Introduction and the behavior-as-signal approach

Hi, welcome. I am Dr. Rachel McConnell and I'm your host and the creator of our Masterclass series here today called Why is my child acting this way? So I' m a board certified pediatrician with over 20 years of experience and so there's a lot of information out there, a lots of parenting tips and tricks out here, but my approach is a little bit different.

Because I think that the behavior your child is showing you is a signal. It's not necessarily the problem It is just that there's something going on and this is how it's coming out and This is they're displaying that.

There's an underlying problem. So it is time to stop guessing and start understanding I'll see you soon. Thanks Hi, welcome. Today we have Dr. Michelle Pero with us.

Hi. Thank you so much for joining us, Dr Rachel. Rachel, thank you for inviting me. Can you please tell our parents a little bit about you and the work that you do?

Sure, love to. So I've been practicing pediatrics for almost 45 years and I started as a pediatric emergency physician, transitioned into an integrative environmentally focused gal about 25 years ago, started and am CEO of a 501c3 gmoscience.org that focuses on education to regeneration, pesticides, GMOs and the like.

I have a podcast also, The New MDs, which focuses on moms, doctors, and scientists bridging those gaps. I wrote two books, What's Making Our Children Sick and Recently Making our Children Well, a parent guidebook on nutrition and homeopathy.

Perfect. Thank you so much. You bring so wisdom. I really appreciate it. So our summit today is called, Why is my child acting this way? Whenever you talk to parents and they ask you that question, what do you tell them?

So I often, the first place I start is asking them to describe for me what they're seeing and really get people to be observationally in tune with their families.

Not that he's bad, she's moody, he is not listening, and she is defiant. Those words don't help me, but I ask for descriptions. Can you describe to me?

What do you mean by mooty, defient, bad? I want to hear it from them. I also ask parents to take a little video. Show me what you mean. Now don't go in your child's face with the camera because that will increase whatever behaviors that you're not seeing.

But I asked him, is there some way to covertly or your partner, your spouse, or husband, wife, whomever is involved to take a video secretly? Because I want to see the behaviors myself.

That is so much more helpful to me. Oftentimes now, Rachel, as you know, we're not in the office. We're on Zoom. And we often don't see it. But when you're in office enough and you've seen a child over the years, at some point you see those behaviors describing.

The next thing I ask parents to do is I tell folks, do not blame your child. They're not being malicious, they're trying to get you, the not trying out with you.

It's often a symptom of what they are experiencing in their body.

Dr. Perou2019s background and integrative pediatrics

So if their brain is not working right, if they were dysregulated for any reason, we have to a deeper dive as to the root cause of might be creating this acting out, this behavioral thing.

and do the deep dive root cause analysis. The heart and soul of integrative are also called functional medicine. I'm always looking at the connection of the gut brain microbiome axis and how that affects the biology of the child.

So when I start to put it in that framework, that context for parents, it helps them understand like, oh, this is my kid misfiring, brain on fire even, telling me something is not right.

Let's see if we can begin to unravel the process of what might be going on. And this is a symptom just as a stomach ache, a fever, or rash of an underlying upset in my child.

So this will give you some ideas of I do no shame, no blame, and no game with parents. I don't like shaming and blaming. This is not bad parenting. Let's reevaluate.

I don't like that terminology, bad parenting. Well, children don' t come to Blueprint, and we don t go to parent ed, like Drivers Ed, Rachel, to understand.

We should have a parent. And Dr. Spock's manual is not for the 2026 parent anymore. Dr Sprock was a wonderful pediatrician. Every parent had a copy on their bedside of his guide for parenting, but boy, things have changed in 60 years.

Yes, that is so true. All right. Well, thank you. You actually answered our next question about behavior being the signal and not the problem. So that was perfect.

What is one of the biggest misconceptions that parents have with what you do? There are a few misconceptions and I'm glad you asked that question because I want to clarify.

So many parents in a modern time have gotten used to convenience thinking this is a drive-through. I'll drive through, get the answer, apply it, be done.

Here's a symptom, we're going to give it a drug and fix it. That drive thru mentality doesn't work. What we begin to offer, and it almost always starts with lifestyle, is a process.

It's not a straight shot to success. And I often tell parents, it's a marathon, not a sprint. So understand that this will take some time to unravel. We will try to work quickly because I understand you may have sleep disruptions at home.

