

## **Full Plate Podcast #88: Building Diet Culture Resilience & Preventing Eating Disorders in Teens with Oona Hanson**

00:00.00

Abbie Attwood

Welcome to the pod Oona I'm so glad you're here. Yeah, we were just talking about how we had found one another on social media...gosh...how long has it been?

00:03.19

Oona Hanson

Happy to be here. , probably 2019 or 2020 maybe earlier.

00:18.97

Abbie Attwood

We've been mutually following and liking each other's stuff for a while. So this is exciting to be on video. So I always like to get us started with what's on your plate first is a food, a meal, a snack, a specific food. You've been loving lately and then. The second part being kind of like your life plate like what's something you want to share that's going on.

00:41.16

Oona Hanson

Yeah, well because I'm a trader Joe's shopper one of my favorite seasonal items is the horchata ice cream at trader Joe's it's so good.

00:51.72

Abbie Attwood

Ah, oh my god it's so good. It's so good. Oh my gosh I I'm so sorry I just interrupted you on this but I I shared this on Instagram and it created a total controversy like. Everyone was confused because the label says something about it being rice ice cream and everyone was like is this made of rice milk and I was like no no, it's dairy anyways, continue it was a hysterical like thing on Instagram for a while.

01:15.18

Oona Hanson

Yeah, but that is funny. I know well it can be hard to distinguish all the different options that you know that are available now. But yeah I just love that cinnamon flavor and a little kind of.

01:22.20

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

01:30.23

Oona Hanson

cookie bits that are in it like there's texture to it that you don't usually get from an ice cream So that's been something I've been enjoying in the hot weather in the evening. and trader Joes also sells a little sugar cone. So I make myself a little cone and it's just like it's just so fun and delicious.

01:40.95

Abbie Attwood

Oh I Love that Oh I Love that? Yeah, that flavor is fantastic. I am just such a sucker for

cinnamon ice cream and to your point like I Love an ice cream to have something in it. You know like a cookie dough or a crunch of some sort. So. Just hits on all the tastes and textures for me. So delicious.

02:04.80

Oona Hanson

Well tonight when I make my cone I'll be saying cheers Abby okay sounds good. Yeah so life ways 1 thing that's new is i've.

02:10.34

Abbie Attwood

I have some in my freezer too. Okay, we'll be choosing tonight because I always have my nightly bowl always. What about Lifewise what's going on.

02:22.89

Oona Hanson

I feel a little bit late to the party but I did start a substack newsletter and I'm really enjoying writing in that format and connecting with people that way. What I love about it is being able to control the content right. , and that there's no advertising So as I'm sure you know you know that the ad algorithm is pretty awful when it comes to writing about anti diet things and eating disorders because it inevitably gives people ads for weight loss and so when I I mean I do like writing for.

02:58.60

Oona Hanson

Big publications because you reach more people who need this information but it's also nice to have a space where someone can read an article I write about Anti-d Diet

parenting without being interrupted. You know by ads for you know, intermittent fasting or or what have you and they often have.

03:09.40

Abbie Attwood

, yeah Noom yeah.

03:15.44

Oona Hanson

Really upsetting images that they use to catch your attention and you can't unsee it So I'm trying to split my writing time between the Substack newsletter and you know the larger you know national publications and parenting publications.

03:18.26

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

03:32.10

Abbie Attwood

Oh I Love that you know I've been thinking I have a newsletter and it comes through like I do it through my website and I have been playing with the idea of a substack. , just maybe I have to pick your brain on that another time but I think it's such a great. It's such a great format and you're right? The advertising is terrible.

03:42.19

Oona Hanson

, yeah, anytime.

03:49.60

Abbie Attwood

Terrible and you went to so you have a degree in writing or in education. I'm trying to remember your career path. Maybe fill us in a little bit on that. Yeah.

03:55.80

Oona Hanson

Yeah, yeah, so my first career was as a high school English teacher and girls athletic coach. So I have ° in english. I love language. I love talking about books with people and just thinking about the way that words shape our. Thinking and our beliefs and how we connect with other people. So I do also have a master's degree in educational psychology. So that really fed into my love of learning and how like understanding how people learn things and how you're where you are in your hand development and how that affects you.

04:29.16

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

04:34.61

Oona Hanson

You're learning and kind of what you're thinking about. So after I left teaching I did

private tutoring for a long time and then shifted into parent education because working with teens I realized even before I had my own teens How much their parents needed support.

04:51.66

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

04:51.83

Oona Hanson

You know little kids when you have little kids. There are so many parents in my classes. There are a lot of books and then when you get to the adolescent years or the teen years parents tend to feel pretty lonely. Obviously the pandemic really aggravated that feeling. But

05:07.60

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

05:08.11

Oona Hanson

So I became really passionate about supporting parents of teens and tweens specifically and then because we had the experience of having a child develop an eating disorder in our own family. I started focusing more and more of my work on that and that's what brought me to where I am now. Supporting families whose kids are in eating disorder treatment but also families who want to do some prevention work or to lower the risk or they want to heal their family's kind of relationship with food to to you know, make

mealtimes just more joyful and.

05:32.20

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

05:42.40

Oona Hanson

You know that connection piece around food kind of gets back to that which obviously as you know diet culture likes to interfere with that. Yeah so I like to bring that kind of teaching that education like that's an educator is sort of like my core I think like my core being.

05:46.26

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

05:59.20

Oona Hanson

, of bringing that love of language into supporting parents in terms of how to talk to kids about food. How to talk about bodies How to talk about body changes How to talk about Diet culture. So It's really kind of marrying all these different interests I have together and you know taking my own families' kind of suffering and really. Bringing so much purpose and meaning and being able to help other families through you know navigating diet culture or navigating eating disorder treatment that was probably a longer answer than you wanted. But that's sort of how all my different backgrounds kind of come together and to where I am now.

06:33.40

Abbie Attwood

No such thing as too long of an answer on here. That's why I started a pun like I am not. I am not short winded. No, I'm kind of actually shocked. And my own I'm like tearing up a little bit hearing you think just talk about that because I was just thinking about it. I just feel like I have a lot of grief around me. You know I have one caveat. I have a wonderful relationship with my family and my parents and I'm so lucky for that. But so much of me wonders what would have been had. They had some support. You know and they were so busy and they were both medical professionals so they were steeped in a lot of you know this is you know thirty years ago and at that time and during puberty during my teen years just thinking about that you know, . Because you're right, parents need a lot of support during that time. It's a confusing time for teens and tweens and it's a confusing time for parents. , especially being in that middle life stage yourself and experiencing your own probably grief comes with your body and things that are happening with your own. Relationship with food in your body. So who yeah kind of got to give me the feels there. What memory did you have when you went through that with your own family? Did you do you have memories now thinking back to your own teen years as there was diet culture present for you.

08:03.80

Abbie Attwood

Then did you have your own struggles, not that we're all in diet culture. But I mean did you have a disordered relationship with food or did you have any kind of struggle with your parents in your own body.

08:16.94

Oona Hanson

Yeah I mean I was I had a lot of privilege in terms of having very supportive parents and you know I was living in diet culture before we had that phrase diet culture. , it was just normalized. You know reading? back when you know 17 magazines or those sort of like.



08:18.11

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

08:26.65

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

08:34.37

Oona Hanson

You know we would just, you know, get together as girls and you know pour over these images and compare our bodies and that was seen as normal and I really wanted to protect my own kids from that So you know when I became a parent you know I thought it would be really easy.

