

Katie: Hey, we're Katie and Caitlin coming to you from our library living room. We are here. And not just as children's librarians, but as people who are parenting our own children.

Caitlin: Each month will bring a new conversation about parenting with helpful resources from our library and beyond. This is "Your Family, Your Library," and we're your librarians.

Katie: Before we jump into this month's topic, we want to remind our listeners that though we're pretty good at finding resources and we have experiences parenting our own children, we are not child development experts. Our choices don't need to be your choices. There is no judgment here. We're all doing our best with the health and well-being of our families in mind.

Caitlin: That's right. And today is an exciting day because this is our one-year anniversary episode.

Katie: Amazing.

Caitlin: Isn't that wild.

Katie: It is wild.

Caitlin: Did you think we would make it this far?

Katie: I did. But, it's interesting to, like, look back on the year and, like, how much we've done, like, how much content we have, like, how much we've grown. And it's really cool.

Caitlin: How we've grown stylistically, too. I feel like we've sort of, it's been such a nice transition from feeling nervous about coming to these sessions and not knowing how it was going to turn out to just sort of looking forward to them and knowing that whatever it is, whichever way that the conversation is directed, knowing that it's going to turn out okay in the end.

Katie: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

Caitlin: Is there anything that surprised you?

Katie: I think for me, just like how much more comfortable that I've been able to get with this whole set up, you know, I mean, it's it's like not intuitive for me and it's not a comfort zone for me. So, like, to be able to be sitting here now and like, be able to come here and just do it is like it feels like a really a big accomplishment for me.

Caitlin: I think for me, it's been the I think I thought at some point

we were going to run out of things to talk about. And now that we've been doing it for a while and talking with Paul and Amber every month, it's like, Oh no, I think we could probably do this forever and we would never run out of things that are relevant and, you know, topical and interesting to the people that are in our community and to ourselves.

Katie: Well, it's been really nice to hear from my family, the listeners, our friends, colleagues as that, like how people can like, sense the relationship that we have. Oh yeah. And like how that comes through and we have an ease with each other. And I think obviously that has played into making us feel the way it's felt for both of us. And also behind the scenes too, we have great support and so that's just like, it's always felt really good when people can hear the way that I feel about my friendship with you.

Caitlin: Vice versa.

Katie: And my working relationship with you.

Caitlin: Absolutely. I think piggybacking on that too, I've heard from my own family. My dad in particular called me and told me that he wished that this podcast had been around when we were babies and toddlers and kids. My gosh, that's a really nice thing to say.

Katie: That's really sweet.

Caitlin: Just talking about how relatable it was and how friendly. Well, in Double Plus exciting news, we talk about our behind the scenes support a lot. And today we thought it would be really fun to bring that behind the scenes support in front of the scenes. We have Amber and Paul with us today.

Amber: Oh, my gosh.

Paul: Hello, hello.

Caitlin: So tell us a little bit about yourselves, Amber and Paul.

Paul: Amber.

Amber: I guess I'll go first since name was first, but name is Amber. I do communications at the library, so a lot of behind the behind the scenes stuff. Regardless, you know, the emails, our social media our website kind of stuff, so you don't really see my face too often. So this is a fun new experience.

Paul: That's right.

Caitlin: I always get really excited, Amber, when you because you do a

lot of the like the Instagram reels and the video, the short video content that shows up on our social media. And every once in a while, because I watch all of them. Amber pops into these reels and I think it's a really exciting. I go, "There she is!" It's like the wizard behind the curtain. You know?

Amber: I try to limit myself like once every two months. Like, "okay, the people have seen enough. Back to the true stars."

Caitlin: Oh, I disagree. I love seeing it.

Katie: You've got a great energy that you bring to everything.

Amber: Aww you guys are the best.

Paul: Sometimes you just have to grab Amber and say, "Hey, we've got this Summer Reading video coming video coming up that needs a star."

Amber: Like today.

Paul: That's right. Offering very little time sometimes. Yeah. Yeah. But I am Paul and I also work in the communications department along with Amber and engineer the podcast and do videography here. It's a thrilling job and I really do enjoy this part of it a lot, too.

Katie: So you both are parents. People may or may not know that. So can you tell us a little about your journeys as parents or any little nuggets of wisdom that you can share with people or just your feelings about parenting?

Amber: I have the least amount of parenting experience at this table, so I do not feel comfortable giving any kind of advice.

Caitlin: I feel like once you're in it, you're in it.

Amber: I've got one, kiddo. She is four, but she's counting down the days. So she's five every day because five is when you're a grown-up according to Aria.

Caitlin: Oh, yeah.

Amber: She's going to drive when she's six as well. I was like 16. She's like no no, Six.

Caitlin: Six, huh?

Amber: Yeah. That's when she's a grown up. You can ask her today when you see her.

Katie: But she's so beautiful.

