

Ep. 12: Girls Who Say “Yes, And...”

[00:00:00] **Audio clip:** So picture an eight year old girl, she's singing, she's dancing, she's kicking the soccer ball. She's raising her hand in class. She is full of confidence. Now picture a 13 year old. She's still singing, but more quietly into herself. She thinks twice before she raises her hand. She still has her inner awesome, but less confidence.

[00:00:25] **Trudy Hall:** The confidence drop in teenage girls is real, documented by study after study. Ask any parent or teacher of a young girl. Between the ages of 8 to 14, girls' confidence levels can plummet up to 30%. As compared to boys at the same age whose confidence levels which, while still drooping, can be up to 27% higher than those of girls. The effects of this precipitous drop in confidence can be both profound and long lasting. It is no wonder that both parents and educators care deeply about proactively addressing this central challenge in the life of a young girl.

[00:01:10] **Audio clip:** What is improv? Improv is anything and everything. Anything you want it to be. You can go from here to here, to here, to here to here. Improv to me is just having fun and making up stuff. You don't necessarily have to memorize anything. It's very fun to just make stuff up on a certain topics. I think that improv is, can be carried over into real life. [00:01:30] The concept of being positive and wanting to try new things and, um, and sort of going with what's happening.

[00:01:46] **Trudy Hall:** What in the world can Improv, the theatrical practice of acting in the moment, without a script, have to do with the confidence gap in girls? As it turns out, teaching girls improv might be precisely what they need to learn self-awareness, empathy, collaboration, intellectual agility and resilience. Said another way,

[00:02:09] teaching improv might be the way to move a girl from the sidelines to center stage during a formative stage in her growth as a leader. I am Trudy Hall, your host for *On Educating Girls*, a podcast produced by the International Coalition of Girls Schools. My guest today is Jenny Raymond, the Executive Director of the Harnisch Foundation, a New York based foundation that focuses energy and resources on advancing gender equity.

[00:02:36] The Harnisch Foundation has developed a research-based curriculum, named **Funny Girls**, designed to foster the habits of leadership in young girls, at the very front end of their leadership journey, when skill building can strengthen confidence.

[00:02:52] **Jenny Raymond:** The 5 core leadership skills that we're teaching through Funny Girls are self-awareness. Self-awareness is feeling your own emotions.[00:03:00]

[00:03:00] Resiliency is when you never give up. Never ever. Empathy. You feel what other people feel. Agility. It helps you think and learn. Collaboration. When you work together you can accomplish more.

[00:03:16] **Trudy Hall:** Jenny Raymond is the founder of "[Funny Girls](#)," and you have to love the tag line for this groundbreaking leadership training program: "Because Leadership is No Joke."

[00:03:27] End quote. She has spoken at [TEDWomen](#), the [Girl Scouts National Convention](#), and has appeared on [NBC Nightly News](#), in [Glamour](#), and in a video produced by [Amy Poehler's Smart Girls](#). This is most definitely a program that gives girls roots and wings; it makes them smile and giggle, even as it makes them strong and resilient. [00:03:47] Welcome, Jenny. It's so good to have you.

[00:03:51] **Jenny Raymond:** Oh, thank you. It's so nice to connect.

[00:03:53] **Trudy Hall:** Since the moment you and I discovered that we are both rabid fans of applying improv technique to the serious business of life, I have been eager to have this conversation. Why don't we start by having you tell us how you came to personally embrace the power of improv in your own life and then do some pile on by providing your definition of improv for our listeners.

[00:04:15] **Jenny Raymond:** Fantastic. Well, funnily enough, I actually trained as a classical oboist. So I spent my 10,000 hours plus on a musical trajectory towards being literally pitch perfect and executing exactly what was on the page. So in music school, there was kind of a whispered mantra of, you know, quote you're as good as your last performance end quote, which is a pretty destructive mindset.

[00:04:45] I'll admit, but it wasn't until years, way later in my life, when I started exploring improvising in music and I, I could see that there's a different kind of beauty and relief in the margins off the [00:05:00] page. And that concept of improv started to take root. So eventually I took some classes at improv comedy and the concept of 'yes and' which I'm sure will cover.

