

Biz Ellis	Host	00:00:00	Hi. I'm Biz.
Theresa Thorn	Host	00:00:01	And I'm Theresa.
Biz	Host	00:00:03	Due to the pandemic, we bring you <i>One Bad Mother</i> straight from our homes—including such interruptions as: children! Animal noises! And more! So let's all get a little closer while we have to be so far apart. And remember—we are doing a <u>good job</u> .
Music	Music	00:00:21	"Summoning the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
Biz	Host	00:00:24	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> , I only have one child, so... easy-peasy! Plus, it's still MaxFunDrive, and the awesome librarian Gwen Glazer returns!
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:00:36	Biz and Gwen: Woooo!
Biz	Host	00:00:41	<i>[Biz extends her "woo" into a lengthy vibrato.]</i> It's been a while since I've wooed with anyone, Gwen. Thank you. You were wonderful. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen Glazer	Host	00:00:46	Oh, thank <u>you</u> . That felt amazing. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:00:49	Guys, Gwen Glazer—who has appeared as a guest host on Episode 195 as well as a guest on Episode 163 and 275—is back. She's the Head of Teen Services at her local library in suburban New York City and a member of the American Library Association's Notable Books Committee. Which means she reads a <u>lot</u> . And... I'm so excited to have Gwen here, but before I even let her speak... <i>[Laughs.]</i> I wanna start just by saying... guess what, guys? COVID is still happening! I <u>can't</u> —Gwen? <i>[Laughs.]</i> I <u>can't</u> even—I—I am not surprised. I am already making doom predictions of, like, "It ain't gonna be August. It ain't gonna be October. It ain't gonna be December." And I just— <i>[Laughs.]</i> I just wanted to say as the second wave—or continuation of the first wave—really sinks in... and school—daycare—and all the things we were really <u>hoping</u> were going to be there in the fall start to appear not to be there as we were hoping... <u>that</u> reality setting in is a very <u>gigantic</u> pill to swallow. And I am choking a little on it. So I just want to tell you... you are doing... a <u>very</u> good job. Because this is fucking nuts! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:02:30	Just... it's nuts!
Biz	Host	00:02:31	It's nuts. Like... everything is still happening. All the things that we have to deal with... in a perfect world. Those needs are still there. Right? And we don't live in a perfect world! And yet we're trying to navigate that—which was already hard—with the pandemic on top of it. And I am not gonna soapbox out right now. I'm just gonna say... you're doing a great job. You really are. I wish I could hug all of you. With that said—Gwen, welcome back to the show! I wanna ask you how you are doing! I—like, especially as a librarian during all this!
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:03:16	Gwen: Thank you!
Biz	Host	00:03:19	Biz: 'Cause I miss my library so much!
Gwen	Host	00:03:21	I miss my library so much. Are you—is your library not open for curbside or anything yet?

Biz Host 00:03:26 They do—no. They’ve got the curbside, but I have been really struggling finding time to navigate... the, like, book system? Like, to figure—‘cause you’re like—and it—and I’m sure it’s actually easy? But because my brain is so fried I’m struggling?

Gwen Host 00:03:43 Yeah. And not to get super dark right off the bat—hi! Aren’t you glad I’m back? Let’s get really dark! *[Laughs.]*

Biz Host 00:03:49 Let’s get dark! *[Laughs.]*

Gwen Host 00:03:50 *[Gwen laughs.]*
 But there are so many things that before this were not working well? *[Laughs.]* That now are just so completely broken? And so system—y’know, and it’s—it’s especially coming up with going back to school. And it’s like, schools were already underfunded. Teachers were already overworked and underpaid and undervalued. And now it’s just, like, throwing everything into this huge relief. And the same is true for libraries in some senses. Like, every—y’know—we—I’m back in the library in person a couple days a week now, and we don’t have patrons in the building yet, but it’s pretty—it’s pretty nerve-wracking. So when people are doing curbside pickup, know that we’re trying to navigate a totally new system, too, with a lot of new rules. And we’re trying very hard to keep you safe. And I—somebody recently told me the analogy that curbside pickup at a library is just like it is at a restaurant, except that people bring back all the foods and plates when they’re done.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:04:46 So—*[Laughs.]*
 I know! I know! And I will admit—that’s part of why we have been hesitant to do it, because... y’know, I know that the library’s doing everything they can to get the books—y’know—ready to—to give us. But to return them... y’know, it’s—that’s a risk! And I don’t know the science on that. I don’t know how risky that is.

Gwen Host 00:05:09 Yeah. Yeah. There’s so many unknowns. I mean, at my library we’re quarantining everything for 72 hours. So it’s just sitting in a place where no-one touches it for a long time. And in our old program room, like, the big room where everyone used to gather that now is full of books waiting to be *[through laughter]* picked up again. And I do—y’know, I think everybody’s doing the best they can. Which is, like, true about all of this stuff. But it does require a lot more patience on a lot of people’s parts. And sometimes you see that patience and sometimes you do not. And so... that can also be really tough.

Biz Host 00:05:40 That is... really tough. With all that said—how are ya? I mean, you’re—yeah. You’re in—you’re outside of New York City.

Gwen Host 00:05:49 Yeah. And I now have a really short commute where I can walk to work, which is unbelievable and wonderful.

Biz Host 00:05:55 Okay. I’m sorry. This is so cute. You... are a librarian. You can walk to work. In the fall, there are probably leaves. I was saying to Gwen that she officially is now—uh, should now have her own cozy mystery. Which usually features a amateur detective who solves horrible murders. And now that—I now see you walking to the library—

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen	Host	00:06:31	—stumbling upon—y’know—the piano teacher’s dead body.
Biz	Host	00:06:32	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Right? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:06:34	From the town! Go ahead. Go ahead. Could it be something else that dies? Could it be, like, a plant or something not sentient that is, like, lying in the middle of the road? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:06:42	Gwen Glazer—plant detective!
Gwen	Host	00:06:44	Plant—right! Everybody would read that. That’s a sure thing. You need to write that right away.
Biz	Host	00:06:49	Done!
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
			You wanna know who murdered all the plants? It was me! I killed them <u>all</u> !
Gwen	Host	00:06:55	Oh no! The Black Thumb Killer!
Biz	Host	00:06:57	I—oh, ho, ho, ho, ho! Damn! We’ve done it! We just started our first cozy. Okay.
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:07:03	Okay. We are fine. And lucky. Y’know, New York City got hit really hard, really early. We know plenty of people who have had it. We know people who were really super sick. I know a couple people who have died. It was terrible. So there’s really nothing to be said in the beginning except that we’re super lucky that we can mostly stay at home. That we have the resources to be able to care for our one single child. <i>[Laughs.]</i> And... y’know, that we have enough space to not totally lose it. Which I think is a really huge problem in the city, especially at this point as this drags on and on. That people are just inside and they can’t figure out what to do with themselves. We’re okay. <i>[Laughs.]</i> We’re okay.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:07:44	Yeah. No. No, I get it. That’s... it’s... it’s still hard. Y’know? And we’re gonna get into that for our topic. But before we do, I just want to take a moment to say—very quickly—it is still the MaxFunDrive. Again, guys, this is the laid-back MaxFunDrive because— <i>[Laughs.]</i> IT’s a shitshow out there! And it’s not a good time at all to ask for support. I did it. 100%. That said, we still do need your support. There are very small levels you could start out at, like \$5 a month, which gets you a shit-ton of bonus back episodes that go back, like, eight years. I mean, it’s not just our show but all the shows. But again, if this isn’t your year to support—I get it! You can really help us out if you just share the news about your favorite shows and about MaxFunDrive on social media. That is like a really big way to help.
			Also, I just wanted to say—for a lot of new listeners, I know that <i>One Bad Mother</i> tends to bring in listeners that are not familiar with the rest of the MaxFun network because we are here to talk about how hard it is to be a parent. <i>[Laughs.]</i> So I just want to quickly lay out why MaxFunDrive—and then we’re gonna move into something way more exciting to talk about! One— <i>One Bad Mother</i> is an independent podcast that is part of a family of podcasts in the

MaxFun network. So that's MaxFun and us. Two—*One Bad Mother* is funded by listener support. That's you guys! We're able to pay for the Hotline—hello! Hotline! Our website, our recording equipment, and most importantly—we can pay for Hannah Smith, our producer. Who deserves all the money right now because this has been weird. By anybody's producing standards. Listener support also pays our salary. So this is... you pay us to do the show. And I greatly appreciate that.