Amber: Oh, and she's in her, like, drama era right now. She likes to watch "Phantom of the Opera." Yeah. So that's her vibe. And so she was watching the 2004 movie of Phantom of the Opera and I was like okay, movies over time for a nap, she, like, starts crying. "I miss you, Phantom." How we get here? But yeah that's it's been it's been a blast. She's for like I said she's a handful I think she's going to end up being the only one which is fine for me. But she keeps us. She's funny. She keeps us going. And me and my husband Matt. And we're just thrilled with her.

Caitlin: You are not particularly dramatic or theatrical.

Amber: Yeah. Matt is. Not me. Growing up he was a drama kid.

Katie: Oh, I didn't know that.

Amber: Yeah. And he's like the extrovert. And so both he and Aria are extroverts. I'm the lone introvert, just like, Leave me alone. There was one thing. It was like two days ago I was having, like, a bad day, and I went to our bedroom just like, you know, sit for, like, 4 minutes.

Katie: And that's what you get, right?

Amber: Yeah, right. It's like Aria comes in, it's like, Mom! And then Matt comes out, he's like, "Hey, I tried to keep her out." So then you both come in here? So they just, like, laid on top of me.

Caitlin: How do we end up with these extroverts? I don't get it. Devin is having a big birthday this year. He's turning 50, and I in my head had concocted this, like, big birthday idea for us, which was he and I would travel just the two of us. And maybe we go to Europe, just the two of us. And I thought he would love this idea. And you know what? He wants a flippin' party. He wants a party.

Amber: Instead of going to Europe?

Caitlin: Yeah, he wants all the people at this party. All the people.

Amber: But is it at your house?

Caitlin: I don't know where it's going to be. I think it maybe because he wants all the people. Maybe it has to be not at our house.

Amber: That way you can hide. I do the classic go to the bathroom, you know, every half hour and just kind of.

Caitlin: I live in the bathroom now.

Amber: This is. Yeah, okay. It helps.

Katie: Yeah, that's really cool. That that I mean, I know that's not the direction you would go if you had a choice, but, you know understanding that about him and...

Caitlin: Well, I mean, he told me directly. I kept being like "we should probably get passports," and he's like, "Yeah..."

Amber: That's okay, when it's your birthday you know what's happening.

Caitlin: Exactly.

Paul: Oh, so what about me?

Caitlin: What about you, yeah.

Paul: Parenting journey. Yeah. I would say parenting is definitely a journey. And I'll have to agree with your dad. I do wish something like this podcast was around. Well, Penny is 10 now, so 10 years ago and more because having a chance to edit and engineer the podcast each month, I get to learn so much about you and Katie specifically. And I have to say, you guys really put yourselves out there for everybody as parents. And I think it's what really makes the show special, and it's better when we go through it with other people.

Caitlin: I think that's true. Even if you're an introvert.

Paul: So yeah, Penny is ten now, and I love being a dad to a daughter. I never really thought about it when Penny's mom and I were pregnant with Penny. We want to go really old school, you know, We did not want to know boy or girl, which I know. Did anybody else do that?

Caitlin: Heck no.

Amber: I found out immediately.

Paul: It's a lot of work.

Caitlin: Like the minute I could.

Paul: Yeah, it's a lot of work.

Caitlin: To not find out?

Paul: You have to remind them every single time.

Caitlin: Like, walk in the door. Don't tell me.

Paul: Because it is. They know it's in the paperwork and every nurse's

assistant or. Yeah.

Amber: And all the ultrasounds, they are checking for things and whatnot. Yeah.

Paul: Yeah. And so it was a lot of work, but we, we succeeded. And I can still remember when Penny came out and, you know, we were both in there and the nurses were taking her out to the back and they say, "turn and look at your child for the first time." And I go, "What is it?" It's like "A girl!" Oh, my God. And I never really thought about it, but was instantly, you know, fell in love.

Amber: Girl dad.

Paul: And it's been a blessing. And also, you know, we all know it has its challenges. Yeah. I'm doing the single dad thing hasn't been that easy, but I've had some pretty good family support and, you know, support of friends and colleagues. So it's not all bad. And the end of the day, I think it's challenged me to be a better parent, to be a stronger parent, and to think more directly about Penny's needs and how I can you know, best contribute to help, Right?

Katie: Well, and you bring a really unique perspective, you know, because you're a dad and you're a single dad. And like, it's something that I think a lot of people don't get access to, like hearing someone talk about enough. And I mean, even for people who have, you know, are partnered or whatever, I mean, I think it's important that we always like, think about what other people are going through. And I think that's just important.

Paul: Yeah, we don't always know why either, you know, things. I think, you know, part of my journey as a parent, the beginning of it was very, very difficult. Just for some context, we found out that we were pregnant with Penny and I think it was the very end of February, her mother and I and then, you know, you want to wait a little bit, right? What is it, like six weeks or something before you want to start telling people.

Caitlin: 12 weeks if you're old school.