Dinner time's the nightmare. Can't get the kids dressed to go to school. Maybe you have three kids and they're all fighting and you can't even get out the door.

There are some social emergencies happening at homes. so we wanna act quickly. I don't ever use the term, my least favorite pediatric term, they'll grow out of it.

I just don't even go there. So that is what I begin to set the realistic expectation of what to expect because we're looking for long-term changes and the first place we always go shopping is the food.

What is your kid eating? First place I always start almost with any issue, whether I'm talking asthma or autism is let's start with the diet. Perfect.

So we're hearing a lot about processed food and now ultra-processed food, the microbiome, food additives, who dies, gut health, all of that. And so I know I've talked with a lots of parents who just feel totally overwhelmed.

They've just kind of given up because they don't know where to begin. For those parents, where would you recommend that they begin, if they're not able to obviously make sweeping changes overnight, what's a good

beginning for them?

Yes. Again, another great question, Rachel. We are not given enough time with families in a traditional pediatric setting to really get into this, and that is a fault of the system.

The way the insurance billing patient model is set up, it's really hard to have these conversations.

How to interpret child behavior and avoid blame

But on a podcast like yours, people can begin to understand. So thank you. So where do you begin? You begin in the pantry. So to understand GMOs, ultra-processed foods, synthetic food, the dyes, additives, emulsifiers, oh my gosh, you need a PhD in nutrition science.

Mom, dad, three, two kids, even one kid. One kid could be tough. It's not necessarily a number game. You could have one hard one and you'll never have another one.

So I say, let's start on what we're doing. Food is medicine. And for all, I'd say la cocina is to medicina. The kitchen is your medicine, we start there.

I always tell folks whole foods. Even before I get into the organic, no GMO, regenerative food, even before that conversation, meet people where they're at.

It's like I ask folks, what do you know? If they are ground zero, that's where we start. Meet people were they at, if they more educated about organics, GMOs, we can start there.

So I tell folks, buy the whole food, which means no packaging. If it's in plastic, it can sit on a shelf for two years. It's got preservative, and it got 85% of food stuffs on the shelves contain soy lecithin, that's all GMO.

And I don't want kids eating GMOs, That's a whole nother story, but I prefer whole foods, organic when possible, Which simply means, no pesticides. I'm not a fan for children's tummies to be, you know, laden with pesticide-laden foods.

So I tell folks, let's start cooking Whole Foods. I told folks you don't need to be Alice Waters in Chez Panisse. This is not Michelin five-star restaurant.

It could be very simple meals. We start in the shopping, the perimeters of supermarkets, getting Wholefoods, and people tell me, Dr. Pero, you're out of touch.

Organics are crazy expensive. What are you talking about? I said, I know, right? So I say, buy in bulk. We could start with rice, beans, some veggies, and bones.

You don't need to buy the meat. If you make bone broth soup and use that broth, that's healthier than the meet, folks. And you can cut back on your meat consumption.

Organic meat is wicked expensive, And I'd say shop co-op, CSA, Costco, Trader Joe's, Sprouts, whatever you've got near you, farmers markets, Grow your own.

And, you know, in my book, I go into this probably ad nauseum, the steps on how to create the pantry. When I meet with folks, they send me pictures before the Zoom meeting of the panty, their refrigerator and their freezer and the liquor cabinet.

Not for the children. I always say, okay, thank you for your honesty. And people are less organic than they think. And I always find some ingredients there that I say, we could think about getting rid of this and get rid that or why.

There's lots of processed foods. When I ask folks about that, they say oh, my little Susie loves those Doritos,

whatever. I'd say okay, to make the transition, can you find an organic variant of that product?

and the better yet can you make it yourself. So if little Susie loves the Doritos, you can make tortilla chips yourself and they're so delicious when you bake them yourself, and get your kids in the kitchen.

Boys love knives. Get them those child-friendly knives and teach your kid how to cook. Now them folks tell me, I never learned, my parents never taught me how I say, so glad you asked.

I said, when you go on YouTube, I'd say everyone knows YouTube. Yeah. Everyone's got a freaking phone right there. So you Google how to make a healthy rice, beans and veggies.

Oh my God. And there it is. You can watch it and prep it with your kids. This is not mom, this is family and you can start cooking and prepping. The other thing I hear, Rachel, is that moms and dads both say, we both work full time.

Are you out of your mind? I say yeah, I work for full-time too. So to my husband, he's also an ER doc. We're both ER docs, raising two small kids, dogs, cats, soccer mom, PTA chair.