08:39.88

Abbie Attwood

Totally.

08:53.80

Oona Hanson

Like oh I'm not going to have those kinds of magazines in my house. Yeah I'm going to do it right? and I'm going to you know I thought I'm never going to disparage my body

in front of my kids. I had a really oversimplified idea about what it would take to make my home a safe haven from this stuff. .

08:56.22

Abbie Attwood

I'm going to do it right? Yeah yeah.

09:10.93

Abbie Attwood

Nan.

09:12.16

Oona Hanson

Yeah, and you know I had the best of intentions and I learned a lot the hard way and you know we can't prevent every eating disorder they're they're much more complex than that We don't have a you know vaccine I Wish we did right? I Wish we could inoculate kids from eating disorders but we.

09:27.29

Abbie Attwood

And ah.

09:29.57

Oona Hanson

We can lower the risk and we can make our homes more of a safe haven. So I really come to this work with a lot of empathy for other parents because we're all always doing the best we can just as our parents did as well and I think that with this parenting without diet culture approach.

09:49.32

Oona Hanson

I Do believe in the concept of sort of reparenting yourself. , and so yeah, so yeah, so like yeah and even you know thinking about that horchata ice cream. You know making myself that ice cream cone at night is.

09:51.87

Abbie Attwood

Me too so much. Yeah, it's so important. Yeah, that lens of compassion.

10:07.69

Oona Hanson

That kind of joy around like summer ice cream. It does take you back to childhood and maybe maybe what you weren't allowed to have or didn't have access to for whatever reason and really showing yourself that kind of that love and that pleasure around food and.

10:25.63

Abbie Attwood

No, no yeah.

10:25.64

Oona Hanson

Yeah, so it can sound a little woo woo I think the idea of reparenting yourself, but it doesn't have to be called that. But I think you can heal some of the things that maybe your parents didn't know how to provide for you? , and you know I think having empathy for our own parents also helps us have empathy for ourselves right? that.

10:45.35

Abbie Attwood

Yes, yes, no I couldn't agree more? yeah that just the act of that ice cream for you. It's like ah both a rebellion and a reclamation right? like it's both.

10:45.55

Oona Hanson

Yeah, this is a judgment free , kind of project in my opinion.

11:00.65

Abbie Attwood

Kind of the middle finger to die a culture and giving yourself that unconditional permission to eat what it is that brings you joy but also like reclaiming the joy that you once had with food before before you were basically inundated with all the messages that told you otherwise right? we all kind of had. Some amount of time in our life whether it was just when we were a baby or maybe it was up until we were ten years old where we we hadn't yet like fully integrated those messages about our body and about food and it is a lot of times just going back to that version of yourself and saying like what did I need. And how can I give that to myself now because it's not a lost cause you

know and you mentioned something that I would love to get into further in the episode. So don't let me forget but you were a coach and that was a big part of my experience being an athlete and then.

11:55.20

Abbie Attwood

Actually I coached for a long time. , in addition to doing diet headaches and nutrition work that I did and so it's something that's really near and dear to my heart in terms of the impact it has on children and teens. , but 1 of the things I wanted to start with is. You know you mentioned we can't protect. We can't fully prevent eating disorders as parents. We can't protect everyone but like what are some of the things that parents if parents are listening who have teens and tweens what are some of the ways that they can start to cultivate. Like a safe space in the home to really build up resilience for those teens and tweens out in the world which we can't say like once they go out into the world or when they are out in the world. They're not going to encounter it. But that building that safe space at home like where do you start? What a good foundation.

12:49.85

Oona Hanson

Yeah I mean I as a parent myself I often bristle when I hear this answer but it really starts with us right? that we have to start modeling some of this for our kids right? because I do believe in the power of words and I think what we say and how we say it Obviously it really matters. But what we do matters even more.

12:50.74

Abbie Attwood

In your mind.

12:57.91

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, and.

13:09.63

Oona Hanson

Yeah, so you know for parents this means working on your own relationship with food, your own relationship to your body and you know when you're a parent of a teen or tween. It's likely you are entering some kind of midlife change in your body. . You know and this can be sort of a hormonal body change Perfect storm in a lot of families and parents and guardians often get messages from their doctor and their peer group and social media that they should be cutting out food groups and they should be trying to. Control their weight and they should be really panicked about their body changing so it makes sense that parents might launch a new kind of diet of course, almost no one calls it a diet anymore. , Lifestyle or or a detox. , on you know a fitness journey or.

13:55.92

Abbie Attwood

Lifestyle Protocol. Ah yeah, clean eating. Yes, yeah.

14:05.43

Oona Hanson

, so it makes a lot of sense that parents and guardians want to do that and we have to be really mindful of the messages that not only that we're taking in but that we're also sending to our kids So we think about a kid going into puberty where weight gain is not only normal, but essential.

14:15.18

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

14:24.72

Oona Hanson

For Health and development and then we're over here demonizing weight gain and being terrified of weight gain and cells are saying oh my gosh I can't believe I grew out of my genes or by definition our kids need to go out of their genes.

14:29.23

Abbie Attwood

In ourselves. Yes.

14:38.31

Abbie Attwood

Listen.

14:40.83

Oona Hanson

And so really thinking about the messages we're sending to our kids about what we value about ourselves about our kids. How we know how we perceive bodies, how we perceive body changes so it really starts with again giving yourself a lot of compassion like it's not like oh no I've said all these the wrong things to my kids.

14:57.11

Abbie Attwood

Totally yeah.

15:00.39

Oona Hanson

Being really compassionate with yourself and then being aware of what you're saying in front of your kids and trying to you you might have to fake it till you make it might you might be still having these thoughts but how we act on them or what we say that can be kind of the beginning of making some changes in our home.

15:17.53

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, and and on top of that. you know, psychologically that helps parents like that helps like actually faking it till you make it is a really great way to like start to rewire a lot of your own thinking you know. Like just changing behaviors and changing language to your point. Not only will it help the children in your life but it will start to change the way that you just those automatic responses that we all develop over time or those automatic things we say about food or about clothing or about our bodies. You know it isn't it. It is action. That changes the way that we think you know so I love that you mentioned that and I love that you've kind of divided into like okay think about a how you're talking about food and bodies and then also B How are you behaving because it's not just what you say? It's what you do like. You might be saying and legalizing all food in the house for your family., But if you're eating the salad while everybody else is enjoying pizza night that sends a message right? and even if you're not criticizing how many slices they have or making a comment on anything else like. If you're having the salad something is being said just by the behavior. No when it's when it's a satisfying non-dietary salad.

16:37.88



Oona Hanson

Absolutely and again nothing gets salad. I Love salad. , but right? , yeah, no here I mean I thought I was you know creating this really healthy food culture in my home. But my kids noticed that I.

16:54.00

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

16:54.42

Oona Hanson

When we went out to eat I always ordered pretty much always ordered a salad with dressing on the side you know did the whole thing because that's sort of like that's how this that's how you eat a salad right? was sort of how I was taught right by our culture right? right? , and you know I would offer dessert.

17:00.76

Abbie Attwood

, and.

17:05.78

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, is there any other way right? yeah.

17:14.18

Oona Hanson

Every night in my home but I often didn't have it myself. So yeah I was, you know, slowly moving things in the right direction but I hadn't brought myself kind of up to speed in the way that that I have now and that I you know I'm sure there are still ways that I can evolve and grow and learn in some of these.