Paul: Is that right? 12 weeks.

Amber: Just to be sure.

Paul: Yeah. I think we waited six, maybe weeks to tell my parents, but we we told my family, I think it was maybe March or April. And then in May, we found out that my dad was sick with pancreatic cancer. And then I was in I was in graduate school at the time, and it was in my last year of graduate school. So it was kind of like all these things going on. And then, you know, five months later he passed away. So

just two months before Penny was born. And so there was like a lot of it was a lot of difficult personal stuff going on. And it was it was overwhelming. And I don't think it helped with my relationship with Penny's mom. And so it wasn't long after that. It was like 2015. I think they must have been between two. It was like between two and three. I was unemployed for a lot of that. My job changed up some things internally, like sort of re-orged my position and it wasn't one that I was interested anymore. So I left and it took me about a year to really find viable work, you know, And so but I got to spend that time parenting Penny. So it was like that was probably one of the best parts of my parenting experience so far. It's also one of the more challenging ones, right?

Amber: We kind of had that too, because Aria was born in January 2020, and so my maternity leave was until April. We went outside for one month and one month only. But yeah, my maternity leave with up until April. So I was like in like Matt works at a school at his schools and one of the first cases of COVID and so he had two weeks off too. And so we had like a full two weeks off before the rest of the world also had, you know, lockdown, too. So we just had a lot of infant time. But it's fun, like, you know, like you never if you were to have a second child, it would not be the same, you know.

Caitlin: Did you ever feel like you were parents right away? Like as soon as your babies were born? Did you feel like, now I am a parent and this is my baby? Or did it take a little bit of time for you to sort of ease into that role?

Paul: I thought it was pretty immediate for me. Yeah, I don't know that I was ready per se I don't know if you're ever ready.

Amber: Yeah, I won't say I was ready, but I accepted role immediately right. Like as soon as she was put in my arms was like, This is next chapter.

Katie: Yeah, I think so. I was ready. I mean, you know, when I first learned that I was pregnant, it was like. Because it happened really fast, like, faster than I thought it would. And so I was like, Oh my gosh, okay.

Caitlin: You and I had a really similar experience with that. It's like, this is going to take a while. And yeah, it did not.

Amber: Same! You have all this time of like, you know, y you'll be fine and a year will be ready and you know, in nine months you'll be ready. Yeah.

Caitlin: And it's like more than a year. I was finishing up grad school when I got pregnant with Daisy, and we had, you know, we had decided that we wanted to try to have a kid, but we had watched our

friends go through the same thing. I was in my thirties. I was like, It's going to take a minute. So, you know, I can finish up grad school and we'll just sort of like, you know, it'll be great, you know? Yeah, there was not it's like, here you go.

Amber: You said you wanted this.

Caitlin: Enjoy your morning sickness.

Paul: Is there ever a perfect time?

Caitlin: I don't think so. No, I don't think so. I also it was interesting how much at least I gave birth at the same place at Evanston Hospital for both my kids. And the changes that happened between the kids' births, like in terms of like what the expectations were, what the, you know, the wisdom at the time is was like how you care for an infant was really different. So like when Desi was born, they had to have a C-section with him with both kids. And so they took him. And I didn't see him, you know, like they showed him to me. And then they took him off to do all the tests and whatnot. And I didn't see him for a long time. I mean, what even his time, I can I don't know how long it was. It felt like a very long time, but it was probably like 45 minutes to an hour, but enough time that like I went into a recovery room and then like, we went upstairs and then I was like, Where is the baby?

Katie: Wait, I did just do that, right?

Caitlin: I'm like, I'm pretty sure. But I do remember, you know, feeling sort of like what happened. And then they put him in my arms and I was like, okay, here we go. This, this feels great. This is right. And when Haven was born, immediately they gave her to me immediately. Same deal, same C-section. They didn't take her off like they gave her to me. And then it was all about kangaroo care and skin to skin, which I'm guessing that that you guys both had your kids within you know, approximately a couple of years of Haven.

Amber: Aria never left my side.

Caitlin: Also when Desi was born and say what you will this was the best they, they were like, do you want us to take him overnight and we'll put him in the nursery. And I was like, "What, that's a thing?" And they were like, "Yeah, yeah, we'll take him. And then, you know, we'll bring him back when he gets fussy or if he's hungry or whatever, it will bring him back every couple hours." I was like, "Is that a good idea?" They're like, "It's a great idea because you'll get some rest." And it was, it was so great. Like I, I felt like he was safe and I was safe and it was like I actually got some sleep. And so when I went in with Haven, I was like, "So you gonna take this kid or what?" And they're like, "How? Ma'am. Don't you want your baby?"

Paul: Same hospital?

Caitlin: Same hospital.

Katie: Yeah, That's really.

Caitlin: It was just like, I mean, it was a four year difference. And I think I mean, I think just the.

Paul: Different doctor too?