You know the scene, right? On Sundays, i would do all the food prep. I'd make three big meals on Sundays and I would chop all of the veggies on Sunday.

And then I had glass containers, plastic then, Rachel, let me be honest. Now glass. Let me just be clear. And almost all again, I've been into the organic thing for a while, but not as hardcore as I am now.

The more I learn, oh gosh. And then I would cut everything up, prep it all and have three main things. A main like stew, a main soup, and then a maine carb like quinoa.

I like Quinoah, rice or a pasta. And I then would mix and match during the week. That's how I did it.

Starting with food: pantry, whole foods, and meal prep

It worked and I've taught people how to do it and these are practical tips. And I shared my brain with folks in the new book because I feel that some of these simple common sense techniques get lost in a shuffle and there's so much online.

Parents are overwhelmed as you state. Yeah. No, I love how you described that. You made the carb and then like a soup or a stew or something. I feel like when I talk to parents, they feel they have to make this whole elaborate like 12 course meal and all these sides.

So that's really reassuring that you're like, no, simple. Simple. And then like, you know, I also love, lunch boxes. That's like a whole lecture in itself.

So whatever, i'm always thinking about what I can use for leftovers for the lunch box. Most kids don't get cooked meals in school and I still want to send my kids what a healthy meal.

I would do a lot with organic hummus and i'd make the humus myself. Back in the day I'd use organic canned chickpeas. Now I soak my own. It's so easy.

But hey convenience and sprouts. I have no stock in sprouts You can get two cans of organic chickpeas for $3 and you can make a lot of hummus for three dollars And you said that with some carrot sticks or celery sticks Maybe some couple pieces of fruit and You've got maybe a muffin to go with that if you want to give a snack or some popcorn a little bit of Popcorn in there kids love it and off you go.

Popcorn, I used to bag it, make it bag, it and then have it ready and to go for the lunch box. Perfect. No, that sounds great. And then terrific things instead of like, oh, they only like Cheez-Its or anything like that.

Because I think sometimes parents are, you know, stymied what to send. So that is great advice. I'll throw my husband to the bus because he's not here.

My husband doesn't quite eat as well. It was often a battle. You might find parent A all in, parent B not so much. Okay, I'm going to be clear. It's often the mom who's on board and dad is doing, you know, the drive through to, uh, pizza hut.

So, okay. My husband used to hide the junk food in the closet. By the time my kids were two, they could burry it out immediately. So with my own husband who has a sweet tooth or little junk food tooth, my husband loves corn chips.

Corn chips are all GMO. They're all processed, full of pesticides. I was able to find an organic substitute for him. It's still a processed food, Rachel.

And it's not a health food. This is not an apple. But it was still better. Well, can we at least start with making organic swaps? I was not cooking my husband his corn chips.

Sorry, I wasn't going there. You know, you try and be a good wife. That I Swap where we can and eventually, folks, we want to get off those processed foods and into real whole foods.

Apple and peanut butter, oh my God, it's an ideal snack. You get a nut butter. Assuming you could bring peanuts to your kid's school, maybe get 5% almonds instead or some other nut better that's not allergic.

Whatever you have to do with some apples, super healthy. Excellent. So you mentioned whole foods, and I think a lot of parents know like this is an apple, this isn't orange, This is a zucchini.

But then whenever you're talking about grains, because I know most of my patient families are like, oh, yeah, we're pasta based or we are rice based. And so what advice do you have about like whole food for grains?

Yeah, so grains are processed. We're not in the rice fields, okay? They are process whether you're eating rice as a grain, wheat, barley, oats. Quinoa is not a true grain.

So it's my number one choice and it seems to have the least allergenicity. In terms of wheat pasta, which kids, I've never met a kid who didn't love pasta.

I'm going to be honest. Wheat is a highly sprayed crop because on wheat, oats and legumes, they use glyphosate-based herbicides, Roundup, as a crop desiccant to dry down the crop.

So it's extremely high in pesticides. And often those are the very foods that are high and children's diets, wheat oats, legume, peas, you know, the kids love that stuff.

Oh, it's super healthy, not when they're not organic. So wheat, if you're going to do wheat organic, I pulled a lot of kids off with neurocognitive challenges off wheat and dairy.