[00:05:10] Uh, later today really started to resonate in way more areas of my life. So improv doesn't mean abandoning preparation, um, but it requires a flexibility that I hadn't cultivated prior in my, in my musical training. Um, and for your listeners who aren't familiar, improv is a type of spontaneous performance where a group of people figure out how to work together to make up characters and plot on the spot.

[00:05:43] So it's totally different dynamic than stand up where one person stands up and tells jokes or stories that they've planned in advance. So it's really a group sport.

[00:05:52] **Trudy Hall:** Okay. Now, let's back up a bit. The Confidence Gap, the precipitous drop in girls' confidence in those pre-teen years. Many of our listeners may have already heard about [The Confidence Code for Girls](#), by Claire Shipman, Jillellen Riley and Katty Kay. For those who haven't, and as a review, can you talk a bit about this dip in confidence—when have you seen it surface and how can a parent identify the signs?

[00:06:20] **Jenny Raymond:** So, this is really fantastic research that that team codified a couple years ago, and as many people have seen, uh, as a result of their research, the number of there's a 30% drop in girls' confidence between the ages of 8 and 14, they say more than half the girls they interviewed feel the pressure to be perfect.

[00:06:44] Uh, three in four girls worry about failing. So all of this is exactly fits in perfectly to the, the program that I've developed and working with. But basically the effect is girls [00:07:00] speak up less in class and they take on fewer risks. They don't participate as regularly as they did when they were younger and they don't take on leadership roles and they wanna be perfect.

[00:07:11] And if they don't think they can be perfect, they don't wanna try. So we all know this is true. Girls who don't speak up in school, grow up to be women who don't speak up at work. So in our early research, when we were developing funny girls, we also looked at some research coming out of the girl Scouts research Institute.

[00:07:32] And from there we learned that four out of five girls don't think that they have the leadership skills. So that's bad news but good news is nine out of 10 girls think that leadership skills can be taught and nearly everyone can learn them. So, as we were thinking about this in building the program, we felt very hopeful that there's a room and space for us to do this.

[00:07:58] **Trudy Hall:** Oh, I love the idea that leadership [00:08:00] skills can be taught and that girls believe they can be taught. Um, and so that leads me into, um, an area where we may need to slow down to speed up. Um, and that is the whole, um, area of, um, how we build confidence in girls. I understand that's fairly counterintuitive and it means a steady diet of taking risks and failing and trying again, which may not necessarily be something that young girls are up for.

[00:08:28] So why, first of all, did you connect improv to this and then we'll go into how it works. So a two part question, slow it down. Why improv?

[00:08:38] **Jenny Raymond:** Fantastic. Well, improv is an amazing methodology to help girls take on risks. So the rule of 'yes, and' which I had alluded to a little bit earlier, so no matter what crazy thing I'm doing in a scene and a game, I agree with it.

[00:08:56] And you add onto it. So this idea of, [00:09:00] yes, I hear what you're saying and I'm gonna build on the idea. So one of the things that makes improv work is that it completely jolts you out of your expectations. And I know the first time that we met, um, at the recent, uh, ICGS conference in Boston is that I shared with you the work of Peter McGraw.

[00:09:23] Who's out at UC, uh, in Boulder at the humor research lab. And he has this, you know, very academic paper. Um, and I love this cause' it really, really resonates. Um, He's a comedy academic researcher, and he says three things have to happen in order to make you laugh. And that jolting you out of your expectations.

[00:09:44] I said, that's he calls the benign violation theory which kind of cracks me up every time I hear it. Um, So in the benign violation, there's three things for something to be funny. The first [00:10:00] is that there's a violation of a social norm or an expectation. The second is that it's benign and it's not meant to be malicious.

[00:10:09] Uh, and the third is that they both happen simultaneously. I always like to make the reference. If you think of Kramer from Seinfeld, right? Every time he enters the room, his whole body jerks and lunges for it and on its own, it's not a funny, it's not a funny motion, but because your expectation is that anybody who would open the door would simply walk in, when he comes through this benign violation happens.