Caitlin: Same...same.

Amber: I think policy must have just changed.

Caitlin: Yeah. Or, you know, like we have different information and we give off accordingly.

Katie: I had Orson in Indianapolis and we did that. The overnight thing...

Caitlin: Wasn't it great?

Katie: You know, give me all the food now. But I remember like when we, we were there maybe like a couple of days after he was born, and then we took we take him home in the car, see, And I remember we walk in the front door and he put the carseat on the ground and then were like, okay, what do we do now? Yeah, You know. It was just like, I just remember that moment, like being so real because it's like you're so caught up in, like, the birth and being out of the hospital. And there's just like, all this hubbub and here's.

Caitlin: This is how this works. And here's this you know, this works. Here's how you put on the diaper.

Katie: Yeah and then we you put him in the car seat for the first time. Yeah, put him in the car, and then you got home and it's like...

Amber: That drive home was terrifying. It was so scary.

Caitlin: There's so little in that car seat to like. And my babies were big. Like, I had big babies eyes, and they still look so tiny in that little kind of seat. That this wild.

Paul: I remember having this feeling of like a need to prepare the house for like baby and mom to come home. So I'm like at home, like it's furiously putting together like art projects and things like that. Like, I don't know that I was on the right track for preparation, you know, I should have been thinking about, like, I

don't know, like getting the diaper basket ready or like. Cleaning the stove. Yeah, maybe food, cooking. I'm like, making, like, welcome home. You know. It's, it's Like the front door. And I think it was a better idea in my mind than reality, because then I'm like, hey, you know, And it's kind of like, "ugh, where's the food?"

Caitlin: Yeah, we were so lucky. My sister Emmy came up and she really like, prep the house for us. We So Desi was born three weeks early, so it was not expected at all. Like I was still working and I went to work and I was like, Man, my back hurts and I was like, I think maybe I need to go down to part time. That was the last thing I thought of. Like on my last day of work before, before I had Desi, I got home, I had a conversation on the phone with my grandpa. I fell asleep. The next morning, my water broke and I was like, "oh my God, it's too early." Like, it's way too early. It was fine, y'all. It was totally fine. But our house was wildly unprepared. It was messy. We did not have any kind of hospital bag packed like we were not ready. But my sister came up and, like, took care of business. Like she made a whole bunch of like, I mean, she's just like this. This is just like the person that she is. She's very thoughtful and very organized, and she's an excellent cook. So she had prepared all these meals for us. And they stayed for a long time because we, we were not anticipate having a C-section either. But then we were in the hospital for longer than we thought. So my family was at, my mom came up and Devin's family came up, and both of my sisters and my brother in law came up. And then they all left. They all left. And it was like that same feeling that you described where. It's like, "what do we live now?" Like what happens? And I just remember Desi, like holding him at home and it feeling so different. Like that feeling of holding him in our house is so different than holding them in the hospital. They get felt more dangerous. And then he started crying and he like, did not stop crying. And I was like, Oh, no. Like it was very scary.

Paul: Yeah. It was like zero minutes of sleep that first night.

Caitlin: Yes. Yeah, yeah.

Paul: Every little crack or sound. What's that?

Caitlin: Yeah. And Desi was a bad sleeper. It was not good.

Katie: Like going by the bed and being like. Are they breathing right, Right.

Caitlin: Did you get to where I was? Like, I can't. I can't tell if I feel anything or. I think I would have to wake him up.

Amber: Well, I was the fool who woke her up. Like on the clock. I'd be like, Oh, time to feed. Like per the internet, you have to feed every 2 hours. I would wake her up, okay, and then feed and then she'd be

cranky and I'm like, did it to myself. I played myself.

Paul: Self-inflicted parenting wounds. Those can be the one.

Katie: They said, You want to eat now!

Caitlin: Why are you still asleep?

Paul: You're not hungry?

Amber: Per the Internet...

Caitlin: Conventional wisdom says..

Paul: Google says...

Caitlin: Yep.

Katie: I think everyone knows now how Caitlin and I feel about this podcast, but it would be really cool to hear your perspective being on the other side of it, and you guys share it a little bit, but anything more to say about it?

Amber: It's so much fun. Like it's so fun to get with you guys and just kind of brainstorm and like, think about things and just I... like to coordinate. That's my thing. So I get really excited putting together outlines. It just like organizing things like it's going to be a great episode.

Katie: We love you for that.

Amber: I also love it's like when it's warm, right? It's like walks to listen to the podcast review, and that's so much fun because like, enough time has gone by enough for me that I don't remember everything we talked about. So it feels like new like, like a regular listener. And it's it reminds me of how much I love this project.

Paul: Yeah, I agree with that. I enjoy a lot working on the editing and I really do enjoy the subject matter that we bring. I think it's important and I think you guys bring a really positive one. Even though parenting is very up and down and everything isn't sunshiny, but you guys bring a really good perspective and the resources that you bring... Amazing.