"But Biz, what about ads?" Okay. Do you listen to other podcasts? There are a shit-ton of ads and I—*[Laughs.]* I don't! And then I'll like turn one on, listen, and there'll be, like, three ads at the beginning. And then, like, ten minutes in there's like three more ads! And then there's like still more ads! And I was like, "Wow! That's a lotta ads." We only do the two—max—because it's not our main source of support. Also, we can pick and choose the ads. Do we? Yes. We do! We pick and choose them! There are a lot of ads that we don't play or don't choose to do because either we honestly don't feel like we could tell you you should use it—because we really like you guys. And we've established a relationship with you and I don't wanna, like, tell you you should bleach your teeth. 'K? And it—pretty much almost all of the ads we say no to usually tie in to... our physical bodies? And I just am having a hard enough time as a parent? To ever try and—I don't wanna be focused on that! So we get to pick. And we do. We take it very seriously.

And... finally, if you join it supports the MaxFun office staff. It helps keep the lights on at the office where we normally would go to record this show? It pays for the development of more shows at the network. And it pays for the gifts for the Drive and, uh, the transcripts! Which is a really big deal. We finally have been able to start doing transcripts. We have a new website. You can find all of that at MaximumFun.org. So that probably wasn't short at all and I apologize. But... go to MaximumFun.org/join to not only find out how you can support us. You can also find out about the really cool gifts, which I am gonna talk about later. I'm just gonna mention really quickly—Zoom Hangout. With me. That would be really fun. With some wine or coffee. Uh, and—

Gwen Host 00:12:10
Biz Host 00:12:11

I would pay for that.
I know, right?! That'd be so much fun! And then also... the MaxFun dinner party, which is coming up. There are a lot of events going on. So anyway. That said.

Gwen Host 00:12:22
Biz Host 00:12:25

Can I tell a cheesy story before you keep going?
Okay!

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:12:28

You can.
A cheesy donor story? So when—

[Biz laughs.]

Actually, before—okay, wait. Before that— *[Laughs.]* I think that an amazing bonus episode would be you making fun of all of the ads that you reject.

[Biz laughs.]

That would be amazing. You could burn all those bridges. [Through laughter] They'll never ask you to advertise on your show again after you have mocked them all.

[Biz laughs.]

Um, okay. But also— [Laughs.] I—when I first started listening to this show, my son had just been born. We moved when he was ten weeks old, and I didn't know a soul up here where we moved in New York. From DC. And I was super lonely and I discovered *One Bad Mother* because someone—I don't even remember. Somebody had recommended it to me. And I was listening to all of the episodes. I was listening to, like, eight episodes a day. Literally. Eight episodes a day.

[Biz laughs.]

As I was, like, unpacking and trying to take care of this baby and I didn't know what I was doing. Whatever. And I got to the last one. Like, I got to present day. And I freaked out. I dropped my phone on the floor.

[Biz laughs.]

And I was like, "I—what?! It's over?! [Through laughter] I don't get to spend more time with them except for one hour a week?!" But—because I had been listening so much—I had become a member and so I got to go back and hear a couple bonus episodes? That like padded that shock for me? And it was so—it was really, really important. So the bonus episodes are amazing and very funny and great and also they might save you.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz	Host	00:13:56	Gwen, thank you!
Gwen	Host	00:14:01	It's true. It's all true. [Laughs.]
Biz	Host	00:14:03	I appreciate—thank you. No, it means a lot. We—it... we really value our listeners. We also couldn't do this show if no one was listening. I mean, we could, but that'd be weird. That would just be [singing] lonelyyyy! [Regular voice] Speaking of lonely... I think that ties in nicely to what we're gonna talk about today [through laughter] with Gwen. That's a horrible segue!
Gwen	Host	00:14:30	[Through laughter] Oh, god. [Laughs.]
Biz	Host	00:14:31	What we're gonna talk about with Gwen! And that is having only <u>one</u> child. [Laughs.]
Music	Music	00:14:37	[Gwen laughs.]
Theresa	Host	00:14:40	Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue. Please—take a moment to remember: If you're friends of the hosts of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , you should <u>assume</u> that when we talk about other moms, we're talking about <u>you</u> .
Biz	Host	00:14:46	If you are <u>married</u> to the host of <i>One Bad Mother</i> , we <u>definitely are</u> talking about you.
Theresa	Host	00:14:51	Nothing we say constitutes <u>professional</u> parenting advice.

Biz	Host	00:14:54	Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.
Theresa	Host	00:14:57	Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.
			<i>[Banjo music fades out.]</i>
			<i>[Biz and Gwen repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss the weekly topic.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:15:05	Before we get in to life with only one child—spoiler alert—I would like to ask you <i>[through laughter]</i> who lives in your house?
Gwen	Host	00:15:14	So I live in my house.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			I am an only child. My husband lives in my house. He is an only child. My only child lives in my house. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			He is six. And my only dog lives in my house. <i>[Laughs.]</i> And he is a giant, 70-pound monster named Moose.
Biz	Host	00:15:35	He's, like, the equivalent of <u>three</u> people. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:15:39	Basically. He—he is as loud as three people.
Biz	Host	00:15:42	Yeah. I bet.
Gwen	Host	00:15:43	Yes.
Biz	Host	00:15:45	Alright. That is a <u>house</u> of only's!
Gwen	Host	00:15:49	It is. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:15:50	Sounds like an album cover. "The House of the Only's." Anyway. I wanna just jump right in to offensive questions that clearly—not only <u>you</u> must be asked as a parent, but you might've gotten asked when people found out you were an only child yourself. And that is, "When are you going to have another one?" and "Won't the only one be a lonely one?"
Gwen	Host	00:16:15	Mm-hm. Yes.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:16:18	Someone actually sang that song to me once. Gwen: That "Only the Lonely"? Y'know, that like—
Gwen	Host	00:16:21	Biz: "Lonely Boy"? Oh, "Only the Lonely." <i>[Singing]</i> "Only the lonely." And I was like, "Oh, wow! That was something. Thank you." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			Yeah. So—yeah! It's a—it's a very unique situation. Because not only when they are saying things like, "Won't he be selfish? Won't he be lonely?" Y'know, that's—
Biz	Host	00:16:39	Oh, "Won't he be selfish."
Gwen	Host	00:16:41	"Won't he be selfish." Right? Because he'll never learn how to share because <i>[through laughter]</i> he doesn't have a sibling. All of the bad stuff that they're saying that's going to be a result of this terrible only childhood that I'm giving him is <u>also</u> true of <u>me</u> . So it's like—yeah. It's like offensive to me as an adult— <i>[Laughs.]</i>

[Biz laughs.]