[00:10:34] So this is an important approach in our curriculum because we're not teaching the girls to be funny and how to craft a joke, but we are teaching them how to be present by super listening and adding their own ideas to a scene. So if they're improvising, using their imagination, they're releasing their inhibitions and, and hilarious, funny things just naturally happen. So.[00:11:00]

[00:11:03] **Trudy Hall:** I can, I can imagine what I can imagine, what that's like when you get them going too, because, uh, there's nothing better than a bunch of young, creative girls just playfully using their imagination in ways that girls do, um, before they become women. Um, so reminding them of how wonderful that feels is gotta be a good thing, but now, now, how does it work? [00:11:23] So how do you do this?

[00:11:24] **Jenny Raymond:** Great. So there, there are three key elements of improv in funny girls and why this marriage of leadership skills and improv works as a methodology. And the first element we like to say is that every contribution is valid. So what does that mean? So any spoken word, let's say in a scene, you say potato,

or you make a nonverbal gesture, uh, with your finger, you know, stretching up and down kind of disco.

[00:11:55] Both of those things serve as a building block for the scene. So no matter like [00:12:00] how wacky, how small, how lame anything, anything goes, everything is welcome. So this really encourages, uh, everyone, the girls to be spontaneous, which is especially helpful for girls to shut down the kind of internal chatter you know, chat, chat, chat, and the constant kind of negative self talk of perfectionism.

[00:12:25] So the, the second element I would say is that everyone is supported and this really helps to build trust among tween girls who, who don't always have one another's back. But if you take on risk on stage, whether you're pretending to be, let's say, um, racoon or a pilot. You'll be supported in that risk by everyone else on stage.

[00:12:52] So the only time that improv comes to a grinding halt is when someone refuses to play along, what's been put out there. So [00:13:00] that's breaking that first rule of improv. I mentioned it's turning that 'Yes and' into a big fat 'No'. Um, and I've seen this kinship so many times with their funny girls once they know that they're supported.

[00:13:15] You could see them just building community and learning how they can count on one another. And that's a pretty rare dynamic for teen girls, teen and tween girls to engage in. Um, so I also wanted to say about the, the value of girls feeling that support. Um, research across the board shows that when people feel supported, they're more likely to take risks, right?

[00:13:41] So if we're trying to get girls to take risks, that feeling of support is integral. Um, and so in the environment that improv fosters, they take the risks and they have the affirmation right from their peers. So when they take the risks, they recognize the [00:14:00] power of their voice. They have a contribution to make, it's, I've seen introverts and extroverts really, really relish.

[00:14:08] And they're this kind of new awareness of their own voice. Uh, the last element that I wanted to mention that's I think particularly interesting for improv and for cultivating leadership skills is that everyone is both a leader and a follower in improv in order, right. For a scene to work, and I know truly you mentioned that you've done quite a bit of improv in order for a scene to work, team mates have to equally make and receive others' contributions.

[00:14:40] Right? So that means that students can gain a greater understanding of what it feels like to be both a leader by sharing the idea or the gesture in the scene and they know what it feels like to be a follower because they're listening and being

present for someone else's idea. So this is a really fantastic lesson of [00:15:00] leadership of, of inhabiting both being a leader and a follower.

[00:15:05] **Trudy Hall:** You've built some nice building blocks, uh, for us. So we understand improv now or as well as someone can understand it without being playful in that space. Um, we know why it's good for girls. Um, we understand the ways in which, uh, it could help girls take some risks. Uh, we've heard you talk about the fact that they can be both leaders and followers.

[00:15:27] Can you now tell us, you know, connect some more dots. How did you then get inspired to say this would be a leadership program specifically geared toward this age group? Cause' you work with a very specific age group, that preteen group.

[00:15:42] **Jenny Raymond:** We do. So, um, I'll give you a short answer and then a slightly long answer, but the short answer.