What's my substitute? I'll often use rice, organic rice. I choose white over brown because brown rice can be higher in arsenic. It's in the brown. Or if I do do a brown rice, which I as I make sure I rinse it really well, and when the rice is cooking, I scoop off a cup of the top rice and replenish it with a couple of fresh water because that has a lot of chemicals in it.

You can do corn if you're organic only because 97% of corn in the US is negatively modified. Forget it, you've got to go organic on the corn. You say, well, I can't even get organic corn where I live.

Organic frozen corn is a good second choice. Can is my least favorite, even if the can says BPA free. If you can do frozen, because as soon as the corn has taken off and cut, they freeze it.

So compared to fresh, it has the second highest level of nutrient density. And what we're trying to do is create a

high nutrient level for our children.

Rice doesn't have a lot of nutritional value, folks, so if you're going to stick to brown, try those tricks. Corn as well. Wheat, neurocognitive challenges in your child, autism, ADHD, OCD, those kind of behaviors, take them off.

I do a lots of elimination diets and I tell parents in my book how to do an elimination diet because I think a a of pediatricians don't even know how do do real elimination and so that we do that.

I also like the grains that are less popular here in the U. S., like millet. Millet is used commonly in Africa. It's a great grain, especially for gluten intolerant people.

So that's another one I've used, TEFF, T-E-F-S, not well known. I've used tapioca and you'll see tapioka a lot in gluten-free breads. You'll tapoca, you see sorghum, these other blends and buckwheat.

Buckwheats, it sounds like wheat. It's not wheat and it's a fabulous gluten free grain, super healthy. it has a very nutty flavor. So when I have old bananas, I'll make a banana bread and I use buck wheat as the main flour in my banana breads.

And that's a great use of old bananas, super easy, and kids do love banana bread because they're sweet. Yes. Perfect. So you had mentioned like the gluten free bread.

So what's your thought on that? Like I definitely have kids who were on it either because they're actually celiac or they are just gluten free. But I've also had kids, who will sometimes struggle with those kinds of gluten-free products.

Yeah, so when you have a child with either full-blown celiac disease, which is a genetic disorder where kids cannot eat any gluten, to gluten intolerance, to gluten have to come off it too.

The gluten-free substitutes can sometimes cause disruption of the gut microbiome because sometimes they have a lot of products or they put in their xanthan gum or emulsifiers in the gluten free bread which are microbiomes disruptors and they're also processed.

So maybe that is not the best choice of bread and you might need to go with a paleo bread or a coconut based bread, which they don't taste as good as pure gluten.

So you wouldn't have to start making shifts. You say, well, what kind of shifts? I found that corn tortillas work.

Grains, gluten, and practical food swaps

Children really like tortillas like you make burritos kids love burrito's and if you take that tortilla But it's a little soft or soggy and you throw it on an open flame and crisp it up a bit and soup it makes a Little crunchy and kids can like that as well So burritos are a great way to get your kids to eat things that they might not necessarily eat.

So corn tortilla's is a swap. What else can you do? Other than that for gluten-free breads, it's a struggle. I mean, an organic gluten free bread is expensive.

You say, well, I can bake my own bread. It's an art to baking glutenfree bread because you have to combine different grains together to get that same gluten quality that you get from using wheat.

And, oh, you can do it. Not the best baker, Rachel, to be honest. And oh my gosh, I would never eat bread except in Italy. You can eat Italian gluten, as long as you're not celiac.

This is not medical advice, folks. So I have found some, but they're expensive. What's your thought like on the sprouted grain bread? Because I know most freezers have like the Ezekiel sprout and grain, so that's a good option.

Yes, assuming you could select wheat. There are other sprout of breads that are wheat free, but sprout it because sprouts are nutrient dense. because little sprouts have a lot of packed nutrients.

And if you have an apartment, you can grow sprouts in your windowsill. It's my favorite thing to grow, especially in a small space because they're power punch nutrient dense health, all sprouts.

Whether there's sunflower seeds, broccoli sprouts, mustard green sprouts they are all healthy. All healthy. Yes. No, and yeah, I've actually had some success growing some sprouts in my kitchen and sometimes they're next to one of my grow lights.

So sometimes their sprouty color. Sometimes they start turning green and I'm like sprouts, micro greens. I am sure it's all fine. It's good. And I throw them on top of salads or I mix them in or throw in the blender if I was doing a blender drink.