And also offensive to his hypothetical [through laughter] future self. It's really like a—like a double-header.

Biz Host 00:17:02

Oh, wow. It is a double-header! I didn't even think about the fact...

[Gwen laughs.]

That you as an only child are clearly selfish. That's why you chose to only have the one! 'Cause you are selfish! Wow. What was their—there are a lot of—my dad—my dad is an only child. And I know that there's like a lot of like... I remember—even, like, with like friends. Like, in ele—y'know, elementary school? People are just looking for things to be weird about. And poke at. But like... I remember there was always discussion about, like, only kids were like—kinda weird and crazy?

[Gwen laughs.]

Right? But in retrospect, I'm like, "Would they be reading a lot? Maybe they would read a lot! Maybe they would learn to play by themselves and they wouldn't need me as much!"

[Gwen laughs.]

"Maybe—maybe—maybe!" I think also there's the misunderstanding—or the—the poor judgment call that it's so easy. 'Cause you only have one kid.

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:18:13

Is it so easy? Are you like just super relaxed all the time? It's so—oh my gosh. I'm so relaxed. I can't even [through laughter] tell you how I'm so relaxed I'm barely conscious. [Laughs.] I can't—yeah. It—y'know—the—[sighs.] The problem with some of these stereotypes about only children? Is that some of them are a little bit true. Like, I will say—it—especially right now in quarantine, I do think—and I'm only speaking for me, not all of the parents of all only children anywhere 'cause it definitely is not that way—but for me—for me and for my husband, it is a little bit easier because there's only one of him. And because he's old enough to sometimes take a little bit of care of himself. And so—yes. Some of those stereotypes are a little bit true. However! I've had people say things like, "You're not a real parent until you've had the second one"? And I'm like—

Biz Host 00:19:00

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

Gwen Host 00:19:01

Yeah! What the fuck does that mean? And I'm like, "What are you talking about?" And—

Biz Host 00:19:07

Who—how does that come up? How does that come up?

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen, let's just roleplay here. I'm—I'm a patron. At your library.

[Gwen laughs.]

I'm going to get a bunch of books titled *How To Be An Asshole*. And... I'm coming up to check them out, and I'm like—yeah, I've got, like, 20 kids with me.

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen	Host	00:19:28	And—"How are you?"
Biz	Host	00:19:30	"Oh, I'm great! How are you?"
Gwen	Host	00:19:35	"I'm—I'm pretty tired. I've got 200 kids. Do <u>you</u> have kids?"
Biz	Host	00:19:37	"Yeah! I just have the one." [With judgmental disapproval] "Oh. You're not a <u>real</u> parent."
[Gwen laughs.]			
Gwen	Host	00:19:42	"Well, it looks like you're having so much fun with your 200 that I should sign up for that!" [Laughs.]
[Biz laughs.]			
Biz	Host	00:19:47	Well, as I say that, I just am <u>crying</u> . I'm just crying as I say that.
Gwen	Host	00:19:53	[Through laughter] Oh my goodness.
Biz	Host	00:19:54	What a shitty thing! C'mon. What are some other shitty—what did you <u>say</u> ?!
Gwen	Host	00:19:59	Oh, <u>so</u> people say, [through laughter] "Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry about your infertility." I got that one— [Laughs.] And I—like, they assume that you <u>wanted</u> a second one and couldn't <u>have</u> a second one, which, like, very not true. Not true for me. Not true for lots of people who have only children. And also, oh my god, why would I ever discuss <u>anything</u> like that with a stranger? Like, it's <u>so</u> ... yeah. It's often—I mean, I think it's often the same way it is when like someone puts their hand on your belly when you're pregnant. Where it's—it's well-meaning to a point. They <u>think</u> it's well-meaning, at least. And so they're trying to say, like—especially people who are, y'know, my son's teachers when he was little. Who would say, like, "Oh, you should give him a brother or sister! He's so wonderful and kind!"
Biz	Host	00:20:46	"Give him."
Gwen	Host	00:20:47	Like it's—
Biz	Host	00:20:48	"Give it to him."
Gwen	Host	00:20:49	Like it's a present.
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:20:50	Gwen: That you should give him. [Laughs.]
Biz: [Through laughter] Like it's a present.			
Biz	Host	00:20:52	Give him—give—it's like a puppy! Give it to him!
Gwen	Host	00:20:54	Yes. Yes. Oh, another good offensive one is, "You're not a real family [through laughter] until you have more children." That one—that one really—that one actually hurt.
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:21:04	Gwen: Like, most of these are funny to me—
Biz: Yeah! No! These are hurtful!			
Gwen	Host	00:21:06	—and aren't hurtful? But that one hurt. Because I was like, "You're saying that we're not a real family?" Like, would you say that to someone who doesn't have children? Maybe you would! That like, they're not a real family.
Biz	Host	00:21:16	Oh, yeah. No. They would.
Crosstalk	Crosstalk	00:21:17	Gwen: That's horrifying!

Biz: They clearly would. You're not a family—

Biz Host 00:21:19 —if you don't have kids! Duh!
Gwen Host 00:21:21 Oh my gosh. It's—yeah.
Biz Host 00:21:22 I—it—I gotta say. I—I appreciate and I am with you on... like... 80-90% of the time, it is coming from just... that place where we open our mouth and words come out—

[Gwen laughs.]

—that we think make sense and we don't think carry any weight. Like, I get it. That we are all—I have done it many times and then I stumble around whatever public area I am in, thinking, “Oooh. Would it be weird if I went back and found that person and just said—”

[Gwen laughs.]

“—that's a weird thing that I just said to you?” But like... I think... the... other 10 or 20%, it's just so... unnecessary. For them to have said it. And it is hurtful! It doesn't matter if you have a good sense of humor. It is hurtful. And it's making me think of that song [singing] “Three... is the magic number.” [Regular voice] You ever heard that one? [Singing] “A mom and a dad had a little babyyyy...” [Laughs.] “And that makes three-hee in the family!” [Regular voice] Anyway. It was some sort of *Schoolhouse Rock* thing. I'll try and find it. But it—that song was all about just... three in the family!

Gwen Host 00:22:37 Yeah. Yeah.

Biz Host 00:22:38 I know.

Gwen Host 00:22:39 Yeah. And it's hard 'cause you see—shoutout to the *One Bad Only* subgroup, by the way. Which is great. But like, you see some of the stuff that people say. And especially when people are considering having another child? I was never on the fence. Our family always felt—

[Biz laughs.]

—complete to me with one. It never—it really wasn't a question for us, even? But it—it is a question, I think, for a lot of people. And the timing and if they want a second at all. And the stuff that people say when you're having those conversations with them sounds so incredibly hurtful, too. Yeah. And like the assumption— [Laughs.] I'll get one last assumption off my chest. Which is that when people assume that he—that there will be no-one to take care of you when you're older—because that's what siblings do, I guess, is they always definitely take care of—I guess you're increasing your odds. [Through laughter] But—

[Biz laughs.]

But also that it's depriving your child of, like, a best friend? Is another one. That like people will say, like, “Oh, but when you're—y'know, when you guys are old and dead, who will be [through laughter] his best friend?” And you're like, “Oh my gosh! Like, I—it's great that you live in a world where all siblings always get along. I don't live in that world. There's a lot of adult siblings I know who are not each others' best friends and that's fine.” But like, don't make the assumption that they're gonna be best friends and that makes

me worried about your kids, honestly. *[Through laughter]* That like, you're—

Biz Host 00:24:00 Yeah! Let those kids out! They need to get out of the house!