Amber: You guys sound like friends, like, right?

Caitlin: We are friends!

Amber: Like there's a lot of there's a lot of podcasts like you should do this or like, you know, science has this, which is great

love science. But like, I also want to hear people who are going through the same things that I'm going through.

Caitlin: Oh, yeah.

Amber: Like not talk down to you, you know, like I want to hear people who have shared experiences and I can be like, Oh, yeah, without any judgment that, yeah, maybe I did that wrong...

Caitlin: You should wake your baby up every two hours.

Amber: - laughter -

Caitlin: You should reach your baby of every two hours.

Katie: We, we are the Internet or the Intranet.

Caitlin: All the nets. Well so for context, this was a seed that I had come to Amber and Paul to talk about doing some sort of a...like a...

Amber: YouTube short, right?

Caitlin: Yeah For like a reader's advisory, sort of like how can we promote children's books and in a fun way, you know, with video content, know, like is it is it a chat? Is it, you know, are they like mini commercials? Like what? What would be interesting because I feel like I can, my brain spins in a lot of different directions. So I just didn't know how to funnel that into something that would make sense. And I knew that. I knew that you two would know that you would have some really good ideas. And so that sort of became this idea of having a video chat. So I thought Katie would be awesome to work with and that we would talk about some topic and it would mostly be resources. Like we would mostly just be like hyping what the library had to offer. And our first episode was big topics and not big topics... big feelings. Yeah, and so we had compile all of these resources and the idea was that the video was going to be was ten minutes?

Amber: Max.

Caitlin: Had to be a maximum of 10 minutes. And we sat down in the chair and we immediately just started talking and it was so natural and it was so easy. And how long was it?

Katie: Like 50 minutes?

Paul: It was so, you know, it was a long time.

Caitlin: And we wrapped it up and it was funny because we were, you know, we were shooting in the teen room. And Paul, you had done some

real masterful, like set design to sort of make it look like it wasn't, you know, in the teen area of the library. And that we were is like, let's bring in some plants and some nice pillows, like we're trying to make it seem, you know, homey and like, we're we're just having a conversation. But I remember you coming to me and being like, "I don't know how I'm going to edit this down to 10 minutes." I thought was really sweet was after I feel like you both sat, I think it was This is in my memory, so you'll have to tell me if I'm wrong. But I feel like both of you contacted me and you kind of sat me down and it felt like I was having a conversation with mom and dad. And I felt like you're being so careful. Like, we just think that this might be a podcast. And I was like, Yeah!

Amber: I think we were scared. It's like, put more work. You know, out there because a podcast seems bigger, right, than like a quick, snappy video that Paul would just edit and slap on YouTube, like a podcast felt so much bigger to. So for me personally it felt like, Oh no, it's kind of like a bigger ask for these two ladies.

Caitlin: I think we felt I felt relieved.

Katie: Yeah, me too. Because I think cutting out that video component, it makes me feel safer.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: So even though it still felt kind of scary, like just in terms of getting our groove with it, I feel more comfortable for me, and I think for a lot of people that like the light on you. Yeah, in terms of like physically is always kind of hard.

Caitlin: I just felt bad for Paul because I felt like in terms of content, I know I can go and I get really excited about resources and I get really excited about, you know, compiling lists and and getting all the information out there so that everybody can have it. And then, you know, our conversation was flowing so naturally. And I really was like, Oh my God, are we going to do this to you every month? Like, are you going to have to? And this feels better because we can kind of go on and we can put it all out there. And then what you are cutting isn't, you know, like you're really separating like the wheat from the chaff instead of like, how do I how do I really pare this thing down to like absolutely nothing, you know.

Paul: Right. And yeah, the adding the video elements in there obviously is a whole 'nother level of things. And I think to your point, Katie, it does sort of add a you know, like thought to watching. I and there's other things to consider, you know, with video that it makes it, it makes it a little bit more complicated in that way. Everything's about getting into a groove. And the same thing with the podcast, I think, you know, we had to get into a groove and we we

have and it's like much smoother now, but yeah, to your story, we, Amber and I were, you know, feeling like we wanted to be careful and because also this was your idea and we know from our position, you know, we're a sort of a support team for the rest of the library services, you know, all of the communications that we do or things that we do or to support the other departments.

Caitlin: I would say elevate.

Katie: Oh. I like that better.

Paul: Yeah, I like that. I could use that. So we're here to elevate the song.

Katie: I like that because that's very true.

Caitlin: Elevate and celebrate.

Paul: And so we don't want to you know, the ideas aren't always ours. And so we wanted to be careful with how we approached this idea, because I think we knew from the beginning it could be a really good one and it has been. So I'm really glad we made that step.

Caitlin: Me too. I'm really glad it happened this way.

Katie: Me too.