And that's another great tool for parents, Rachel, are blender drinks. And so when you can't get kids to eat certain things, if you throw in a blender with some coconut milk and pineapple juice, ice, and then sneak greens in there, it becomes a pina colada without rum, no rum parents.

Don't put the rum in there. My kids will often drink those and my pickiest kids with autism, that's how I got them to eat stuff. And the way I did that, because as we know, kids on the spectrum often are extremely picky.

A whole section of my book, Rachel, on how to feed an autistic kid who's picky, it could be like a nightmare for parents because I'd make popsicles. They often would tolerate the cold popsicle.

Okay. And then they have popsicles now, they're in the middle. So you don't have to get the plastic popsicle. I saw them on Amazon. Mm-hmm. It's so hard.

Even the book, my book is published on the Amazon, it's on Amazons. But anyway, I do that with the popsicals. My own kids, wouldn't do it again yeah no because i feel like it you know even when my kids were younger which you knew wasn't that long ago like pretty much plastic was what there was we thought we were doing good having the hard plastic instead of this soft squishy plastic um so yeah it's it stuff and now there's a lot of like silicone things so it like is that I guess that's better.

I still try not to heat in any of that. It's like heat and glass, but it's, like, you know, I go with silicone too. Like with binkies and bottles. Silicone not as reactive.

Your cookware utensils, silicone. Steel is my number one choice. Then probably wood, then silicone, or silicone wood. You got to keep your wood clean because it can get contaminated.

Yes, totally. So I have a little bit of an aside from what we're talking about because I've always contemplated. You mentioned that autistic kids were hard to feed, but I also know that there are some studies out there that a lot of times autistic kid have different microbiome than what is considered kind of typical.

And so I feel like it's one of those chicken and egg things. Is their microbiome different because they're so picky or are they so picky because their micro biome is different?

Or is it just now we've just entered this circle and it's like, who knows, but we have to make it stop. Like, what's your take on that? For me, I think it is all about the microbiomes in all of us.

And our kids are under their, microbiomas under assault, literally from prenatally. Even before consumption, their microbiome is under assault. So everything we can do to support a healthy microbiomes in kids is paramount to their immunologic and neurologic success.

Because that microbiom, as you know, but will tell your fun parent as they may or may not know It's the first line of defense against detoxification, setting up your immune system as the baby passes through the vaginal canal,

hopefully vaginally and not a C-section.

I had one in one. They don't acquire the microbes you need. And it's those microbes that chat with the thymus, the gland that sits behind the breastbone that really sets up some of the baby's innate immune system, which is a key part of immunologic function.

Those microbes also produce vitamins like folate, B12, K2. So they're essential part our being. But what parents may not know, and this gets to the behavior question, how we started off this chat today, is that the microbes produce neurotransmitters.

Now, you need a particular one. It's called bifidobacteria, and that one parents might recognize from yogurt. They'll see bipidbacterial and lactobacillus.

Those little biffido, 100 years ago, babies were a monoculture of bippido bacteria. 25% of babies now appear not to have any biphido. That is a neurologic disaster because those bifido produce something called short chain fatty acids.

An example of one of those is called acetate. Acetate, quickly, is the precursor for a chemical called the neurotransmitter, the chemicals that run brain function for acetylcholine.

You need that neurotransmitter for executive function, focus and attention. No bifido, no acetate, not acetylcholine, and no focus. What does that look like clinically?

ADHD. And what are we seeing now? Literally an explosion. We say 13% of American children have ADHD. I think it's way higher. And also we have those subclinical cases where kids don't fit in exactly to a box.

Adult onset ADHD, where adults are running into their doctor's offices for Concerter, Strattera, and other of these amphetamine drugs. They are amphetamines, right?

What those amphenamins do increase dopamine. Dopamine is a side hack to help you get on focus, but it doesn't replace the missing bifidobacteria, which is the root cause of what might be going on.

Microbiome, probiotics, and fermented foods

So, you know, I actually have like a follow up question for that. So like I'll talk about, especially for parents who needed to have their children on antibiotics, which, You know I try not to, but I often get ones that, have been to the urgent care, the ER, like you've got a pneumonia, there are reasons.

And so it's like, okay, let's be on some probiotics and they're like oh we are, we're on whatever brand. And it's like, oh, have you flipped that over?

Because it only has lactobacillus. So I guess what's your thought on probiotics in general? And then some of those probiotic, we're getting as supplements, but they only offer the one strain.