Gwen Host 00:24:03 *[Through laughter]* Right!

Biz Host 00:24:04 Go make some other friends! Also—most siblings aren't best friends because... they are bitter and resentful over who has to take care of their parents. *[Laughs.]*

Gwen Host 00:24:13 Oh, yeah. *[Laughs.]* Yeah!

Biz Host 00:24:15 If we wanna walk into another stereotype.

Gwen Host 00:24:17 Oh my gosh. Yeah.

Biz Host 00:24:19 Yeah. I think that's really hard. I actually wanna kind of talk about... this weird time with COVID and sheltering in place a little bit, with only one child. I... know... that... y'know, I'm a big believer that everybody gets to have guilt. *[Laughs.]*

[Gwen laughs.]

Wheee!

Gwen Host 00:24:41 Oh, good. Good. 'Cause I have some.

Biz Host 00:24:42 Yeah. And I know that, like, for me, I am struggling with... y'know, the kid—it's never been about the kids not having each other 'cause I have two. But yeah. Obviously. They're right there. They really love spending all this time together.

Gwen Host 00:25:00 *[Laughs.]* Do they? All the time, they love it?

Biz Host 00:25:01 God. No. Noooo! It's like, ten years of, like, siblings cramped into one month of just like growth and bickering. But that said, I actually—my guilt really comes from the missing of... peers! Right? Like, of just interacting! And like, I just... where... where are you guys with that? I mean—yeah! I'm assuming the same place. Right? Like, you guys gotta all get sick of each other. Y'know?

Gwen Host 00:25:31 Yeah. For sure. I mean, there's a lot more—I think—sort of handing off between me and my husband? Where each of us will take him to do something or he'll sort of get to spend time with one and then get to spend time with the other. Because I— *[Laughs.]* As Deb Perelman said, "You can have a kid or a job but you can't have both"? So—yeah. You—it's pretty hard. Both of us work and neither of us has enough time to work and whatever. But there is quite a bit of handing off. But yeah. I mean, I am worried that he's lonely. For sure. I know he misses his peers. He misses school desperately. And I'm so— *[Laughs.]* I feel like we're wasting these years when he actually loves school and wants to go?

[Biz laughs.]

He just finished kindergarten? *[Laughs.]* And I'm like—you're—a couple years from now, I don't think you're gonna be this enthusiastic about school? And now I just can't believe that we're wasting this time in the house when you're like begging to *[through laughter]* go to school.

[Biz laughs.]

Crosstalk Crosstalk 00:26:19 **Biz:** It does suck. It does! That's—

Biz Host 00:26:22 **Gwen:** It really sucks. It really sucks. And it's trying to find that balance. I mean, 'cause I—I think it's—y'know, one or more kids you—the situation is still the

same. You're trying to figure out how to balance work, time, and... yourself. And we all know where the "yourself" part falls in this equation. Y'know. I—Ellis is six. I—so I'm right there with you. There—it's not a lot of times that they want to do their own thing. There's also still lots of big feelings. And next year is first grade. Right? Are you first or going into kinder?

Gwen Host 00:27:01
Biz Host 00:27:03

Yeah. Going into first. Yep.
Going into first! And it's still a really hard, like... if it winds up being online—*[laughs ominously]*—which it is—

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:27:16
Biz Host 00:27:17

It's just—mm. Let's just alllll accept it.
I know. It's like, deep breath.
Deep breath. That's such a—such a weird age to have to help navigate online learning. Yeah! I—I don't know. You're a librarian. You have any— *[Laughs.]* Got any tips with that? Like that somehow makes you better equipped.

Gwen Host 00:27:33

Nope. I got nothing.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:27:42
Gwen Host 00:27:43

I don't have a *[through laughter]* single tip. I have no clue. I mean, I... the online learning thing? I really think the teachers are doing the best they could?

Yeah, I do, too.

But they just—and I mean—his—his kindergarten teacher—who was an amazing teacher—had a really good piece of advice. Where she was like, "If you are asking them to sit still for longer than 15 minutes? Forget it." She's like, "Just don't." And I really took that to heart in both his online learning and in other things *[through laughter]* that we try to do. I never ask him to do anything for longer than *[through laughter]* 15 minutes now. *[Laughs.]* I don't know if that counts as good parenting advice.

Biz Host 00:28:04

No, it's smart! I think it's great parenting advice.

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:28:09

Well, good. But yeah. It's—I mean, I do think that a lot of things about this quarantine time—not just kid-related?—it's like... it's building on things that we were worried about before. Right? Like, I was already worried that he—y'know—wasn't getting enough interaction with his peers. I was already worried that he was either playing independently too well or not well enough—

[Biz laughs.]

—depending on what the day is. Like— *[Laughs.]* Like, the before—in The Before Times, those things seemed very manageable. And now it's just like, well, there's really nothing you can do about it. So... I don't know. Yeah. We've been having—we have been having masked outdoor playdates with a small group of friends, which has really helped. Like, I definitely see a difference from, y'know, two months ago when we weren't even considering anything like that versus now.

Biz Host 00:29:01

Yeah. That's totally derailing, but I agree. Like, I will say the shift—the mental shift—that I see with the kids when they get—and with

me! And with Stefan! When we get to have, y'know, socially-distanced interaction with like one other person. Like, y'know, both kids have been able to do that individually? And it's... it's huge. It's huge. And I... *[groans]* I don't know what's okay to do!

Gwen Host 00:29:35

I know. And I don't know if it's huger because he's an only child or not! Like, I'm really not sure. I don't really think so, to be honest. *[Laughs.]* But.

Biz Host 00:29:43

I have a feeling that most things aren't because he's an only child. Let me actually—I wanna actually wrap up on this question, which is: you and your husband are both only's. So, y'know, talk about what you loved about that! Talk about—I mean, y'know, there's—yeah!

Gwen Host 00:30:05

Yeah! Thank you! I'm really glad for the opportunity to answer that, actually, 'cause nobody ever asks you that. They always just feel sorry for you and assume that you were lonely?

[Biz laughs.]

[Through laughter] So thank you for asking that! I was super not lonely as a child. I never remember wanting a sibling. I never *[through laughter]* remember feeling lonely. I really don't. And maybe that's part of why I wanted an only was because I had a great childhood and I was sort of like, "Yeah. Let's do that." Financially, also? There's like a really big upside to it, obviously. *[Laughs.]* And I definitely—when I was cognizant of that—was able to be, like, "Oh, wow. College. This is easier because I don't have a sibling." *[Laughs.]* But I... I did spend probably more time alone than some of my peers, although not all of them. And I did read a lot as a kid, which obviously has led to massive problems as an adult. *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

And a career path and stuff. But yeah. My parents, when I was growing up, always said that... y'know, when it would come up somehow, they never seemed upset about it or regretful or anything. And they would—my mom would always kinda joke but kind of not. Where she was like, "Well, the one that we had was perfect so why did we need another one?" And— *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:31:16

No, no. I always, like, fuck around and be like, "Number," y'know, "Number two in order, but number one in your heart!"

Gwen Host 00:31:23

Nice.

Biz Host 00:31:24

Y'know, like that— *[Laughs.]*

Gwen Host 00:31:26

Do they ever play off of each other? Like you were trying to improve on Katy Belle so you got an Ellis. No?

