we want to make related to hygiene is that it's so important to make these hygiene tasks fun, personalize for our kids, and that we're using positive reinforcement strategies. So positive reinforcement being anything that's like, exciting and kind of naturally fun and motivating for your child. And I was listening to Atomic Habits,

which I think is an amazing book for everyone and especially if you're parenting. And it was really interesting to me, kind of thinking about how even us as adults really need that positive reinforcement to develop new habits. It's not just our kids, we need it too. And he gave these great examples of, like, when you start a new, you know, eating a certain way or eating healthy and you haven't been eating healthy regularly, or you're starting a new exercise routine. You know, a lot of people, like, if they don't lose weight within the first three weeks, like, then they're just off of it and that, reinforcement isn't there and they are nixing the whole thing. So, it's really important to think about when we're trying to develop those habits and be consistent, we all need some type of reinforcement kind of built into those habits to make them sustainable, to make them interesting. If we try a workout routine and we're like, this is so boring, and I hate it. I hate lifting weights. This is awful. But maybe you love to, like, dance, you're going to be more motivated to do dancing. So, I think, again, if we can take our child's interests and, you know, put things into the routine that our kids love doing. So maybe it's, you know, having a dance party at the end of teeth brushing and hair brushing, like right before bed. Or if that riles your kids up too much, maybe it's them picking out their favorite book at the end of the night, or having a specific kind of fun routine or making a game out of it. These are all things that are going to make our kids more likely to follow through on that habit and develop that habit and teach them.

Katie: And I think another piece of that, too is, like, anytime that you can connect it to what they have done, like, the great thing that they did, it's really helpful to help our kids with ADHD understand cause and effect. So, an example is, oh, you finished that really quickly, and you got through it so fast and so now we have a lot more time to do this really fun thing, right. And you're helping them make that connection. Because an area of executive function that a lot of our kids struggle with is learning the cause and effect of I did this thing and it had this outcome, positive or negative. And so just if you aren't, I know Lori mentioned, like, the dance parties and stuff, and I, my son loves to do those kinds of things, but it does not work at night. So, a really inexpensive thing that we tried recently, and it's been a game changer. Again, TBD on how long it lasts. But what we did is we actually went and got, like, glow in the dark stars that we can stick to his ceiling. And I did this. My husband did not know about it and when he got home, he's like, how are those stuck to the ceiling? I was like, oh, this really nice little gummy product that they give you. Great. Yeah. But anyway, that's a problem for tomorrow or, like, future Katie to deal with. So anyway, we stuck a bunch of stars to the ceiling. He loves outer space and we made a Big Dipper and a Little Dipper, and I

think it comes with a moon. And so now the sort of incentive is, hey, if we can get through our bedtime routine, then dad or I will come in and lay with you and we can look at the stars together and we'll have more time if you kind of hustle a little bit here. And so, again, you're just trying to help our kids. Like, it doesn't have to be a reward, I think people think of rewards and they think of, like, an M&M. And maybe that is, like, that's called a primary reinforcer and your child might need an M&M for specific skills. But thinking about more like a natural reward of like, okay, I got this thing done and now I have time for this. This is a lifelong skill to be able to manage our time, to save time for the fun things. So that's just a small example.

Lori: Also understanding that the younger your child is too, and, and even for older kids, the thing that is exciting or rewarding for them is going to change frequently. And I think sometimes people get tripped up on that too. It's like, well, now they're not interested in their routine, right. Now it's not very fun. And that's, again, all of us, our interests change and the things that we're motivated for change. So, we do have to think about those, how we are reinforcing our kids at the end of the night might have to shift and change too. Sometimes, you know, again, when they're younger, it sometimes shifts and change frequently, because their interests are going to change frequently. So, keep that in mind. Along those same lines, I think it's really important to kind of, and these are some listener tips, of things that can really help this process, but one person had said that they really try and personalize the process by having their kids, like, have choice in everything that they do. So, they take them to the store and they get to pick out, you know, they smell all the deodorants and get to pick out their favorite one. They get to look at all the body washes and shampoos, and they get to pick out the thing that they're super motivated for. So, again, building in choice and having our kids kind of be, have, buy in in that process makes them more motivated to do it themselves.