17:32.92

Oona Hanson

You know sneakier ways that diet culture can still , kind of infiltrate your thinking. I won't say I'm completely free of it because we're swimming in this. It's hard to completely cut it out. But yeah I agree there are multiple steps right? if.

17:38.85

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, totally.

17:48.40

Oona Hanson

Yeah, thinking like we're recording this at the end of July like if someone has access to you know a beach or a pool you know are you getting in the water with your kids if that's something you enjoy and this idea that you have to wait to feel brave enough or whatever it is. You think you have to wait to be comfortable, to your point.

17:56.23

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

18:07.90

Oona Hanson

Ah, a much quicker way to feel comfortable doing that is just to just do it right to put on the bathing suit. Yeah exactly? Yeah yeah, using Cognitive dissonance as a much quicker way to kind of rewire your thinking rather than waiting for some perfect moment where you're going to be.

18:09.78

Abbie Attwood

To do it. It's kind of the exposure therapy approach. Yeah yeah.

18:24.72

Oona Hanson

Feeling you know body neutral or body positive. Yeah.

18:29.30

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, ah so important and and you mentioned also just what's happening hormonally for kids at this age like that age right? Puberty is as we know puberty and menopause are. The 2 of the biggest like in terms of times of our lives are risk factors for eating disorders and disordered eating because of you know our body seemingly changing in ways that we feel like we can't control and this desire to try and seize control of that. So. 1

of the things that I mean I'm in with the teens that I've worked with I've noticed that that's a big trigger for trying to quote unquote eat healthier or get into like a fitness routine to try and kind of mitigate. The changes that are occurring in the body and it's a really alarming time I mean I remember I think that I got my period when I was maybe 11 or so and it was really it was a very strange isolating time. You know it was. Ah, a very weird time with my body and I remember that like just being very confused by all of the changes I was having and and I'm lucky that I was insulated. My family had a good, positive kind of culture around food. , and that.

19:58.84

Abbie Attwood

Didn't get exposed to a lot of disordered eating behaviors until I was in college which is when I developed an eating disorder but I I have had so many teen clients where that's really it like that's the starting Point. So Can we talk a little bit about puberty and. How that can give Rise specifically to disordered eating behaviors and maybe some like red flags for folks to look out for in that particular time period with their kids.

20:27.99

Oona Hanson

Yeah I think it's really important to come back to that point that weight gain is essential I think it's yeah and I think I mean it's amazing that even even Pediatricians can sometimes.

20:32.87

Abbie Attwood

Yes, yes, expected essential nature. Yes.

20:46.18

Oona Hanson

You know they're just looking at this growth chart. This kid might be going through puberty earlier than the growth chart expects and there's panic about Rapid Weight gain. , and this really can be the catalyst for parents getting concerned, the child getting concerned and you're hearing Yeah the voice of this. Trusted Medical professionals that the body is something that there's something wrong when in fact, the child's body is going through a very natural important process of Maturation. So I think you know remembering that puberty starts earlier than a lot of us think , it's really in those. Tween years really like elementary school is where these changes get started for for a lot of kids for most kids , doesn't mean that the you know the period or other you know so secondary sex characteristics or things like that those might show up later and and and middle school but kids bodies and brains are starting to change in elementary school.

21:23.64

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

21:38.27

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, and they're already getting those messages about fatness and fearing weight gain. Some of the statistics lately are just so alarming and saddening I mean.

21:40.35

Oona Hanson

For the most part. So I think yeah.

21:56.15

Abbie Attwood

As young as 3 or 4 years old. They're starting to internalize those messages that you've found. Yeah.

21:59.69

Oona Hanson

Yeah I mean and you know parents and coaches and educators right? Think they're you know think they're giving helpful messages When in fact, we know they are doing these lessons and in school are doing harm.

22:05.90

Abbie Attwood

Yes, teachers. Yeah.

22:17.32

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

22:17.47

Oona Hanson

The coach made comments about cutting out food. You know again all well intended. But it's really setting kids up to? yeah yeah, yeah, so I think for parents yeah going back to their own body changes I think 1 thing that parents can do is to model. You know if they need a new size.

22:22.91

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, the impact is what matters. Yeah.

22:37.45

Oona Hanson

And their own clothing. , you know to make it very matter. Of fact like oh I'm you know I'm bringing my old pants to you know Goodwill and get myself some new pants that fit me comfortably you know and and trying to make it matter of fact, not something that you have to kind of feel bad about .

22:54.25

Abbie Attwood

Normalizing those body changes and the sizing up and that it's natural for our bodies to change. Yeah.

23:02.51

Oona Hanson

Yeah, , and I just am you know thinking about for anyone kind of in back to school mode right? This might mean depending on your child's age. You know if there's something they love or if they wear a uniform. , you know, buying it if you can.

23:07.40

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

23:18.59

Oona Hanson

For now and in the next size up so that you have you have that ready to go and you're normalizing that you expect their body to grow. and that can be a kind of a conversation starter for some families I think you know we've been taught to fear eating. What.

23:26.00

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

23:38.90

Oona Hanson

Seems like a large amount of food. We've been taught to sort of fear things that are often labeled bingeing that aren't actually bingeing. We've been taught to fear carbohydrates and kids in these you know Puberty growth spurts are going to have you know a bigger appetite than when they were younger.

23:55.76

Oona Hanson

And so you know 1 thing parents can do is to know, support their child's hunger cues right? and not questions like are you sure you want those seconds of pasta right? yeah.



24:05.50

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, you can't possibly be hungry. We just ate dinner like what you know you can't possibly need a snack right? I was called I was over my parents I mean lovingly I know called me a bottomless pit my whole life right? like I was.

24:16.16

Oona Hanson

, yeah.

24:20.53

Abbie Attwood

Insatiable and that became kind of part of my identity like I thought I was like a big eater you know and that eventually that message was like I have to curb this you know? ah yes, among many? yeah.

24:25.51

Oona Hanson

, right? Yeah yeah, the hollow leg and the bottomless pit, those are his phrases I think we should retire, right? And the other thing you know often family members will say oh I wish I could eat like that.

24:40.83

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, I got that all the time as if only certain people have permission to eat.

24:43.23

Oona Hanson

Right? So there's just exactly one and then another in terms of language. I think the phrase baby fat or puberty pudge are things that parents might want to think about.

24:58.16

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

25:01.36

Oona Hanson

Think a lot of parents when they hear they're tween having some body image concerns parents with you know again, well intentioned will often try to reassure the child. Oh that's just your baby fat. You're going to grow out of that. , which.

25:13.21

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

25:17.10

Oona Hanson

You know it's sending some pretty mixed messages. I think pretty harmful messages to kids again. We think we're helping. But when we know a child who expresses concern about their body changing.

25:21.52

Abbie Attwood

Yes, of course yeah, that's like a caveat to this whole conversation. Yeah, everyone's doing their best. Yeah yeah.

25:35.95

Oona Hanson

You know I really think these are these moments for parents to take a deep breath and you know try to be as mindful and as present as you can which is hard because all the things from your own teen or preteen years are probably flooding back all the comments you heard? Maybe you were teased and bullied.

25:44.63

Abbie Attwood

Very.

25:50.76

Abbie Attwood

Yes.