Biz Host 00:31:31

Yeah. And I got an Ellis. No. I just do that thing where I tell them each secretly, *[conspiratorial tone]* "You're my favorite." *[Laughs.]*

Gwen Host 00:31:38

Oh, nice. Nice. That won't mess 'em up, I'm sure. It's totally fine. *[Laughs.]*

Biz Host 00:31:40

No! "You're—one day, you're gonna have to kill your sibling."

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:31:45

And don't forget to take care of me!

Biz	Host	00:31:47	Yeah! “Don’t forget to—for the honor! Of taking care of me!” Anyway. Go ahead.
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:32:07	Did you ever have that, like, as a young... child or as a teen, did you ever have the, like, “Why didn’t you—why don’t I have a brother or sister?” Like your parents don’t have any memory of that? I—y’know, I should ask. I should ask. But I don’t ever remember feeling that way. Like, I had my very best friend growing up. Our moms were also best friends. Which was like totally living the dream. And she had an older brother who I loved very much and was very fond of, but I never remember feeling like, “Why don’t I get one of those?” Yeah. I don’t. And my dad <u>did</u> shock me recently where he said—he just made some sort of comment about, like, “Oh, well, we would’ve had another one if it had happened, but it didn’t.” And I was like— <i>[gasps.]</i> “What?!” I was like, “How could you <u>say</u> that?! I was <i>[through laughter]</i> the only one you wanted! You told me that my whole childhood!”
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:32:43	I... love it. And I’m glad no matter what! Because... I like you!
Gwen	Host	00:32:50	Gwen: Aw, thank you!
Biz	Host	00:32:51	Biz: And I don’t think— —having a sibling would’ve made any difference with that. And I really, actually, appreciate you coming on and sharing some of this. Y’know, we don’t really get a chance to get too much—it’s really hard <i>[through laughter]</i> to be like, “Uh, hi. I would like you to come on as a guest and talk about this very specific... personal... thing.”
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:33:14	But as my cohost— Woo!
Biz	Host	00:33:15	—for the day... I can ask you strange and personal questions. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:33:20	I love it. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I love it. Yes. I—my parting thought is—just don’t ask people questions that assume that... anything. That assume anything. They might have really wanted to only have one child. They might not have. Either way, it’s none of your <i>[through laughter]</i> business! So let’s talk about something else! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:33:38	It’s not gonna lead to an interesting conversation. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:33:41	No! Probably not. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:33:43	We should just talk about politics instead.
Gwen	Host	00:33:46	Oh, definitely.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Music	Music	00:33:49	That will lead great places for sure. “Ones and Zeroes” by “Awesome.” Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:34:08	Wooo! It’s like the old days. My cohost is going to stay with me the whooole show!

Gwen	Host	00:34:15	Aww. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:34:16	Yayyyy! This is when I tell you about gifts that you can get by becoming a new or upgrading MaxFun member and supporting the show. If you do five bucks a month, y'know, price of a cup o' coffee, I guess. Do we go out for coffee anymore? Anyway. You get all the bonus episodes. This is a lot of listening. At the \$10 level, you get to pick one of 40 enamel pins. And—as I have posted on the Instagram—our pin this year is a sack of bananas. Because nothing says “2020” like a sack fucking bananas. You also get the bonus episodes. Okay. \$20! You get—a pin! You get bonus episodes! And you get the MaxFun game pack, which includes a MaxFun-themed playing cards and dice! Who-woo! Oo-da-lolly! And there is fun stuff that you get as you go along, but I do wanna just say that if you become a new or upgrading member at \$35 a month, not only do you get <u>all</u> the stuff I've talked about; you also get a cool camping mug. But I will set up a... Zoom hangout and <u>all</u> the \$35 or more members—we'll just—I don't know! We'll figure out what we wanna do. Maybe we'll have a cocktail. Maybe we'll play Pictionary. I don't know! Maybe we'll just sit around... and stare at each other.
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
			I'm fine with that, too! So head over to MaximumFun.org/join to find out more about awesome gifts.
Theresa	Host	00:36:15	Now... what's really awesome is that it's genius fail time. Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.
Biz	Host	00:36:34	Genius me, Gwen!
Clip	Clip	00:36:37	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>
			Biz: Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u> . Oh my <u>God</u> , that's <u>fucking genius!</u>
			<i>[Biz and Gwen repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective genius moments of the week.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:36:53	It was pretty slim pickings on <i>[through laughter]</i> the geniuses for me, to tell you the truth.
Biz	Host	00:36:56	I know.
Gwen	Host	00:36:57	But okay. Many kids, I think, are not super excited about wearing masks right now. My six-year-old initially was somewhat hesitant. Not super thrilled about it. Especially because we've been doing only these, like, outdoor playdates. It's really hot. It's really humid. Like, he doesn't love the cloth on his face. So I was like, “Oh, I'm gonna buy all these cute masks and they're gonna be—I'm gonna buy him a <i>Harry Potter</i> mask; I'm gonna get him all this stuff.” Our neighbor made some that were so cute that have all these great patterns on it. And he—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>

Pink and purple are his favorite colors, so there's one that's all, like, pink and purple and I was like, "He's gonna love these." He still wasn't super into it until— *[Laughs.]*

[Biz laughs.]

—I employed the old trick, and this is why this is not *[through laughter]* such a great genius because everyone's probably done this, but whatever. Where I have three of them. And I am like, "Which of these do you want?" *[Laughs.]* To make him feel as though he has some control over this thing that he actually has no control over? And it kinda works! It really works.

Biz Host 00:37:56
Gwen Host 00:37:59

It does work! Good job! That's a—
He wears the mask. Doesn't complain. He doesn't take it off. He's really good about keeping it on. I'm really proud of him! Because he got to choose that he wants the sloth mask. Or the rainbow mask or whatever. It was not forced upon him.

Biz Host 00:38:12
Gwen Host 00:38:15
Biz Host 00:38:16
Gwen Host 00:38:18
Biz Host 00:38:19

Oh my god! Good job!
You think so? *[Laughs.]*
I think that—I actually do.
[Through laughter] Okay. Okay.
Like, I was like—I don't know what I was waiting for? But when you said, y'know, "I gave him a... small choice"? I thought, "Huh. I should try that." *[Laughs.]*

[Gwen laughs.]

Like, I hadn't thought of that. I hadn't thought of giving my children choices.

Gwen Host 00:38:34
Biz Host 00:38:35
Gwen Host 00:38:37
Biz Host 00:38:38

Oh good! Phew. Phew.
So you are doing a great job.
Thank you.
Now, speaking of choices. Katy Belle is *[singing]* getting ollderrrr!
[Regular voice] And the way our house works is—it's technically really a two-bedroom. But there is a weird room between the kitchen and the back bedroom that is her bedroom. So that she doesn't have to share a room with her brother anymore. It is very small. *[Laughs.]* It's a very small room. And—to get to Ellis's room—we gotta walk through her room all the time. I don't know if you know this about ten...-year-olds going on eleven? Uh, they like their privacy. And do not want us walking through their room.

Gwen Host 00:39:23
Biz Host 00:39:24

Mm.
Willy-nilly. So—uh—eh—we wound up... coming up with a plan to get, like, this IKEA loft bed and to like let her pick a paint and to, like, y'know. Mature up the room. And it gives her, like, y'know, really three living spaces now. There's like a desk under the loft and that's one space. The bed itself is another space. And then—
[Laughs.] The, like, two feet left of space in the room is like a reading nook.