Caitlin: Was there. And so kind of like the conversation that we just had about. Was there a moment that you knew that you were parents? Was there an episode or a moment in making this podcast that you knew that it was going to work? Or do you feel like you knew from the jump that it was going to be ago?

Amber: I think the first episode, like just hearing your, your banter, your engagement, like both of you meshed so well that I thought it was a good like match. And so I was confident from the start that this was just gonna be great.

Paul: Yeah, I agree. I think it was a few episodes in when I really realized that we were sort of on to something really good.

Caitlin: I'll tell you, for me, and I don't know if you know that you do this, but I think it was in the first. I mean, you do it every episode and I love it. I wait for the Amber Hayes head nod and sometimes you laugh quietly. And anytime that I see you, it's like I think it was in our first episode and I can't even remember what it was that that we said. But I saw you. You were kind of sitting in your corner and you did this like this big head nod and you had this smile on your face. And then you did a real quiet laugh. And I was like, "yes!"

Amber: I know I love these episodes. I feel like you guys are so witty and like, have so much good observations that I'm often making sure I don't appear on the soundtrack with my laughter.

Caitlin: Better than my throat gurgle.

Amber: Along those lines. Do you guys have any favorite episodes from our one year?

Paul: I, I personally really liked the Creating Boundaries episode. I know that was one of the more recent ones.

Caitlin: That one was, I think, the most outside of my like, emotional comfort zone, and I was really nervous about it coming out. But maybe that's one of the ones that I think when I listened to it, I was like, Oh no, this is actually like a really, really good episode, even if it is like pushing my own personal comfort a little bit. I'm really proud of our Climate Change episode. I felt like, and that one is one that has fewer listens, I feel like, than some of the other ones. But I really I felt I don't know, I felt like that was a really important one and I'm really glad that we did it. I'm really proud of it.

Amber: You guys do a great job with that one. I think climate change is big and scary and people like to avoid big things, right?

Caitlin: I agree.

Amber: And like, I think that episode, we're all like, man, this is like. This is a lot. But I deliver that second half. The second segment, like it was a lot of uplifting conversation, which I felt really good about, like how can the everyday Joe solve climate change? And that I thought was really helpful. I think my favorite episode is also Creating Boundaries, which is interesting since that was the hardest one to film for you guys. But I agree that you're super vulnerable. Like I appreciate how you bring your full selves to this, but I also loved How to Be a Friend. All the kids and adults because like as adults, right, we all know it's hard, but it's also fun to put yourself in like a kid's shoe of like, how do you go about and make friends? Because Aria, she's an extrovert, but she gets nervous about rejection now at her big age of four and plus five.

Caitlin: She's almost five though.

Paul: Counting the days.

Amber: January 2024 was her birthday. She had her dad go with her to go ask these kids, can they play because she didn't want them to say no. And I was like, girlfriend you just got to do it. You know, I can't be with you all the time. So I think of I find myself thinking

about how you talk about like, you know, Desi's, like friendship bench or whatever it was called. Buddy Bench. Yeah. And like, I think of these things, and it's been helpful for me.

Katie: Absolutely.

Caitlin: I think the part that sticks out the most for me that I think about all the time is that crowdad story in your wedding. I think about it all the time.

Amber: Indiana nightmares.

Katie: That's one of many Indiana nightmares.

Caitlin: I'm sure there's a lot.

Katie: All year we read tons of the latest books for kids to find the best books to read during the summer. You'll find great books for students in kindergarten to high school. Find the recommended titles. In the show notes.

Amber: All right. So to get to know everyone just a bit better, maybe we will learn something about ourselves as well. We're going to do some quick lightning round questions. Caitlin, can you start us off?

Caitlin: I would love to. Katie, How do you prepare for an episode?

Katie: When I prepare for an episode, I kind of go to resources first. I think about experiences that I have had to personally share to go with that. I don't know. It's like any more. I think at the beginning I was preparing a lot, but now I tend to prepare less to just kind of let it flow. Mm hmm. So how about you?

Caitlin: Kind of the same. I think in the beginning it was mostly me and you doing the prep on our own. But we would come up with the topic and then we would sort of make our own outline and fill in resources as we went. And I felt like we would meet, you know, for at least an hour the week before and sort of go through like we would have like a pre-conversation conversation. And as we were talking, those usually inspired me to find resources. And now we don't really do that. I think now we meet more as a team and I like the way that that flows better. And I think Amber puts together a really nice outline and so it takes a lot of pressure off of us and a lot of pressure off of like the like, how is this how is this going to like, I have a tendency to want to control the flow and that's a nice way to break it up for me. I think so. Now I rely more on what we determine as a team and then just sort of let it ride. There are definitely episodes that I spend time. Like if I'm less comfortable with, I will do some like pre homework, you know, like climate change. I did a lot of pre work at the beginning, like how am I even going to like because it is all just

like clumped up in my head. So like, how do I unravel this? And then there were some other ones. I think the friendship one, I did a little bit more research on how, you know, like what child development practices are and like how, how grown-ups can, you know, make friends outside of work and stuff like that. But I think it just it kind of depends on the topic. Yeah. And how about you?