[00:15:48] So I'm the executive director of the Harnish foundation, who is the supporter and founder and funder of Funny Girls. But for 20 years we've been [00:16:00] supporting women's leadership initiatives. And in that time we've served or touched tens of thousands of women as they're growing in various leadership programs, but people still tell us every day.

[00:16:13] "I wish when I was a kid, somebody had taught me the skills I needed to be a good leader." So after hearing this so many times, we decided to be that somebody for girls. So in 2014, uh, when we started building the program, we started speaking with child development specialists, educators, improv comedians and other child centric experts.

[00:16:38] We looked at executive training programs for women from Stanford to MIT to see what challenges women were facing and how those were being addressed. And we could see very interesting. Uh, we could see similar hurdles for women and girls like boldness being reduced to quote unquote being called "bossy" [00:17:00] or being interrupted in the workplace or school where ideas were not only not being heard, but sometimes they were actually being stolen.

[00:17:10] right in front of them without anyone noticing. Uh, so we engaged with a slew of experts Um, both, uh, we're based in New York city. So the Magnet Theater, which is a teaching, uh, improv school also, um, some folks who had worked with the center for creative leadership and the PLU dance theater, um, and we began to build this curriculum based on leadership skills.

[00:17:36] Improv and creative movement in the pipeline of, of supporting and developing women's leadership that going for this age group of 8 to 13, when that confidence starts to winnow was really, really the niche where we wanted to go.

[00:17:53] **Trudy Hall:** You've just reminded us that, um, uh, you, uh, have learned some things along the way as you've done this.

[00:17:59] And so [00:18:00] I'd love to have you sort of slip back into that, those earlier stages. What, what do you know now that you wish you'd known then? Cause' you've obviously gone through several iterations of this.

[00:18:08] **Jenny Raymond:** Right. So we started developing the program in 2014 and now here we are eight years later. Um, and we're added a second level of the curriculum.

[00:18:22] We have learned so much, but I will say a baseline is that everybody needs to take more risks. We've learned, uh, up from a microcosm level. We've learned that when you're asking students to be playful, that sixth graders and eighth graders, and, and for your, your, uh, listeners and other parts of the world that don't, uh, use sixth and eighth grade, I'm talking, uh, 11 year olds.

[00:18:49] 10, 11 year olds and 13 year olds. They're different food groups. so asking those kids to be vulnerable, to asking them to be playful. Sometimes that can be [00:19:00] challenging in the same room. So when we're cultivating and starting the classes out, we really want the girls to feel that sense of sorority and, uh, being willing to be vulnerable.

[00:19:12] But we found that really, really isolating the kids when it's in a school environment and that's how they know one another. If it's an after school program or an intergenerational after school program, which we serve, it seems to work a little bit better cuz there's siblings involved in that. But I will say in general, you know, there are different food groups.

[00:19:35] Uh, we've also learned that, um, it, it takes a lot of courage to be playful and I'd like to think that, you know, adults had more playfulness to them. And when you see it in a third and fourth grader, they have big puppy paws. We refer to them as the littles. They're really willing to play. And you can really see in the older grades, you know, six, they're [00:20:00] still playing seven, they're still playing and eight they're kind of looking around and make sure it's safe before they're playing.

[00:20:10] **Trudy Hall:** Interesting. Wow. And it's a, it is a testimony, um, in action, uh, to the research that you've, uh, shared with us. So how are you measuring your success? Where's your proof that this is working?

[00:20:22] **Jenny Raymond:** So we, all of our partners, we request that they participate in a pre and a post survey. So, what we're hoping to catch in that is two things:

[00:20:36] Number one, we're hoping to see that girls shift their perception of themselves as leaders. So it's quite meta, but like when I, I referred earlier to that stat of, you know, 9 out of 10 girls think anybody can learn, uh, leadership skills, but four out of five say, oh, but except for me. right? So this idea of self as a leader is really [00:21:00] what we're hoping to shift.