25:55.92

Oona Hanson

, you know you just didn't feel good about your body at that age and we want to protect our kids from those feelings when I think what most kids really need is to have their feelings validated and heard by their parents. Instead of trying to shut down the conversation of like oh that's just your baby Fat. You're going to go out of it or oh honey you're Adorable. Don't worry I think it can be Yes, Yeah, yeah, and.

26:18.12

Abbie Attwood

You're not fat. You're beautiful is another one. That's really problematic just insinuating that fat is bad and in that way. Yeah.

26:27.47

Oona Hanson

Think if parents can try things like oh tell me more? , yeah, so coming in with curiosity and compassion and not feeling if you have to fix anything in the moment I think letting your kid know that you can tolerate conversations about hard feelings.

26:29.64

Abbie Attwood

Right? curiosity.

26:46.81

Abbie Attwood

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26:47.35

Oona Hanson

That's really going to support your child's body image. So much better and your relationship with your child than trying to fix it with reassurance and definitely you know, parents might be tempted to say Okay, well let's let's go start running together or let's you know? Do you want to do weight watchers with me or new with me I think. That's a really common pattern in a lot of families and it feels like this bonding and it feels like you're supporting your kid and yet we know the impact or the outcomes are really disconnecting our kids from their body.

27:08.27

Abbie Attwood

I've seen it in a lot of families I've worked with, yeah .

27:24.99

Oona Hanson

Breaking some trust with their you know their loving caregiver right? What they really need to know is that their body is okay and that we love them unconditionally. They have permission to eat and permission to be in their body The way that they are and.

27:26.70

Abbie Attwood

1 and.

27:39.84

Oona Hanson

In a positive regard for their body. You know we don't have to praise their appearance. I don't think that can be right? but that you know does your face light up when your kid walks in the room right? Do we give our kids the attention we need?

27:42.68

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, that can be the same side, different side of the same coin right? Like yeah.

27:52.80

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

27:59.63

Oona Hanson

Those moments together. You know, busy family life. We don't often have the quantity of time that we want but when we are with our kids we are really present with them. Are we listening? We think that you know body image is all about how you look and really, it's about how you feel about your relationships. You know, are you getting that emotional support? So body image is just much more complex than our culture has taught us right? We used to think you know if you change the way you look, you'll feel differently. You'll feel better about your body when we know that that tends to backfire right? If you start picking. You know, an adversarial relationship with your body. Your

body image is actually not likely to improve. , so yeah I realize I'm kind of rambling on that topic. But , yeah I think in some ways supporting a child's body image is simpler than we might think but in other ways it's more complex and it's this It's a long ongoing process of supporting our kids and any kind of quick fix or quick reassurance is unlikely to help and I'll say one more thing about this which is if you're thinking oh I did tell my kid. It's just baby fat or that they'll you know we've said one of those reassuring statements. I'm a huge fan of rupture and repair that we can go back to our kids the next day, the next week, even the next year and say hey you know when you came to me asking about x y or z.

29:23.98

Oona Hanson

I Realized I really rushed in and shut down that conversation. I'd love to hear more about how you're feeling about your body.

29:29.22

Abbie Attwood

I am glad you brought that up because that was something I wanted to go into actually which is like okay, what about the parents that are listening who feel like oh my god I've fucked up already like and just knowing that it's never too late too early to have these conversations and like 1 of the most powerful things I mean even if we all and. Anyone listening to this is obviously a teen themselves and may have teens and it's I. I think that there's nothing more powerful than a parent or a caregiver kind of owning their own humanity and their mistakes and. Having those honest conversations I think that that's the thing that that can be that can drive that connection and that trust more than anything else and help us think more critically and the other thing that I think if anyone's listening and struggling with how to respond to those comments like if a. Ah, tween or teen is complaining about their body or you know I think one way and you kind of named it is like just come back if you're not quite prepared with how do what do I even say just come back with a question like tell me or just tell me more about that or like how are you feeling you know and then the other one is just. Constant reassurance that you trust their body like you can just say I trust your body your body is changing and it's supposed to and and I think that's a really great way to come come at this whether it's about food or about body size like about your appetite like I trust you like I trust that your body knows what it needs and i.

31:03.42

Abbie Attwood

I Trust your hunger I Trust your appetite I Trust whatever changes are going on you know and keeping the dialogue open about those changes is so important.

31:10.63

Oona Hanson

, yeah, definitely and to your point about owning our mistakes and being vulnerable I mean with teenagers I mean that's gold right? Do you know teenagers whose parents can.

31:18.18

Abbie Attwood

, just maybe.

31:27.19

Oona Hanson

Accept and own up to mistakes or be vulnerable like that is so powerful for that parent child and relationship I think parents sometimes are afraid to show that vulnerability thinking. Oh my teenager is not going to respect me and actually it's the opposite I mean because teens smell a phony a mile away.

31:34.33



Abbie Attwood

That.

31:41.52

Abbie Attwood

Is it the opposite? Yeah .

31:46.87

Oona Hanson

And when we can be really honest with them in a developmentally appropriate way. This really can unlock that connection I think parents want with their teens right? It's a time for the teen to push away which is again natural. We would expect that but they still need us and.

31:52.44

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

32:04.79

Oona Hanson

They need to have that authentic connection with us and yeah teens catching us making mistakes. It's like that's one of their favorite things so we can. We can lean into that and know that it's actually creating connection and not , it's not something where we're kind of like losing our.

32:19.55

Abbie Attwood

Authority. Yeah no I Love you saying that I mean those are the most powerful moments I can recall from my relationship with my parents or even just wishing so many times that they admitted to their mistakes would have developed like more respect in that moment and yeah because I love what you said these melophony.

32:21.12

Oona Hanson

, Authority in the home. Yeah.

32:39.44

Abbie Attwood

You know it's so true like would you rather have your teen start to not trust you or think you're lying or would you rather them see you show up in the fullness of your own humanity and model that opinions can change like it's not Even. You know, I have a mistaken opinion. Whatever you want. It's like you get to evolve in your thinking and the way that you because you are evolving in the way that you think about your body by anyone listening to this podcast is on that journey right? So yeah, you can even share that like you know when I was growing up. This is how. You know I learned to think about food and think about my body. This is how my parents talked about it and I really want us to talk about things differently because it ended up really harming my relationship with myself and my body and I think that's just so it's a game changer you know.

33:30.98

Oona Hanson

, yeah for sure for sure.

33:34.82

Abbie Attwood

So we talked about parents and I mentioned I want to talk about coaches because that's obviously like parents are just 1 piece of the puzzle in our teenage years and coaches teachers like we can go into you know, social media obviously friends. But I'd really like to talk about coaches because. It's interesting to me that you had that experience and I think I've done a lot of work. I've done a lot of presentations and workshops with high school teams. I actually like a lot of running teams and just talking to coaches about this and you know how we create a culture of love. Positivity around food and around all bodies and how do we start to notice when a child or a teen might be starting to slip into disordered eating these days. You mentioned it before that it's no longer a diet. It's a lifestyle orthorexia is much more common in this generation. The kind of guise of healthy eating is how it's typically posed so there's so much here. So teachers and coaches. Where do you start with this when you have these conversations?