Gwen Host 00:39:58
Biz Host 00:39:59

Ooh!
And everything in there is hers. We took everything that we were, like, forcing her to live with for storage out. Don't ask where that shit is now. And it—y'know, it—it worked. It's—we still have to, like, walk through her room? But it's a little less invasive? And we did it in two days. We did the whole—

Gwen Host 00:40:22

Oh my gosh!

Biz	Host	00:40:23	—thing. We just said, “We’re doing it!” And we got the paint and we, like, moved all the furniture out and we did it and then we assembled that thing— <i>[Gwen laughs.]</i> —all day. And we did it—and Stefan and I are still married! So <u>that</u> is like a double genius. So—
Gwen	Host	00:40:39	Oh my gosh. You’re doing an amazing job!
Biz	Host	00:40:41	Thank you! <i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Caller	Caller	00:40:45	This weekend, I did an amazing job. <i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i> Hi, Biz and Theresa! I’m calling with a genius moment. For once. I have a almost-three-year-old—two-year-old—and she has found my <i>[through laughter]</i> variety box of tampons. And has been playing for the ten minutes of taking them all out ‘cause they’re all different colors and sizes— <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> <i>[Through laughter]</i> And sorting them by color and size. So, um, not only is she busy for, like, the last ten minutes with—relatively safe toy, ‘cause they’re just tampons— <i>[Biz laughs.]</i> But she’s also learning <i>[through laughter]</i> sizes and colors! <i>[Laughs.]</i> So—who needs toys when you have tampons? Thanks. I love the show. You’re doing a great job. And today? So am I.
Biz	Host	00:41:35	Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!
Gwen	Host	00:41:37	Oh my gosh.
Biz	Host	00:41:38	Plug it up! Plug it up! <i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:41:48	I... this is... <u>so</u> good. With the twist of “teaching colors and numbers”! Yeah! You’re basically running a Montessori school right now. <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:41:52	Seriously. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Congratulations! We’ll all be signing up for your online <i>[through laughter]</i> course.
Gwen	Host	00:41:59	Yes. 100%.
Biz	Host	00:42:00	Next week. Oh my god, you are doing a very good job.
Gwen	Host	00:42:03	Great job.
Biz	Host	00:42:04	Failures.
Clip	Clip	00:42:05	<i>[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]</i> Theresa: <i>[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]</i> Fail. Fail. Fail. <u>FAIL!</u>

[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]

Biz: *[Calmly]* You suck!

[Biz and Gwen repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss their respective failures of the week.]

Biz Host 00:42:12
Gwen Host 00:42:14

Fail me, Gwen.

Okay. As I mentioned, we're doing a lot of outdoor time. *[Laughs.]* We are going into the forest a lot. Like, almost every day. I know. I know. And let me tell you—getting up early and packing up all our stuff and whatever—is this my idea of a good time? No, it is not. Like, I am not an outdoorsy person. This is really not my thing. I like reading books, if I haven't mentioned. And, like, staying home.

[Biz laughs.]

And things. And—yeah. However— *[Laughs.]* Everybody is happier, as we have already established. So. Today—just this morning—we go to this new place with two other families. All the kids are hiking. Of course it's time for a snack. So we all go to sit down and there's this really perfect, sort of, like, rock wall that's covered—like, a low wall that's covered with, like, a thick metal mesh. And I hear one of the other moms—I'm kind of far away—tell her kids not to sit there. And I was like, "Oh." I don't even know what my brain did in that moment. I was just like, "Okay. Well her kids aren't gonna sit there, so we'll sit there."

[Biz laughs.]

And so— *[Laughs.]* We walk over to it. I guess she has a much-younger child? So I was like, "Maybe it wasn't safe for her"? Whatever. I don't know what I was thinking. So we go over and I'm like, "Okay. Here. Why don't you sit here?" And Lev hesitates, and he stops for a minute. And I was like, "No, no! Go ahead! Go ahead! Sit down." And the moment that I basically like shove him toward this rock wall, a gigantic snake moves—

[Biz screams.]

—underneath the metal mesh. I shrieked. I pulled away. But that's my fail. The other mom had already figured out that this was not a safe place to sit and that stuff probably lives in those rocks and that maybe we shouldn't be bothering it? And I basically shove my six-year-old on top of a snake.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:44:07
Gwen Host 00:44:11

So. That's it. Major fail. *[Laughs.]*
You are living the *Wild Kratts* dream. Man.
Oh, yes.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:44:14

[Singing] "Wild, wild, wild Kratts!" Yes.
[Singing] "Wild Kratts! Gonna go wild!"

[Gwen laughs.]

“Cheetah speed and lizard glides!” *[Laughs.]* Anyway. I know... all of it. *[Inaudible.]* Anyway. Uh... I love that fucking show. So much. Well, you are doing a horrible job.

Gwen Host 00:44:26
Biz Host 00:44:28

Yeah. Yes.

Your child will, like, Indiana Jones-style be afraid of snakes for forever.

Gwen Host 00:44:32
Biz Host 00:44:34

Mm-hm. Agreed. Agreed.

So, horrible. Alright. It’s not like the worst thing I’ve ever done. But it’s one of those things where I’m like, “Eh, I used to be able to do things.” So we make pizza. Stefan—who is the baker in the house—makes dough. We keep it in the freezer. It’s the, like, quintessential shelter in place, I feel like, food? Because you can freeze all those ingredients and then you just pop it all out and make a pizza. So I’m making the pizza. And I make two. And it’s delicious. I put the second pizza in and then I’m like, “It’s time for dinnerrr!” And then we all sit down and I always remember that there’s a second pizza in the oven. And I did not... remember until—much, much later than I should have. And yeah. Like, it... it was pretty bad. And I just was like—

[Gwen laughs sympathetically.]

I opened it and I just, like, felt bad. Like, y’know, you open it and you’re like, “God. Damn. I... I’ve ruined dinner.” Y’know? Where you just like wanna throw your head up and be like, *[screaming]* “I ruined it!” And then you like wanna storm out. Well Stefan’s like, “I’ll eat that.” And I’m like, “Well, yeah. Okay.” But that’s not like—I—I won’t. *[Laughs.]* ‘Cause it is burnt. But, y’know, it’s just like—I was like, I—makes—I feel like... this sheltering—staying home, all that—just makes those minor things, like, really feel... sadder.

Gwen Host 00:46:06

Mm-hm.

[Biz laughs.]

Biz Host 00:46:07
Gwen Host 00:46:08
Biz Host 00:46:11
Crosstalk Crosstalk 00:46:12

Where I’m just like, “Aw.”

And it also makes wasting food feel worse, too.

Oh, I hate it.

Gwen: Yes. You’re doing a horrible job.

Biz: I hate it.

Gwen Host 00:46:14
Biz Host 00:46:16

That’s an appalling—appalling thing to do.

I know. Appalling.

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 00:46:17
Biz Host 00:46:18

Appalling.

That’s okay. No one fucking eats food in this house.

[Gwen laughs.]

Y’know, one was never gonna eat it. The other one was already full. And by the—by the next day, the—sitting in the refrigerator had really mellowed out that burnt pizza.

[Gwen laughs.]