Amber: I really rely on those like monthly or quarterly meetings, however often we meet to get like most of my work done because I like to put those outlines together, whatever makes job easier. I will happily do so. But how about you, Paul?

Paul: I think, you know, most of my preparation comes in the back of everything. I do really value our meetings together. I think that's a great time for us to catch up on where we are and also talk about upcoming topics, but really, I think, you know, my preparation starts where you guys finish off with getting all the files organized and working to bring the best out of the files and then of course, editing. So I sort of wait until this day when we record and then launch and the preparation from there.

Caitlin: So do you find when when we're talking now that we've been together for a year and Paul and I have worked a lot together, I think you and I started almost at the same time here at the library, starting a little bit after you. But I feel like almost one of the first things I did here at the library was get assigned that early readers project, and I did not know what I was doing. And I just remember being in, in a big room with you and you were so relaxed and I was so not really intense. But I feel like once we did that project together, we we were like, I don't know, you're like my person, You know, It's like we did so many projects together that I feel super comfortable working with you. But my question is, do you now that the four of us are together, you know, every month and it's been a full year now, do you find yourself, as we're talking, making like mental markers during the conversation, like, okay, I'm going to I'm going to cut that or like, I'm going to highlight that in some way or like, this is where this is going to shift you?

Paul: Definitely. Yeah. And I know Amber is also taking notes over there and so we often collaborate.

Amber: In my corner.

Paul: Because I think the most challenging and I might have said this before, but the most challenging part for me is determining what to cut because all of the things that you guys talk about are good. And if we're trying to keep for time, which is one of our objectives, some things have to be cut. So I do take notes in my mind, but listening to you guys tell your stories about your families is really uplifting to me because you guys really don't really hold back. I mean, you're

honest and truthful and you have a way of delivering your perspective that I get a lot from every time I sit here with you guys and we record this.

Caitlin: One of the things that I really appreciate about you, Paul, is that I, I trust you in a way that I don't always trust myself to make us sound good.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: And I know that, like, I used to always say that to you. Like, thanks for making us sound good or thanks for making us look good, depending on what kind of project you and I were working on. And I mean it like I really mean that. I feel like you get us and you make us sound perfect.

Paul: Thank you.

Katie: Yeah, I agree.

Katie: Caitlin, what is your drink of choice?

Caitlin: I thought about this since Wednesday, and I. What I came down with is what it came down on is hot tea with oat milk. I drink so much to drink. Roughly 75-

Katie: I Would have said that about you.

Caitlin: Like a million and a thousand million. Thousand billion cups of tea a day.

Katie: Yeah. You probably know mine.

Caitlin: All the beverages well.

Katie: Yeah. That is true.

Caitlin: Coffee, water.

Amber: I see multiple cups a day.

Katie: Yeah. Sometimes I'm balancing a third one on top.

Caitlin: Yes. I saw a little beverage tray at the thrift store and I kind of wanted to get it for you, but I didn't do it.

Katie: I'm. Yeah, So mine's coffee.

Caitlin: How did you take your coffee?

Katie: I'm just with, like, a little oat milk or a little half and half, right? Yeah, I don't. I don't do a whole shebang with it.

Amber: I think I would go for a chai latte.

Caitlin: I love chai latte.

Amber: I also don't like coffee.

Paul: I think I drink too much coffee.

Katie: No such thing.

Paul: You know, my new drink of choice has been this mushroom coffee. Have you guys heard of this?

Caitlin: I have heard of that.

Katie: I have. But I. I do not like mushrooms.

Paul: Yeah.

Caitlin: Does it taste like mushrooms?

Paul: It does it a little bit like dirt, but...

Amber: You're not selling it.

Paul: No,

Katie: Is this just like mud water.

Paul: No, it's. I don't want to bust everybody out. But, but I will say the first couple I'm like, I kinda wasted my money here, but then it started to grow on me, and I actually kind of like it. Yeah, it does still taste like mushrooms, though. You know what? I'll bring some in for the group. I hope that our next meeting.

Caitlin: It feels better to me than that coffee that's made from, like, the big cat poop. You know what I'm talking about.

Amber: No.

Paul: You know, I've heard of this.

Caitlin: It's like it's like top of the line. So it's like. Is it Civet cats?

Amber: This is why I don't I drink coffee.

Katie: Top of the line for what?

Caitlin: Like the creme de la creme of coffee. Of fanciness, obviously fanciness. So no, like it was like the big cats eat the coffee beans and then they poop them out. And then you make the coffee from it.

Caitlin: It's real.

Paul: Yes. I think it's like naturally strips the coating off of the to reveal the bean because you know, it's like a big fruit.

Amber: Katie will never have coffee again.