34:53.20

Oona Hanson

Yeah, well thinking about coaches first. I mean when I think back to my coaching days I know I never got any training about recognizing signs of eating disorders or disordered eating zero and I think it's great that more and more. Athletic coaches are bringing in registered dietitians or other experts to, you know, give athletes like the real story. I think often coaches think well I'm you know. And know what works for me so it must work for my athletes and kind of forget. Oh they're still growing. They're really vulnerable to disordered eating and eating disorders and my offhand comment about cutting out Xy or Z food could take a really you know eager ambitious athlete down a rabbit hole to you know illness. So I think because of our you know because of diet culture the default for most coaches is going to be to perpetuate diet culture unless someone has learned about this the hard way through their own recovery journey or they've sought out education or support from experts. Default is going to be diet culture. So I again have a lot of empathy for coaches and I think athletic directors or you know administrators of club leagues and things like that. Really I think they have a responsibility to educate their coaches about this from a parent perspective.

36:19.23

Oona Hanson

You know one option is to talk to a coach at the beginning of the season and say you know I really care about supporting. But yeah, , yeah, and it doesn't have to be adversarial. It can start with curiosity right?

36:20.47

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, I love that kind of thing.

36:33.91

Abbie Attwood

It is.

36:34.45

Oona Hanson

You know what your approach is, do you talk to the kids about nutrition and what do you do? you know where what framework are you using and that will really guide your next steps right? They're like oh yeah I Just want to make sure they're eating healthy right? They think that's like this very neutral or positive thing and as a parent listening to this podcast. You know that's a huge red flag.

36:53.30

Oona Hanson

And I think that's the beginning of you know, maybe you know more conversations with that coach. We can also ask our athletes our young athletes. I think one way to approach this kind of thing is to ask kids you know, ask your child.. What's that? And what's the vibe on the team when people have their snacks before or after practice or , you know if there's a sort of parents who are in charge of bringing snacks like are there rules about are there written or unwritten rules about what's acceptable to bring that can tell you a lot. But I think often asking kids is sort of like that.

37:12.26

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

37:27.84

Oona Hanson

What are the other players saying about how they eat for performance before a game or rather than putting it on your kid necessarily like under the spotlight kind of getting a sense of what's the vibe or what's the culture on the team around food.

37:35.41

Abbie Attwood

Yeah. Yeah, and I I love that like I love the kind of going in with curiosity at the beginning of the season or if a coach you haven't worked with before and just asking that question and like yeah and then if you do identify that there's perhaps you know which. Again I think we have to go in with the assumption that like you said like most people are not doing this work like the majority of people are not , examining weight bias in their in their life examining their own anti-fat bias like examining their own relationship with food and how that you know it's being perpetuated so like it's. An important question to ask and then maybe even you know, suggesting you know some an anti-d diet but

practitioner to come in and do a presentation to the kids or something like that if you sense that they might be getting the messages but also that coaches really? Maybe it's important that coaches stay within their scope. Like not that there is no reason to be giving nutrition advice to teenagers as an athletic coach right? and I think I just kind of want to make that blank a statement because that's I mean that's number 1 right? like that really shouldn't be happening.

38:52.31

Oona Hanson

Yeah, yeah, and I think most coaches feel like and maybe they've taken some nutrition classes and feel like they have the authority. So it's tricky. So I think it really is sort of I but you know unfortunately the onus is a lot on parents or guardians. But it's also on I think at a school like an athletic director or if there's a you know.

38:57.34

Abbie Attwood

Yes.

39:08.52

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, totally.

39:11.95

Oona Hanson

Governing body of whatever. you know Ai so like I really think it should be on not on the individual coach tends not just somehow know all this stuff. , but really getting good policies and training in place I think will make a big difference.

39:19.29

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah.

39:27.41

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, and there are so many sports that are stereotypically kind of known for perpetuating disordered eating. You know you think about the gymnastics Ballet dance. Gosh I think about wrestling or anything that has an emphasis on weight or ah. Buttics and then there's , you know sports that emphasize leanness quote unquote Leanness right? and that every sport develops this kind of aesthetic appearance based on representation of what you're so quote unquote supposed to look like if you play that sport and. Understanding deeply how that plays into the way that all of us, even in adulthood feel about ourselves as athletes and whether we belong in a certain community or a certain sport and what lengths they will go to in order to do that. You know I was a runner and this was actually. Even post- college I was on a competitive team and I remember having a coach and this was Amazing. He was very much upfront when you got recruited to the Team. He was very much like we have a 0 tolerance policy for eating disorders right? and he talked about that upfront which was great, but there wasn't a lot of Nuance or real love. Emotional conversation about it or compassionate conversation. It was just like no we don't do that and basically in the same breath I remember being told you know well you yeah if you you know dropped a little weight. You'd probably be faster this time right? and so it means that that message persists.

41:02.39

Abbie Attwood

In sports like running or in lots of Sports. You know this idea that performance is tied to weight. How are you?? How do you see that playing Out. What are some steps that parents can take in mitigating some of that? I mean we're talking about coaches and the importance of. Not having those conversations but I guess a lot of this starts at

home if we're going to have those conversations mean anything out in the world.

41:27.61

Oona Hanson

Yeah I mean I think we can definitely ask you know ask our kids I think inviting them you know their opinion right? What do they notice about the pressures to look a certain way and you know it depends on does your kids sort of natural body type fit that.

41:33.30

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, and.

41:46.81

Oona Hanson

Kind of idealized stereotype or not right that can change the conversation. , but it doesn't mean that your child is then protected from disordered eating right? because that there can still be this sense of like oh I could be even better at my sport if I do X Y or Z Yeah yeah.

41:54.52

Abbie Attwood

Right? I felt that way I totally felt that way and it plays out to a certain point right? And that's what perpetuates eating disorders. I mean that was my experience. For a short period of time. My performance did get a little better and then of course you're under fueling and you're not giving your body what it needs and so it's kind of like this cliff like you fall off the Cliff. So. There's this false sense that it is helping for this really brief period of time and.



42:26.78

Oona Hanson

Right? right? right? Yeah and I think that's where giving kids the support to make sure they're fueling adequately that parents are monitoring for weight loss or lack of expected gain I Think that's the other thing. .

42:28.70

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, it gets very toxic. Yeah. Understand.

42:39.58

Abbie Attwood

Oh can we talk about that una because I'm always you know we talk a lot I'm sure and I know you do too about taking the emphasis off of weight in doctors appointments and you know when and where we really want to be careful about the use of the scale and yet you're right.

42:42.45

Oona Hanson

Yeah.

42:56.80

Abbie Attwood

When kids are growing. They should be growing and so can you talk to me about that. That's complex like how do we monitor quote unquote monitor weight or just be aware of it without making it a focal point you know without doing the weigh ins that the doctor you know I mean that's. That's a little complex sorry to I Just ooh that just sparks something in me. Yeah.

43:16.52

Oona Hanson

Yeah, well and and it's tied to the athletic piece because kids often need a doctor's evaluation to participate in their sport and usually height and weight are part of that. I personally feel very strongly that kids should be weighed when they go to the doctor. So I.

43:21.82

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

43:30.58

Abbie Attwood

Okay.

43:33.93

Oona Hanson

Obviously adults are free to opt out. You know they're very rare cases where the doctor actually needs a weight. , you know for someone in eating disorder recovery having someone check weight can be really important during certain stages of recovery of

course. But for growing teens at growing any kid right. A growing young person should be getting weighed in my opinion at all you know, but well people say oh just at the annual well visit I personally think there's a lot of benefit to having kids weighed if they come in for strep throat right? or things like that in between well visits because you know. Ah, kid falling off their growth curve if that could get caught you know three or four months in versus waiting a whole year for potentially a full threshold eating disorder to take hold. You know that kid's gonna do a lot better. , and it may not be an eating disorder. There are lots of reasons why Kids might have a sort of stall out in their growth. That's it.