[00:21:01] So in our survey, we're both asking the students to see what their retention of concept is. So are they able to say to us, um, and we're working with, with quite specific, uh, definitions of these core leadership skills, but do they have an understanding that empathy we say is, is seeing and acknowledging someone else's feelings?

[00:21:25] It's not about being nice. So in our survey, we wanna hear the girls say they understand that empathy is not about fixing it or about being nice. It's about acknowledgement. Um, and so on. So forth with our, our skills. Then we also are looking to see when we're taking a post - class survey how this may have manifested. Does the student say, um, maybe they had tried out for band and they didn't get in?

[00:21:53] And, and what did they do? Did they decide not to do it anymore? Or did they go to the band director and say, you know, [00:22:00] could I have a few lessons? Could you give me feedback? How can I do that better? Um, some students say, you know what? I was kind of shy, but, uh, now I'm, I'm in the church choir. And other kids, it doesn't manifest in kind of like a, a, a marquee leadership role, um, that we might traditionally recognize.

[00:22:21] Maybe I see my mom's working really hard at home and I've, I'm helping more cooking at home or I'm helping more with my siblings and homework or, or babysitting picking them up from school. So we have questions in our survey to see what, what is that shift? And, and I'm happy to say that almost a hundred percent of the students self-report a more positive self-perception or this increased confidence after taking funny girls.

[00:22:49] On average nine out of 10 students, self-report a positive relationship with taking risks, putting themselves in new situations or being actively involved. [00:23:00] And they have excellent retention of these five core skills. And that becomes a very meta adoption of a girl can say, I am a leader because. I'm self aware and give a very specific example.

[00:23:17] Something that we fleshed out in writing exercises in the curriculum with our I AM statements. I am a leader because I'm resilient because I can tell you a very specific example of a time that I was in, uh, a class working with the cohort of students, the project wasn't going well and how we solved it. We, we don't get, we don't let the students get away with the, you know, I'm collaborative cause I work with others.

[00:23:44] We make them really, really flesh out that connection of leadership skill to self. And then when they're verbalizing it and writing it and sharing it with their teachers and colleagues and peers and friends and family, it starts to take root.

[00:24:00] I'm a leader. I am a leader. I am a leader. I have something to say.

[00:24:05] **Trudy Hall:** They may be saying I'm a leader, but it's so clear. You're teaching more than that. Um, in the examples that you gave us, you can see them developing a presence, developing a sense of self, um, going far more than that. And, and so it's one thing to have trained improv instructors doing this work but what thoughts might you offer for parents who are looking to set a tone on the home front that uses some of these strategies?

[00:24:32] Because if I'm a parent listening to you, I like what you're saying about how it would build my daughter's confidence and I wanna see if I can do a surround sound or maybe even create a little home environment where it's, uh, inserting some of the playfulness that you're talking about. Could you offer up some specific, um, improv exercises or language that might be useful for parents?

[00:24:51] **Jenny Raymond:** Absolutely. So the leadership lessons of funny girls are really the lessons that everybody needs today. So we need to have more [00:25:00] self-awareness in our lives. We need to work better together. We need to work creatively around obstacles. We need to recognize others' emotions. We need to respond with agility to challenges, and especially in this moment in time, have resilience.

[00:25:15] To, as we like to say, try, try, try again, to get where we wanna go. So all of these skills that we're teaching, um, make a huge difference. So there's one, uh, there's one game in particular that we can play here if you, if you're up for it. Um, and this is something that's Stu.

Trudy Hall: I'll give it a shot. Okay. I'll give it a shot.

[00:25:36] **Jenny Raymond:** Okay. So, and it is just as a reminder, that improv is a group. So we do have a couple different games that we're working in pairs. Um, but this is an easy one that we like to start off, uh, with the students, um, before they've

even done any improv to realize, uh, that they have the capability of doing it. So this game [00:26:00] is called 'pet peeve rant'. [00:26:03] And usually I have a.

Trudy Hall: Pet peeve rant, right? Pet peeve rant.