Caitlin: I'm telling you, Google it, it's real. It's not just me making a poop coffee because I don't like coffee.

Katie: It's actually really funny to me because I was putting my coffee beans in the meat grinder yesterday. A few of them fell out into my cat food dish.

Caitlin: So you make your own.

Amber: You were on to something.

Katie: I'm like "I think I got it all," and now I'm like, "I think I just started an experiment I didn't know existed."

Caitlin: You can start selling it! Small Cat Coffee.

Katie: Hank and Diana.

Caitlin: This is...it's a deep-roast domestic shorthair.

Caitlin: Celebrate Dia Children's Day/Book Day with us in the Kids Room. Come dressed as your favorite book character and try out fun games and activities. Learn more in the show notes.

Paul: So what kept you all going this month? Katie?

Katie: My cat. Diana loves snuggling with me and it's like on her terms, of course, like all cats. She's such a diva, but I love her and yeah, it's like there's just nothing like it

Amber: Kitty snuggles.

Katie: When like an animal that loves you and, like, loves you the most.

Caitlin: You should do a series called Kitty and Kate, and you should just do pictures of you and Diana together. And I want to see them

all.

Katie: Yeah, I've sent you a few.

Caitlin: I would like more. You could send me five a day.

Katie: And she's like this, like fluffy ball of gray fur. These, like, crazy green eyes. I mean, she's so soft. It's just.

Amber: Send me photos now too.

Katie: Ten out of ten. Great perfection.

Caitlin: And you need a theme song. Kitty and Katie best friends forever.

Katie: Like she'll trap me in the morning where I can't get out of bed, you know, She like, does her like cat voodoo on me. And then it's like lulls me back to sleep. It's like the siren call, you know?

Caitlin: I guess for me, it has been my kids. They have been really funny this month. Desi in particular, I think he's working on his sense of humor and it is evolving and it's a little prurient right now, but I appreciate it. And I don't know, it's I like the laughs that that he and I have been sharing.

Katie: That's cute.

Amber: As folks here know I've been delving into knitting this year. And so I started my first sweater back in February and I have ripped it apart probably at least six times. And yesterday I finally made it to a point like, "this feels good."

Katie: What was that thing you were wearing?

Amber: Oh my little....

Katie: What do you call that. Like a shawl?

Amber: Oh, Poncho.

Caitlin: I would call it a poncho.

Katie: It was amazing.

Caitlin: Like, different than a poncho, though.

Katie The fact that you made that is just. It's so cool.

Caitlin: It really is.

Amber You guys are the best.

Katie: So I'm sure sweaters like.

Caitlin: I would like pictures of that too, please.

Amber: I will show you every state it has been ripped. My husband's like, You have to stop. It's not perfect.

Caitlin: Do you call it frogging when you go in for crochet?

Amber: Yeah, but I didn't. I didn't want to use the...

Katie: Is it like a solid color design?

Amber: It's like a variant. It's like a hand-died situation. So it's got, like some it's like a kind of like, I don't know, there's like a kind of a rosy color with some blues and some purples.

Caitlin: Is it going to be for you?

Amber: For me. Yes, yes, yes, yes. Aria helped me pick out the colors. Awesome. And she got to make it into a little ball at the yarn store so. I'm trying to get her into it. She's like, no.

Katie: I would be impressed if you could get a four year old knitting.

Amber: I hear some like, kids crochet and see.

Caitlin: Do there's some kid on the internet that was like, he's like nine and he's making these, like, beautiful.

Amber: Jonah? Jonah Hands? That's what inspired me to crochet. If a nine year old boy can do it, surely I can.

Caitlin: And then it turns out there's something about those little nine year old hands. I don't know.

Amber: It's different.

Caitlin: He is amazing.

Katie: Oh, that's really cool.

Caitlin: How about you, sir?

Paul: I would say it's. It's been spending time with Penny. It's been really good for me. You know, she's a character and she's working on her skateboarding, so that's been fun. Yeah, I just really enjoy my

time with her, so it keeps me going.

Katie: That's cool.

Caitlin: That's great.

Katie: Yeah. This has been really special to have both of you here with us today. I'm I really hope everyone and I'm sure they can get a sense of, like, why we love working together so much and, you know, the report that Caitlin and I has a special that the report that all four of us have. You know, obviously brings out each episode and can do without you.

Amber: Can't believe it's been a year.

Caitlin: We've been really looking forward to this episode, friends.

Paul: Good team. Thanks for having us.

Amber: On to the next.

Caitlin: On to the next.

Katie: That's it for us this month. Remember to keep in touch with us. We'd love to hear from you. Email us at podcast at Skokie Library Info.

Caitlin: And don't forget, if you've enjoyed this episode with previous episodes rate and reviews on your favorite podcast.

Katie: This has been Katie and Caitlin with "Your Family, Your Library." Produced by Amber Hayes, Sound Engineered by Paul Knutson.

Caitlin: Bye friends.