Mallory: And I think this helps too. Maybe your child has a sensory sensitivity to certain smells or certain flavors. And so, they're going to be less likely to wash their hair or brush their teeth if it's a scent they don't prefer or it's a taste they hate. So, when you give them the opportunity to select what they like, you're just increasing their buy in and their willingness to participate in this hygiene routine. A sensory tip that we got from families, maybe you know this one, but putting a washcloth, teaching your child to put a washcloth over their eyes as they rinse their hair. Because some kids are really sensitive to the sensation of water rushing over their eyes or they're fearful that their eyes are going to sting from the shampoo.

Letting them choose between whether they shower or bathe, if you have that option in your home. Some kids just really can't handle the sensation of a shower or some kids just don't like sitting in a tub. So giving them that option, if that is an option in your home, can really help.

Katie: Another really good suggestion that we got, and I personally love this one because I'm really social and you may or may not have figured that out, but I feel like it's really fun for me to do something when I'm around other people. It makes it much more rewarding. And so, the idea of body doubling with your kids so when they're going to brush their teeth, you can grab your toothbrush and brush your teeth. I have a whole face routine. So sometimes I'll wash my face with my daughter especially. She's almost 11 and I'm trying to teach her how to wash her face each night and put on a little moisturizer and kind of just the basics of that. But it's one thing for me to hand her the bottle and say, okay, here's what you do. It's totally different when we stand at our double sinks and she comes in my bathroom and we do it together. So, body doubling is another really effective way to help our kids learn some of those hygiene skills.

Lori: Yep. And I think another thing we talk about is just making it really fun by turning it into a game. Like our kids are really motivated by games and turning anything into something fun. So, like we could turn the clock and say, okay, you have two minutes. If you get done in two minutes, then you get to pick out two books tonight to read.

Mallory: Another thing that a couple other listeners mentioned that they do is that they have songs or they have toys that are specific to that hygiene routine. So maybe your kid only plays with these super fun toys when they're showering. So, it's like there's something that they can look forward to, something exciting about the routine because they get to play with those special toys or they only listen to their super favorite song while they're brushing their teeth. So, songs, toys, things that are specific to that hygiene routine that your kid can really look forward to that gives them a little bit more motivation to do the hygiene routine. Another thing that I want to point out is that in all of this, we really encourage you to work collaboratively with your child. This is not you against your child when it comes to hygiene. It's you and your child against the problem. So, talk with your child. Figure out where is the struggle. Why are they resisting this routine? Is there some kind of sensory sensitivity? Is there some part of this routine that they're really struggling with? Is it that they're getting distracted? Talk with your child, Work with your child. It's you and your child against the

problem, not you two against each other. And I just want to mention again, avoiding the shame. The shame is not going to motivate your child to action. What is going to motivate your child to action is empathy and collaborative problem solving. So, I just want to really encourage you to take that approach when addressing this hygiene challenge.

Katie: I love that so much. And we've given you tons of ideas and obviously not every single one is going to work for every single child. So, feel free to take what works and leave what doesn't. Really, the big picture goal is to build, you know, these habits, creating a system that works for you and your child, and then really, as much as possible, giving that structure and consistency. Because even though we resist it, ADHD brains really do thrive when there's consistent expectations.

Lori: Yes. And if we can make hygiene feel a little less stressful part of the day, then everyone's going to be a lot happier. So, before we go, don't forget to leave a review if you found this episode helpful. Again, it means the absolute world to us.

Mallory: Yeah. And our key takeaway for today is when you work with your child to get to the root of their hygiene struggles, you can make a plan together to ensure those important hygiene activities are done in a way that works for the whole family.

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!