Jenny Raymond: So I usually have a group of students, uh, maybe four students that we choose to come up to the front and I'm - they're volunteers and - I'm the one running the game. And I say, um, I want, so it's just the two of us. So I'll just direct it at you, but you'll get the gist of it.

[00:26:23] Uh, I want you to think of a pet peeve, something that super annoys you and it could be something that bothers you about work or your spouse or your kids or your dog. Just, just pick one though. you can't, can't put all your pet peeves. It's just one. Um, or something like, uh, I don't know, people talking with their mouths full, so it could be something really big or it could be something small and petty, but you're not just gonna tell me what your pet peeve is.

[00:26:52] You're gonna explain why it annoys you. So I'm asking you to be very specific, uh, be [00:27:00] loud, show your emotions. And, and we, I always say to my students get physical, right? This is a chance to share your truth. So the game begins and, and I, I will point to you in a minute. I'm giving you a second to think about your pet peeve, but I'll point to you and you begin ranting, and then I bring you to a decrescendo and I point to another student and she starts ranting about her pet peeve.

[00:27:25] And then at a certain point and I bring her to a close and the third person starts and then I taper her off and at certain point I, I point to you and the student. So you're both starting to rant at the same time. Your body language is big, you're getting very animated. You can't wait to tell people how annoyed it is that your, you know, dog eats your slippers or whatever it is.

[00:27:48] And then the game comes to a close and we say, you just did improv and you didn't even know it. And then we go into truth and comedy and why we're laughing, but let's [00:28:00] back up a little bit, cuz now that I've given you a chance to think about it. So think about what your pet peeve is and then I'm gonna have you start and I'm not gonna stop you right away, cuz I want you to keep going.

[00:28:13] And I want you to show me with your body, your level of irritation or frustration. You really are gonna get into this. So Trudy, tell me, what's safe for the podcast that you could talk about is annoying to you?

[00:28:31] **Trudy Hall:** Well, the good news is the good news is that our viewers are never going to see me with my hands waving, but I've got something that's on my mind because I just, uh, experienced a lot of it.

[00:28:40] And that is, I get really annoyed when the plane lands and you've been flying for an hour, two hours, six hours, eight hours, and the pilot hasn't even turned the seatbelt sign off yet. And people are moving around, they're starting to stress. You could feel them getting out of their seats. We're all [00:29:00] gonna get off the plane at the same time.

[00:29:03] Nobody can get out that door until they open the door. And yet people from the back are shoving their way through, and they're trying to get in front of me or in front of some pregnant woman or in front of an older person, who's got a cane and they haven't even taken their, uh, suitcases down off the top.

[00:29:19] And if they are, they're bumping people on the heads with them and it really annoys me.

[00:29:24] **Jenny Raymond:** Brilliant! There you go. Brilliant. Where you poor listeners that couldn't see that she had amazing, um, ire in her shoulders. So. Well, this is what this is what's amazing about improv. And so I would encourage the parents at home.

[00:29:41] Uh, There are lots of, so we are, we're using it to teach leadership skills, but just improv as life skills. If you Google, you know, simple improv games for 11 year olds or simple improv games to do at home, [00:30:00] there are all kinds of things for you to do around the dining table. Or when you have a moment walking your kid to school, or when you pick them up right after school.

[00:30:09] And maybe you can tell they don't exactly wanna talk. There's different games that you can employ. Um, some of these we have in our curriculum, but some are just ones that I'm aware of in, in building this program for the last eight years. I'd say another one is the animal game. So you go around the table and your, the genre, you pick whatever genre, let's say it's animals.

[00:30:32] And I would say, uh, an eel and then it would pass to you and you would have to take the last letter of the word that I said, and then turn that into another animal. So you would say.

Trudy Hall: Lion.

Jenny Raymond: Right. And then it would come back to me and I would say

[00:30:53] **Trudy Hall:** I'm having way too much fun with this Jenny I need.

[00:30:55] **Jenny Raymond:** it came back to me and I would say Newt, and it goes on and on and on.