44:31.22

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, that's true. But

Yeah I think it's really difficult to make a blanket statement about that. There are a lot of important pieces involved in terms of monitoring a child's growth and health. And yet the historical context for all of this has been that parents should be getting their children weighed in order to help prevent fatness in children. And so we really need to be careful. I mean depending on the child's experience in their body. What size body They inhabit the conversations that have been had prior to this and doctor's appointments. It might not be a good idea and there are other ways to ensure that our child is growing healthy and happy right. So I don't know I don't I Just don't think that it's It's ah, an end all be all or an all or nothing situation I think that it has to be approached with nuance and compassion and to know that every child's experience is going to be different same with the parent's experience and that the more marginalized. , a person is and the less they know the less power they might have in those situations to have these hard conversations with doctors and we also have to honor that. So I Also think with eating disorders in children. This can be a trigger or.

Something that can bring a dormant eating disorder back up. So ah, Gosh. Ah, ah, very complicated. No right? answer here and I think each parent has to explore this with their child and decide. What's ultimately best based on how they feel. How they feel they are able to monitor and help support that child and in their well-being overall.

44:32.00

Oona Hanson

Always worth investigating. , yeah so I am not. I do not advocate for a blanket rule of having kids opt out of the scale. I think it's really really important data for the doctor to have and tracking a child's growth can really help spot an eating disorder. , or any other health conditions that might be impacting a child's growth.

44:52.78

Abbie Attwood

Yeah I Do worry though. I do worry that I mean so many eating disorders don't present with weight loss and I think relying on weight could you know? Yeah,, That's so hard I mean

Yeah I think it's really difficult to make a blanket statement about that. There are a lot of important pieces involved in terms of monitoring a child's growth and health. And yet the historical context for all of this has been that parents should be getting their children weighed in order to help prevent fatness in children. And so we really need to be careful. I mean depending on the child's experience in their body. What size body They inhabit the conversations that have been had prior to this and doctor's appointments. It might not be a good idea and there are other ways to ensure that our child is growing healthy and happy right. So I don't know I don't I Just don't think that it's It's ah, an end all be all or an all or nothing situation I think that it has to be approached with nuance and compassion and to know that every child's experience is going to be different same with the parent's experience and that the more marginalized. , a person is and the less they know the less power they might have in those situations to have these hard conversations with doctors and we also have to honor that. So I Also think about eating disorders in children. This can be a trigger or.

Something that can bring a dormant eating disorder back up. So ah, Gosh. Ah, ah, very complicated. No right? answer here and I think each parent has to explore this with their child and decide. What's ultimately best based on how they feel. How they feel they are able to monitor and help support that child and in their well-being overall.

I Totally agree with you on the growth curve. I Wonder how you think about the conversations that need to be had about, you know, eating disorders primarily actually occurring in people who don't present as underweight and then also how do we then protect kids from. The damage that the scale can cause in terms of that number. , because that can we know you know we know that that is a big risk factor that number and becoming you know, attached to it.

Oona Hanson

Yeah, yeah, and I think you know gaining weight is not a neutral experience especially for kids in larger bodies. , at the same time I think we can support our kids through that by making you know our kids don't have to know the number right.

45:50.21

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah, exactly.

45:58.99

Abbie Attwood

Is a is.

46:01.63

Oona Hanson

, we can also get ahead of it by making it very clear to everyone in this medical office that you don't want weight discussed with your child and setting up those but right right? And if there's a concern Obviously the medical provider can talk to them.

46:09.30

Abbie Attwood

That it's just like a thing you do and then it's not discussed you mean? Okay, okay.

46:20.23

Oona Hanson

To the parent in private. , so I think the number itself you know we don't want to. We don't want to give it even more power right away by being so afraid of it. So I think I mean this is very nuanced and it is for individuals. It can really yeah.

46:31.38

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, it is so nuanced. Yeah because I mean what I mean what if you are or what if you are dealing with a medical provider who holds a lot of weight bias like most providers do right? I mean they are going to.

46:51.22

Abbie Attwood

They are going to share their concern if that number is higher than they think it quote unquote should be and how is that going to harm fat kids and you know I'm that that is very. It's very tough.

47:01.98

Oona Hanson

Yeah, it is really tough and I think you know not every parent has the privilege to speak up to a medical professional. , and I think this you know puts a lot of Burden especially with the new Ap guidelines. You know it puts a lot of Burden on on parents too.

47:08.92

Abbie Attwood

Yeah I agree. Yeah.

47:15.51

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

47:21.80

Oona Hanson

Yeah, even though the guidelines state that the doctor has to ask a parent's permission to talk about weight. , not every parent feels they have the privilege. Yeah yeah.

47:23.46

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah, no the more marginalized you are the more. Yeah, if a parent is in a larger body. They might not feel like the doctor would listen to them. Are they making assumptions about how they're feeding their children or their.

47:36.76

Oona Hanson

, right? Yeah yeah, absolutely and I think you know one way to mitigate some of that is you know the resources out there with sort of pre-made templates and letters. .

47:41.94

Abbie Attwood

Feel like they might be blamed for their child's weight. Yeah.

47:56.23

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

47:56.38

Oona Hanson

Or you know that Jenny Jones is you know, don't wait. You know don't talk about weight cards. I think sometimes having that piece of paper that you share with the office with the nurses and the doctors it goes. You know there's goes in the child's chart. I think that can really, it's not going to level the playing field obviously between.

48:06.49

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.



48:16.25

Oona Hanson

Every parent and physician but I think it's a helpful tool for a lot of families to feel okay. I have this letter that's written by dieticians and the alliance for eating disorders like that that does help give you a little bit of I think Leverage or feeling.

48:20.26

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

48:28.14

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

48:33.18

Oona Hanson

More confident going into that office and requesting that doctors not discuss this. Yeah.

48:38.10

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, okay I think that's that's a really powerful shift of like not talking about weight at all with the child but like collecting the number to a certain point to to just.

48:54.94

Abbie Attwood

Perhaps monitor for anything that could be going on or wrong or something but acknowledging that that number does not tell us near to everything about what could be going on right? If I mean disordered eating and eating disorders happen at every size body so it is so Nuanced. . I appreciate you for diving into that because it's complicated I Do think as adults most for a lot of adults who have experienced disordered eating. It is really important for them to set a boundary and not step on that scale in appointments and so kind of coming into the conversation about kids is. Yeah, it's complicated. You know.

49:35.82

Oona Hanson

Yeah, and I think you know coming back to that baseline of keeping the conversation going with our kids. You know what was that like for you today? , and you know if you know your child you know has a you know has been given this.

49:41.87

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

49:53.44

Oona Hanson

Burden of a complex relationship with the scale. , thanks to our culture and comments from people who know you know all kinds of people. , you know if parents can access additional support for themselves or their kid I think that's going to go a long way. Yeah.

50:08.41

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, and and going and kind of going back to the coaches thing that we were talking about 1 thing that I also wanted to mention and I'm sure you've come across. This is , just you know, taking weight out of the. Out of the discussion entirely, there are a lot of things that we can look at behaviorally. also just girls and menstrual cycles like not you know, developing cultures in sports and athletics where like it is not. Quote unquote good to lose your menstrual cycle is a really important conversation to be having yeah praised even it's like oh I'm training hard I must be training hard enough because I lost my period and that's it couldn't be further from the truth. It's so harmful, especially in that oh gosh it.