			And I ate it.
Gwen	Host	00:46:33	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Oh no! That's a—that's your real fail! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
Biz	Host	00:46:35	Double fail. I know. It's a real fail.
Gwen	Host	00:46:37	Aw.
Caller	Caller	00:46:38	<i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i>
			So... yesterday—while I was taking a shower—I was catching up on my OBM backlogs. So I've been stuck in the newborn forest for a long time and I realized I was a genius for that week and I got so excited and I bragged to my husband about how awesome I am at being a mom. And then today I fucking threw my keys in the trashcan. The trash bag was at the curb, ready to be picked up by the garbage truck in the morning. I had looked everywhere in my house for my keys all fucking day. And realized—I must've thrown them out. And so I dug through the trashcan after an hour searching my house, and there they were. In the trash bag. So some weeks you're a genius and then other weeks <i>[through laughter]</i> you're a failure. And I'm going back to work tomorrow. So that's, like, a great working mom fail. That my keyring that has my car key and my two key fobs for work almost landed in the dump. That would be a very expensive mistake. You're all doing a great job! I'm not.
Biz	Host	00:47:44	You're welcome! Now you're on the show again... and this time you get to go tell your husband what a failure you are. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I hate that, like, you were like, <i>[celebratory]</i> "I'm a genius! Woo hoo hoo whew!" Like, the—and now... I get to be, like, "Well, you suck. Uh, let's just take you down a peg. You... suck." And that is... that was, like, by the skin of your teeth that you managed to get those keys out of the trash.
Gwen	Host	00:48:12	Yeah.
Biz	Host	00:48:13	That could've wound up, like, forever gone. <u>Forever</u> gone. And then you would've had a whole new series of annoying things you had to deal with. On top of everything else! You're doing a horrible job! I'm not even sure why you're allowed to have keys.
			<i>[Gwen laughs.]</i>
Gwen	Host	00:48:30	Your rights—your key rights are revoked.
Biz	Host	00:48:33	<i>[Through laughter]</i> That's right! You're out!
Music	Music	00:48:35	"Mom Song" by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.
			<i>You are the greatest mom I've ever known. I love you, I love you. When I have a problem, I call you on the phone. I love you, I love you.</i>
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
Music	Music	00:48:59	Laid-back acoustic guitar plays in background.
Biz	Promo	00:49:00	<i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by StoryWorth. With StoryWorth, you can connect with loved ones everywhere, even if you can't see them in person, and learn family history you never knew about. StoryWorth is an online service that helps your loved ones share stories through thought-provoking questions about their memories and personal thoughts. Every week, StoryWorth emails your family member different story prompts. Questions that maybe you've never even thought to ask! Like, "What were some of your

life's greatest surprises?" "What's your favorite movie?" Maybe I should ask them what their life was like outside of being a parent to me. *[Laughs.]* After one year, StoryWorth will compile every answered question and photo you chose to include into a beautiful keepsake book that's shipped for free. I got this for both of my folks, and it—it—the answers are just amazing. It is... amazing. Connect with family and discover untold stories with StoryWorth. Get started right away without the need for shipping by going to StoryWorth.com/badmother. You'll get \$10 off your first purchase. That's StoryWorth.com/badmother for \$10 off.

[Music ends.]

Music Music 00:50:18
Biz Promo 00:50:19

Inspirational music plays in background.

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Biz Host 00:51:16

Well, today is fun. Because my guest host—Gwen—also was our main topic feature. Which really allows us to focus on the other guest that always joins us every week. And that is a mom having a breakdown.

Caller Caller 00:51:36

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi. This is a rant. I... am just really struggling with childcare during this pandemic. Which I'm sure you're getting a million calls about. But. I was working part-time—remotely—before all this COVID stuff hit and—perfect stay-at-home mom, flexible-hour job that let me do my career. And then I wanted to transition into something else. And I got another really great, part-time, flexible-hours, stay-at-home-mom job. And so I was doing both. And then COVID hit and I... had two jobs. And I was taking care of my kids and taking care of my kids full-time with no childcare while my husband works full-time from home. And now we're, like, three months in and it's been working. Like, I've done it. Like, I don't know how I've done it 'cause there's—literally aren't that—enough hours in the day.

But now... I'm just so frustrated with how to figure out, like, day-to-day or week-to-week how to... like, work. While, like... figuring out childcare. Because things are opening up, which is great, so I can have a babysitter come. But then—what if daycare opens up next week? And what about school? Like, is school gonna open? Do we send her for another year of school? Like... do we keep her home? I feel like I'm paralyzed in making any kind of decision about... leaving one of the jobs. Or, like, even just setting up a home office. I just wander around the house from room to room with laptops and all of my stuff. Because... I'm the one that is figuring out the childcare. And I'm the one that's supervising the childcare when

they're here. And... I'm just really tired. And there's—I know I'm really blessed that I'm having a problem of, like, too many jobs and too much work? But I'm just really ready for some type of routine to come back into our lives and... I feel like I can accomplish a task with work without a million interruptions. I really hate COVID. Thanks. You're doing a good job. Bye.

Biz	Host	00:53:48	First of all... you are doing a really, <u>really</u> good job. Yes, I—we do get a million calls. About this. This is an impossible situation and I feel like what... you said... really emphasizes what we're coming to. Right? Like this place that we are coming to as a... as a society. And... there are... <u>so</u> many parents who are single parents. Who have been trying to navigate this with the idea that in a month, things will open up. In another month, things will open up. In another month, things will open up. And... partnered parents—the situation that you are in, I 100% understand. I have the more flexible job. Right? I mean—it's pretty flexible! So it was very natural for all of the childcare stuff to fall to me. So I get that. But now that we've hit this wall—we've hit this place—like you said. It was all okay. Right? Because I think we all thought there was gonna be... a definitive... <u>moment</u> ... where we'd be able to make decisions again. And—and... be confident that we could make them. And we haven't gotten there. And so <u>now</u> ... many are stuck in this rut of it—of the assumption being the childcare will continue to fall to us. So I get it. You— <u>how</u> — <u>how</u> are you supposed to make a decision about anything? Right now? 'Cause it is... I mean, how?! Like...
Gwen	Host	00:55:44	Yeah. The number of unknowns just keeps increasing. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Which is not the way that anybody thought this was gonna go! Or that most other things have worked, right? It's like, I—I sometimes just can't <u>believe</u> that we are where we are in the calendar and this is still how many things we don't know. It's impossible.
Biz	Host	00:56:01	Yeah. It—it is. I—y'know. I've spent a lot of time in therapy. <i>[Laughs.]</i> With... talking about, like—I like to fix problems. Like, "Op! I'm just gonna solve this and I can, y'know, A, B, or C's gonna happen and I am ready for A, B, or C." And... that... has completely gone away. I'm with you. And what <u>sucks</u> about this so much that you did not necessarily touch on—but I heard while listening to your call—was the "you are a self" part of this? You were getting to... choose jobs that you enjoyed and you liked. And that you could do while balancing family. And... that is nothing you should feel ashamed about. That is a gift. That is a joy. Good fucking job! Okay? Good job! That—you are—that is <u>so</u> amazing! And what this whole situation has done for <u>everybody</u> is it's, like... taking away... those... successes. Or taking away those changes. These choices that we had made that made things work a little better or that was bringing <u>us</u> joy or whatever. And they're just like—it's out the window! I—I am... I just can't emphasize enough... you're doing a really good job! You're doing an amazing job! And... we see you. I just...
Gwen	Host	00:57:36	And it's so unfair. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like it's—it's not a word that I feel like we're allowed to use, really, 'cause it makes you sound whiny and entitled? But like, I feel like it's okay to think it sometimes? And maybe it's okay for us to say it to you? It's not fair! That you have <i>[through laughter]</i> this—all of these unknown on <u>top</u> of something that should've been good for you! That you have jobs that you're really into and that you like! That's amazing and hard to find and it's

not fair that you don't get to do it. And. Yeah. I feel your unfairness. I see it, too.