You know, I hate to keep pushing my book, this is why I went into it, because I feel like I'm just on a pitch for the book. But in my books I name names and which probiotcs I use and why, and brands.

I have no affiliation, no money invested, I wish I had, in like a brand. I'm looking for the microbe quality, okay? I don't look for millions of microbes. I look at basic strands of bifidobacteria, especially kids on antibiotics, and several lactobacilli.

But what I also will do is give kids, on antibiotic, another microbes called Saccharomyces boulardii. sarcomyces boulardis, and actually yeast. Parents may have heard of floristor, a common probiotic.

You can get that at the supermarket or at a pharmacy, florister. And I'll give those together. So to offset any

pathogens that might develop, there's one in particular called Clostridium difficile, C.

diff for short. Now, back to your autism question. We know that kids on the spectrum have a high numbers of Closteridium microbes. Not necessarily C. diff, there are at least 10 species of Clostridium, atleast 10. So they're not all pathologic, we all know about the C diff.

But those Closteridium species make certain products that can also be toxic for the kid's brain. And that's why they are not good. When you look at the microbiome of kids on the spectrum, often Usually they're abnormal and most of those kids have sensitivities to foods as well.

They have leaky gut, they have abnormal microbiome, their gut-brain microbiom axis has been disturbed and we need to get them back. Regain the terrain is what I call it, farm at a farm.

is how I frame that, holistic health is I tell parents. These are the terms I share with parents to explain to them what we're trying to do. If you plant a seed in a garden, which just has dirt and not healthy, alive, healthy soil, that seed will not grow, no matter how good the seed is.

So we have to create a healthy terrain for that child to thrive. And then regarding the antibiotics, I replace fermented foods are your friends. If your kid is still on dairy, do kefir, or do yogurt.

if they're not under dairy do coconut kef, coconut yogurt, sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi, whatever you can get. I have saurkrauts fermenting right now. So easy.

My own kid little farmer kid that I had said, when I didn't know how to make sauerkraut years ago, my kid said mom, YouTube it. Geez, I'm not gonna tell you how do it, but I did, a YouTube, it was so easy.

I couldn't believe how easy it is. Fermented foods are key. Even apple cider vinegar, that's a fermented food. If your kid is having a salad, use apple side of vinegar because the microbe and apple-side of vinegars, Cetabacter will break down glyphosate.

There are microbes that will break down those herbicides, glyphosate-based herbicide, round up. So I'm always thinking, what foods can I include that would support microbiome health?

It's all about the microbiomes. But parents need to know that the newborn, the six-month-old, and the toddler, child, or teen may all require different types of probiotics and different microbes because the child is changing with time.

As a matter of fact, I've got a microbiome talk sitting over there. You cannot see it. I just did this microbiomes talk on ultra-processed foods for Florida Department of Public Health.

Dr. Joe Lattapoe, their Surgeon General. Love you, Joe. He is on it in ways that my state of California is not, or your state, I don't know how they're doing there, Rachel.

I'm in Texas. Enough said. California's… We have some work to do here in my home state. Yes, yes, exactly. We work have work do. we have things to achieve.

Well, we're still trying to And that's why we're here, sharing with parents, we don't want to wait for changes in the law. We're telling parents how to do it because kids need help today, not like in five years, like let's start now, right?

That's how we are here. Excellent. So another total aside from, I think, where our talk was actually going. You had mentioned in the last few years that you have seen also the huge increase in ADHD, the adult ADHD.

I know in practice we've had a huge decrease ever since COVID from ADHD and people initially thought it was because parents are home with their children and they see that they can't focus.

But you know, I'm starting to think the more I learn about the microbiome that a lot of it is also like all of the hand

sanitizer everybody uses at every age or the super lysoling that everyone's doing.

Do you have any thoughts about how disinfected our lives are? Oh, indeed. Oh you're hitting all the points and I've been screaming at the rooftop. You know, when you have longevity in this career like I have, you write on just about everything.

I did a whole series of What's in Those Bubbles and there are chemicals in those hand sanitizers during COVID that I lost my mind over because there was great data Particularly in the early days, they were using something called quaternary ammonium compounds, quats for short.

And those were in a lot of the hand sanitizers. Those quads were shown to cause reproductive harm in very small amounts by an amazing veterinarian. She showed it in rodents first.

Her name is Dr. Rubak, I think. Then she showed in college students. Because we often have our data, we extrapolate it from animal studies, often rodents, and we don't often get the human studies like GMOs.