50:46.69

Oona Hanson

, yeah I mean it gets normalized on a lot of yeah.

51:01.41

Abbie Attwood

It breaks my heart when I'm working with teenage girls who've lost their period and just what happens to their bone health as they age is so crucial.

51:09.56

Oona Hanson

Yeah, yeah, so I think you know parents notice that that is happening. You know that's definitely a sign for you know, getting immediate support. , and I think you know the other piece of this too is going back to the sports we think of as being high risk like.

51:15.80

Abbie Attwood

Yes.

51:26.67

Oona Hanson

Lightweight rowing or gymnastics or wrestling I think it's important for parents to know that all athletes are at higher risk than their non-sporty peers. , and it's not always the sports you think about, right? so.

51:36.20

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

51:42.51

Abbie Attwood

, yes, yeah yeah.

51:43.43

Oona Hanson

You know you mentioned running so like you know cross country and things like soccer right? Those high cardio output sports. You know those put kids at a lot of risk too if they're not adequately refueling and it can be really tough. You know a kid who is at soccer practice for 2 hours and they're exhausted.

51:58.20

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

52:02.17

Oona Hanson

They don't always have the hunger cues to refuel afterward. They might even come home, shower and go to bed. I'm too tired for dinner and it's that kind of accidental restriction that can lead kids to just as serious an eating disorder as a kid with , who's dieting to try to shrink themselves for you know.

52:06.42

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

52:21.90

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

52:21.93

Oona Hanson

So I think understanding for parents understanding the sort of neurobiology of eating disorder onset you know it's really important that it's It's not. It's not what the after

school specials are for the Gen X periods out there. .

52:36.28

Abbie Attwood

, yes, right, like those emaciated like very I'm very I'm a big big proponent of the fact that like that I mean so much. So I mean there's so many issues with di.

52:38.49

Oona Hanson

It's not what the after school spur specials said running.

52:53.38

Abbie Attwood

The diagnostic criteria for eating disorders like that. It's like to your point like just something that looks quite unquote healthy eating is praised when it's actually disordered and really that is just as serious as something that was clinically diagnosed as an eating disorder because so many things are missed missed.

53:10.00

Oona Hanson

, yeah.

53:11.72

Abbie Attwood

And eating disorder diagnoses and in the dsm five I mean to tick all these specific boxes. You know it's so reductive and it's oversimplified in a lot of ways.

53:21.63

Oona Hanson

Yeah, and in thinking about the way diet culture might throw parents off you know where we've been. It's ingrained in us to only eat when you're hungry like your stomach is growling hungry and we eat for so many reasons but especially for athletes you know.

53:33.41

Abbie Attwood

Right? right.

53:41.12

Oona Hanson

To actually fuel their bodies not only for their health but also for performance often means eating somewhat mechanically or by the clock to refuel. , yeah, and they might not have you know they might not have those physical stomach hunger cues and they still need to eat and.

53:49.29

Abbie Attwood

Definitely structure is important like yeah.

54:01.90

Oona Hanson

You know if parents think oh my kids aren't hungry. Well then they don't need to eat. You know that makes sense that kids can lose weight really quickly and they weren't dieting. They weren't you know having body image concerns. , but that kid can be in full blown Anorexia really quickly and parents are shocked. .

54:06.69

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

54:18.46

Abbie Attwood

Distance.

54:21.00

Oona Hanson

And again, that's where I am a fan of having kids get weighed not at home right? Unless you're doing you know, eating disorder treatment and like an fbt at home and you are like you know, you know, especially if it's virtual right? If you're going into an office then you can have it done there. But , you know, I think.

54:27.96

Abbie Attwood



Yeah, like Bt yeah, that's part of the process sometimes yes.

54:39.46

Oona Hanson

We can catch kids and that's where you know a kid in ah in a larger body who loses weight. That's just as concerning as a kid in a smaller body losing weight. Yeah yeah, yeah.

54:46.78

Abbie Attwood

Oh It's so important to say it again but like it's not.. Ah, because that gets pinned as oh they must be getting healthier when a kid in a small body lost weight and started presenting as Emaciated. We'd be concerned about an eating disorder and both. Are equally concerning. Yes, any sized body. Yeah.

55:04.57

Oona Hanson

Yes, yeah, like you said you could have anorexia in any size body and , you know and I think it's hard as a parent when you're seeing your kid every day you don't always notice gradual weight loss right? until there's something you know.

55:12.90

Abbie Attwood

, listen .

55:20.71

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, or if their clothes are still fitting after you know a year or 2 that's them that's assigned too right? like.

55:21.34

Oona Hanson

Profoundly different about how your child looks or how their clothes are fitting. , so I think.

55:33.52

Oona Hanson

I'm so glad you brought that up because you know when parents are doing back-to-school shopping or holiday shopping or birthday clothes shopping. Whatever it is and you realize you know your kids' pants are fitting the exact same way they fit two years ago really that really is it doesn't have to mean that there's disaster on the horizon but it's something worth.

55:37.30

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

55:47.97

Abbie Attwood

Right? right? nothing? Yeah like that's interesting right? and we all have different spurts and things happen at different times but it might be ah, just oh maybe I bring a little awareness to like maybe I wasn't like.

55:50.49

Oona Hanson

Looking into? yeah like why is like their growth has stalled. Yeah and I get it. Yeah.

56:05.58

Abbie Attwood

Maybe I wasn't looking more closely at like how are they eating or are they skipping meals sometimes or snacks or are they trying to be healthier or it's their fitness routine picked up are things like that. Yeah so question for you. , as we kind of wrap up a couple of .

56:13.57

Oona Hanson

Right? right.

56:24.29

Abbie Attwood

Couple of like red flags that you look for , things that tend to be the non-obvious red flags. Let's say because I think we all know like you said after school special red flags we're familiar with but let's talk quickly about Maybe we just kind of ring off a few like things.

56:43.48

Abbie Attwood

Quick examples of things that might get pinned as healthy or you know that we are healthy that could be red flags for disordered eating in teens.

56:51.80

Oona Hanson

Yeah I mean just that phrase wanting to eat healthier right? That's a huge red flag. That's a moment to stop and say what does that mean and and start a conversation cutting out any food group that isn't medically indicated right? So kids cut.

56:54.43

Abbie Attwood

Yes.

57:05.60

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, like not having an allergy or something. Yeah.

57:09.64

Oona Hanson

Exactly so cutting out you know, cutting out carbohydrates or cutting out even cutting out added sugar which seem like a very normal thing for someone to do and parents

may be doing this for a growing child. This could be really dangerous. So again, this.

57:21.96

Abbie Attwood

Listen.

57:26.29

Oona Hanson

The child might not already have disordered eating or an eating disorder and might just think that oh they heard about this is something good to do in Health class. The teacher said don't have more than X Grams of sugar a day and they say oh I Yeah I trust I Trust my science teacher and my health teacher. , but that restriction is what can kick off an eating disorder.

57:30.13

Abbie Attwood

, totally ah out with health class. Ah yeah.

57:43.17

Abbie Attwood

Totally.

57:45.48

Oona Hanson

I think for the teen years there you know there's a natural separation where teens want to individuate and of that autonomy. But if kids start wanting to eat their meals alone in their room or avoid coming to the table as with the family I think that's something to pay attention to.