Biz Host 00:58:02 Yeah! It is—like you said! It is okay... to stomp our feet and yell, “Unfair! Unfair!” Yes. Yes. We can *[through laughter]* feel that things are horribly unfair while being keenly aware that circumstances are different for everybody. ‘K? That they both get to exist. You don’t have to walk around Stepford Wife-y with a big fucking smile on your face being, like, *[unconvincingly]* “I really am enjoying this!”

[Gwen laughs.]

“This is really great! I really... this is... I’m really good, guys! I’m great!” *[Laughs.]* Like, you don’t—you don’t have to. That’s not gonna help anybody else! So... wah, wah, wah. Stomp, stomp, stomp. This is not fucking fair. I... I’m with you. I... I’m with you. And you’re doing a very good job.

Gwen, what did we learn today? *[Laughs.]* You know what? I am so thankful that you came on the show. Because I... really value and appreciate getting to hear other parents—just about their choices and—guess what? Those choices are totally fucking fine and none of my business! And I really like the opportunity to be reminded of that, though I asked you a bunch of questions. But like—that bullshit stereotype judgment—I’m trying to say something nice but it’s really hurtful at the same time? That is not unique to anybody’s situation. And I, y’know—why don’t you have one more kid? Are you gonna—I mean, that—are you gonna have another, or are you going to have one? Like, it—it’s across the fucking board! And I just... we do not need to talk about our uteruses!

[Gwen laughs.]

Okay?

Crosstalk Crosstalk 00:59:56 **Gwen:** No, we do not.

Biz Host 00:59:58 **Biz:** Like, as casual cocktail conversations—
—or on a subway! I’m happy to talk about them *[through laughter]* in the Supreme Court and with my politicians!

[Gwen laughs.]

But other than that... no thank you!

Gwen Host 01:00:08 Right.

Biz Host 01:00:09 Okay?

Gwen Host 01:00:10 Right.

Biz Host 01:00:11 So we learned that you’re doing an amazing job and that your child will not, in fact, grow up to be a sociopath.

[Gwen laughs.]

Gwen Host 01:00:17 Well thank you, Biz. I think you’re doing an amazing job? And I also want to say that I—just as a listener? These last couple months, like, every time I hear the beginning of your voice? It makes me feel so much better. Like, I don’t know if you actually realize? *[Laughs.]* I feel like the word “lifeline” is not totally inaccurate for me or a lot of people so I just hope that you realize how much we appreciate you

and all of the good things that you're doing in the world. So thank you. You're doing a great job.

Biz Host

Thank you. I really do appreciate that. We also learned that it is the MaxFunDrive. Guys? The bottom line about this time of year is that I cannot express enough how much Theresa and I appreciate your support. We appreciate that you listen. We appreciate those who are able to financially support the show. We appreciate every time someone goes over to iTunes and clicks "like" or writes a comment. This also benefits us! This also helps! Okay? Going out and tweeting why you love the show; why you support the show. Y'know, these are things that... help support us. And so... again, like I said, I know this isn't the best time to ask for support. And we know that everybody can't. So there are lots of other ways you can support us.

And for the first time ever, MaxFun is doing a thing where current members can increase by, like, \$1! If they want to. Usually it's, like, 5, 10, 20—like, but now, if you think you could do \$1 or \$2 more? That is now an option. Which is, I think, amazing. So again—you can head over to MaximumFun.org/join to find out more. Check out their "Events" tab as well. I... am going to be doing some cake parenting. For the dinner party. *[Laughs.]* There is a very funny video coming. Ellis and I making a cake. *[Laughs.]* They'll also be other funny things coming out. There are more videos Theresa and I made before the time of COVID that I would love to just dump them all at once. Because they bring me such joy. But I'm gonna spread 'em out! And I'll also send a picture of my new studio! It's really classy! So—

Gwen Host 01:02:48
Biz Host 01:02:49

Really classy. *[Laughs.]*

It's so classy! So everybody? You are doing... a good job. I... cannot list all of the things that are hard right now. But what I keep being reminded of—listening to the calls and listening to all the guests who come on, like you, Gwen—like, Deb; Rebecca, who was on recently—and that is... everybody has something going on. 'K? And it doesn't matter how many kids are in the house. How many partners are in the house. How many animals are in the house. How many—I mean, like, it is better to assume right now that everybody just found out something really hard. *[Laughs.]* And go from there. Okay? Because... that is the case. And... you get up and you do it and... you try to have a little more patience doing it than normal. You crash and then you get up and you do it again. And... I see you. We see you. Uh... let's keep going out and seeing each other. You're doing a really good job.

Gwen Host 01:04:25

Theresa? You're doing such a good job. You really are. I... just think you're amazing. Um... I mean—

I also think that—Theresa, it's kind of inspiring to see, also, an example of somebody who is saying, like, "I need to step away right now"? And you're doing it and you have the space to do it and I just feel like everyone is sending you a lot of love and good vibes, too. So yeah.

Biz Host 01:04:40

100%. Yeah. 100%! I wish everybody could just send you cake. Just... all the cake parenting. *[Laughs.]* Just—just right in your face.

Gwen Host 01:04:52

Forget the good vibes. Activate the cake. Yeah.

Biz Host 01:04:54

Activate— *[Laughs.]* That's right! We've got a cake SOS right now!

[Gwen laughs.]

That will make everything better. We miss you, Theresa. You're doing a very good job. Gwen? Gwen reached out to me a couple weeks ago. She said, "I... just heard you 'woo' by yourself."

[Laughs.]

[Gwen laughs.]

"I—can—can I come on and 'woo' with you?" And I was like, "Yes! You can! You can come on and 'woo' with me!" Which reminds me—by the time this show comes out, we will have already announced that we want everybody to 'woo' with us. For one week! We will be asking you to call the hotline—

[Gwen laughs.]

—and we want you to "woo" and check in. Tell us how you're doing. Try to keep it under two minutes if you can. But then we're gonna do something really fun with that. I was like, "Hey! Maybe I don't have to woo alone! Maybe I can woo... with people forever." So Gwen, thank you for that inspiration. You are doing... a remarkable job.

Gwen Host 01:05:57
Biz Host 01:05:58

Thank you, Biz. So are you.

Thank you. And I'm gonna be here again next week! [Laughs.]

With—who knows who? Whew!

[Gwen laughs.]

Crosstalk Music Crosstalk Music 01:06:09
01:06:10

We'll see you then.

Biz and Gwen: Byeeee!

"Mama Blues" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.

*I got the lowdown mamma blues
Got the lowdown mamma blues
Gots the lowdown mamma blues
The lowdown mamma blues
Gots the lowdown mamma blues
Got the lowdown mamma blues
You know that's right*

Biz Host 01:06:35

[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]

We'd like to thank MaxFun; our producer, Hannah Smith; our husbands, Stefan Lawrence and Jesse Thorn; our perfect children, who provide us with inspiration to say all these horrible things; and of course, you, our listeners. To find out more about the songs you heard on today's podcast and more about the show, please go to MaximumFun.org/onebadmother. For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out OneBadMotherPodcast.com. *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate.

Theresa Host 01:07:05

[Music continues for a while before fading out.]

Speaker 1 Guest 01:07:27

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Speaker 2	Guest	01:07:30	Comedy and culture.
Speaker 3	Guest	01:07:31	Artist owned—
Speaker 4	Guest	01:07:32	—Audience supported.