[00:30:59] But, but, but you can't pause, you can't look it up, you know, they just have to pull from within. So this isn't about, um, you know, getting out the dictionary. This is about being present, being focused and responding with your own ideas. So I, can't speak highly enough for this idea to cultivate at home, whether you have access to join, uh, a program like ours in your area or, or not.

[00:31:29] This is, uh, something on a very small scale that you can incorporate at home.

[00:31:34] **Trudy Hall:** I agree. I absolutely agree. And even by introducing it by saying no Google improv games for 10 year olds, you've given people a very solid first step. Um, as we all know, there's a lot of good information out there if we know what, what to Google. You, you've been involved with empowering young girls for decades.

[00:31:54] Um, and you're the parent of a daughter. What do you know for sure about building confidence [00:32:00] in young girls? Cause it's clear that you know a lot. What three takeaways might you offer our parents?

[00:32:07] **Jenny Raymond:** So be ready to, as a role model to share with your kids a time when you may have epically failed and look, you live to tell about it.

[00:32:17] I love to tell my kids about, you know, the audition that I blew and I'm still here to play. I still play my oboe. I'm still here to talk about it. So that's number one is be ready to model that failure is an absolute part of our daily life and, and to talk about growth mindset. Um, number two, I would give kids.

[00:32:40] Encouragement to build a skill and to understand that it takes time and this funky calculus of failure and success before you progress. Right? So it's, you're not gonna be the best kid on the football team. You're not necessarily, you're not gonna be the best gymnast. You're not gonna be the best potter.

[00:32:59] Um, [00:33:00] those things take time. It's, you know, I, I started by telling you, you know, I had to laugh cause I was recently rereading Malcolm Gladwell's, uh, book and, and looking at, you know, 10,000 hours is kind of what, what he identifies is what gives, you know, some sort of expertise. Um, so I know there's some, some people take issue with that, but it obviously takes time to dedicate to something.

[00:33:27] So I would encourage students and, and your kids. Just keep at it. Keep in the practice room, keep on the field, keep lacing up those skates, whatever it is, keep singing in the shower. Don't take a few signs of, of, uh, negativity, your sign that you should quit. Be ready to pivot. Um, and I think maybe the last thing I would say is find ways for them to share what they love.[00:34:00]

[00:34:00] Right? And the confidence that they gain from this awareness of their own voice. So if they wanna tell you about the 10,000, 10,000th makeup tutorial on YouTube and you like, my eyes are rolling in the back of my head. And I realize like, no, this is something that this kid is super excited about. Like, listen, your ears, put away your own adult judgments of like, they're never gonna make any money from this.

[00:34:27] The idea of, of how could you help kids to give them feedback and affirmation when they're expressing to you, something that they love? That's healthy, not injurious to them, of course. Um, but give them outlets, let them write a little something, or draw a picture or talk about it at dinner, you know, create the space to say, I heard you were excited about, you know, the work you did with your clay today at school.

[00:34:57] What did you do? Let them [00:35:00] know that feeling of articulating and saying something that they're proud

[00:35:03] **Trudy Hall:** I like that notion of articulating pride, helping them articulate pride. It's a really key visual for me as I think about this. Um, Jenny, it's been great to spend time with you. Um, I wish that you and I could get together and do more improv exercises.

[00:35:20] Um, let me sort of wrap and, and get a sense of, um, if I've gotten this right, uh. You want our parents to model playfulness. You want our parents to model spontaneity. Um, you'd love to have our parents model failure. Um, and you want our parents to Google improv games for eight year olds, nine year olds, 10 year olds, and get started today to set this kind of tone in their own household.

[00:35:47] Cause you are convinced and I am convinced that it will make a difference in their daughter's confidence level. This has been *On Educating Girls*, a podcast produced by the International Coalition of Girls Schools to address real issues that impact the lives of girls we know. As always, we welcome your thoughts and suggestions as we create content that you find useful. Perhaps you have a topic that you want us to discuss in a future episode? Please send comments and questions to podcast@girlsschools.org and join us next time as we share insights and resources. Thanks for listening; it is important to the girls in your lives that you do!