57:51.13

Abbie Attwood

Moving. Are. Yeah I agree with teenage isolation And yeah, yeah.

58:04.10

Oona Hanson

I wouldn't chalk it up to just , teen independent right now once in a while they're cramming for a test and they're eating you know I'm not saying you need to panic. But I think it's worth a conversation. , and then.

58:14.73

Abbie Attwood

I Love that example. Yeah, that's so important.

58:20.40

Oona Hanson

Just general Teen moodiness right? We expect moods to fluctuate. But if a child seems more irritable. More anxious, more depressed. I think we want to. We don't want to rule out underfueling or disordered eating as a contributing factor.

58:26.10

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

58:37.90

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

58:39.32

Oona Hanson

Think parents just might not have it on their radar right? But you know underfueling restriction can present as depression anxiety obsessive compulsive disorder you know can contribute to Insomnia all those things. So.

58:43.57

Abbie Attwood

Ah, yeah.

58:51.18

Abbie Attwood

Yes, yes.

58:57.31

Oona Hanson

Think just having it on your radar like oh is my kid growing as expected are they eating enough and eating early in enough variety. So really getting support from a professional all to kind of evaluate that. and then you know in terms of body image. You know if a child is, you know, always wearing extremely baggy clothes.

59:00.40

Abbie Attwood

, yeah.

59:16.95

Oona Hanson

Clothing Obviously that you know it's ah it's a style right? , but just paying attention to that right? if your child seems really self-conscious about their body in any body size right? But if they do, if you're just picking up that vibe that the scenes this seems out of the range of just like a style choice. The scenes.

59:18.41

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, there's a style on. Ah.

59:24.57

Abbie Attwood



, yeah, yeah.

59:33.85

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

59:36.53

Oona Hanson

, kind of Rigid I Think that's something for parents to pay attention to as well.

59:38.48

Abbie Attwood

Oh those are great. Those are so great I think , another one that I'm thinking of as you mentioned those would be just around any kind of rigidity with exercise and and then what about social media like in terms of just using that as a way like just. Trying to gauge you know I mean because we know that unfortunately these algorithms can be really dangerous and push Pro-anorexia content and eating disorder content and anything you would look for there or recommend and in terms of I mean obviously a conversation is helpful. Always just like.. What are you looking at ? What's been interesting lately. But yeah, anything there that you'd look out for.

01:00:16.77

Oona Hanson

Right. Yeah, it's really hard I mean I'm just going to say I think which if we try to you know if we try to ban it or overcon control it. It doesn't tend to go very well. Yeah and kids can have multiple accounts right? that? .

01:00:32.51

Abbie Attwood

Drives it up more? Yeah .

01:00:38.19

Oona Hanson

You know where they're following harmful things but you don't realize they are and kids can block you from checking. You know there's that they're almost always going to outpace us in terms of the technology savvy that they have so I think you know waiting as long as possible to give them access to social media is important.

01:00:53.27

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah.

01:00:56.27

Oona Hanson

Is a big difference between you know I mean they're not for most of the apps. They're supposed to be 13 in order you know to and ah some of them might be different but most of them I think 13 is the minimum. Although Cameron one of them tried to make a younger version I can't remember if that actually happened. But

01:01:06.43

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

01:01:15.14

Oona Hanson

Waiting right? is 1 thing if the horse is already out of the barn then I think you know parrots can really put some boundaries. You know, not in the bedroom. Definitely not in their room overnight. and showing curiosity not like oh why are you looking at that crop again.

01:01:28.26

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah, not not insulting it. Yeah, but like oh yeah, yeah, totally.

01:01:33.52

Oona Hanson

Right? right? because it's easy to do right? like oh like rolling your eyes at like why is that even funny right? But instead saying like tell me like yeah I don't get this tell explain this to me right? This goes back to that like yeah.

01:01:44.90

Abbie Attwood

I Love that una like yeah oh I don't get this like what's this video about or like what's this

tell me more about this person. You're following that kind of thing. Love that.

01:01:51.89

Oona Hanson

Exactly and then just asking your kids you know how you do? How do you feel after you look at some of these accounts and if you're seeing your kids' behavior change if they're following a fitness influencer? You know that is definitely something to have a conversation about and probably bring in.

01:02:05.90

Abbie Attwood

Ah, yeah, move? Yeah yes, totally agree.

01:02:10.88

Oona Hanson

Whether it's a Dietician or an eating disorder therapist even if your child doesn't have an eating disorder. That's one thing I'll say is there's a lot of stigma around eating disorders which that's a whole nother conversation. But I think , you know, eating disorder professionals.

01:02:21.92

Abbie Attwood

We'll have you back? yeah.

01:02:28.58

Oona Hanson

Have the skills and tools to help navigate a lot of these things in ways that are going to be really beneficial for the long term. So , you know and most of those professionals do other things too. So , yeah, they.

01:02:33.81

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

01:02:44.40

Oona Hanson

You know might deal with body image anxiety and depression Other you know other things. So I think I think that could be helpful for families that feel like this is getting too complicated. , you know like I don't know how to handle this and yeah, yeah.

01:02:57.83

Abbie Attwood

It's not all on you. Yeah exactly Yeah gosh so much good stuff I feel like people are gonna have to go back and listen to this again, take notes on this episode. So . Final question for you. You mentioned at the beginning and I wrote a note to myself that I can't let you leave without asking this because you mentioned loving you know writing reading What are you reading right now or what's a book you read lately that you love that You just want to mention.

01:03:22.78

Oona Hanson

So I just finished Maggie Smith the poet not the american poet not the british actress but Maggie Smith's Memoir you could make this place beautiful.

01:03:34.49

Abbie Attwood

Ah, I almost bought it yesterday when I was in the bookstore. Okay was it good. Oh okay, I'm writing that down right now. Okay, thank you? Ah yay.

01:03:38.86

Oona Hanson

Exquisite. It's so good. Yeah.

01:03:45.27

Abbie Attwood

Oh I'm so happy I always need it. Ah I'm just an avid reader I just finished Demon Copperhead Barbara Kingolver's new book. , and that was wonderful. But oh yay okay so Maggie Smith it was. We can make this place beautiful. You could make this beautiful. Okay yay, everyone has a new book recommendation now.

01:03:57.90

Oona Hanson

You could make this place Beautiful. Yeah.

01:04:04.63

Abbie Attwood

Thank you una This has been so wonderful and just like such a treat for me to get to meet you in person even though it's over over video can you share with folks where they can find you and learn from you and follow all of your amazing work.

01:04:20.49

Oona Hanson

Yeah, thanks to my website my name is oonahansen.com when I doubt it's an o and then Instagram I'm OOna at Underscore Hansson and my substack is oonahansen dot substack dot com. Those are probably the best places to find me and I also have a private Facebook group and a public page as well called parenting without diet culture. So people want you know more of a community kind of vibe. than private. It's a small group right now. .

01:04:37.68

Abbie Attwood

Yay.

01:04:50.17

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

01:04:55.49

Oona Hanson

If you want that kind of community support parenting without diet culture could be a

good place to check out.

01:04:59.15

Abbie Attwood

Fantastic I will link to all that in the show notes and no one has to scribble anything down but it has just been a joy. So thank you for all your wisdom. I know folks are going to get so much out of this and I just really appreciate you. So thank you for being here.

01:05:16.59

Oona Hanson

, thanks for having me.