We're basing GMO consumption on rodent, one rodin study of three months of like 90-day rodens study. Anyway, no human study, so people may not know that.

But anyway, they took a lot of those quats out of the hand sanitizers and they replaced them with alcohol. Alcohols get rid of the skin microbiome. You also have microbiomes on your skin, eye, gut, mouth.

We are covered with microbiomas. everywhere in our body, including there's a fetal microbiome, placental microbiomes, brain microbiomas. So no part of your body is sterile.

That is all thinking. Those alcohols increase the absorption of the skin for other chemicals and they change the microbioma of you skin. soap and water folks.

What that whole hand sanitizer thing I thought was such a bad turn. just back to soap and water. Again, there's a convenience factor. See that little gel everywhere you go.

And who's at super risk? Healthcare professionals, nurses. They are monitored for doing this little hand sanitizer thing before and after every entry into every room.

I'm thinking, what are you doing to our nurses? You're going to cause these, and maybe they're the more toxic materials that they're using. I don't even know it's in those sanitizers.

Okay. And then on TV shows, here's my big beef, I'm going to air it for your listeners here now. There's a very popular TV show called The Pit. It's about ER doctor.

Of course I was watching it as an ER Doctor. But every time Dr. Robbie went to see a patient, you could see which brand of hand sanitizer he was using prominently.

I was like, how much do they pay for that? And so you may not be realizing the subconscious information you're receiving watching a medical show. It looks like a documentary, it's not.

And I thought, oh my gosh, those Bees, I'm not gonna say the word. So that's one thing. Also during COVID, spike protein study came out by Dr. Sabine Hazan, who's a GI doc down in Southern California.

She did a very eloquent study, which got her into big trouble. Little did she know, she was an FDA researcher and she showed that spike proteins wiped out bifidobacteria.

Are you kidding? So she got so much heat on that, and of course nobody talks about it. So after I read her study, it came out several years ago, I'm like, huh, so what effect do routine childhood vaccines have on the microbiome?

this much data. In case people are listening and they're not watching because they are making those organic whole food dinners, that would be a zero. I found you zero because I looked.

Now, if somebody can find a study that shows me what various vaccines did in microbiome, I'll take it back. And I'd love to read that data, but I couldn't find any.

I feel like, at least for me, and I'm not as experienced as you, I've been in practice for almost 20 years, but it wasn't, probably, until the last, like…

three to five, that I really feel like there's just even been more information about the microbiome and how important it is and we have to nurture and love it and keep it growing.

So yeah, hopefully soon we're going to have more studies and more info and ways to recolonize us. No, just so parents know, so they don't get depressed hearing this, like, oh my god, this doctor's, Dr.

Doomingloo, is someone who has reduced the toxic insult. If you dont remove the toxins, you're not going to get better. So you have to reduce the toxicity exposures in microbiome.

Those are antibiotics. Glyphosate is an antibiotic. It was patented by Monsanto, now Bayer is antibiotic, but so you got to protect the microbes. Whole foods, they love.

They love fiber. They all have all kinds of fiber, so got to eat a high fiber diet, but real foods, real fruits, really veggies, not Metamucil. So that's the other thing.

Support that and give them the fermented foods. You increase the fermentive foods in diet. And remember, you have to acquire a taste for these fermented food, Rachel, because sometimes they're sharp and kids go, ah.

It can take 10 times. get a kid to try your new food. You have to keep trying it, keep serving it. What moms may not know is what they eat during pregnancy affects the fetal taste and then the baby's taste buds.

So there was a study that showed that moms who drank alcohol during Not recommending it, people. Those babies preferred alcohol. And moms who ate fermented foods during pregnancy, the babies had showed predisposition to liking fermented food.

So what we do during a pregnancy matters. Excellent. Yes. No. I feel like we just need to support our pregnant mommies so much more than what they get.

But like you say, that's a whole different talk, a different conversation. I'm with you, Rachel. And your parents get like a year off, year leave after a baby.

Like our moms can't even get two weeks off. Yeah, no, it is crazy. Then those poor babies are having to go to daycare. And it's like, okay, well, their immune system's going to get a workout.

Poor babies. I used to call that job security when I was doing ER. It was daycare. Like, oh boy, here we go. Yes, no, I hear you. All right, let's see.

I think we covered our next question to undiscourage our parents who are listening. So this one's an interesting one. If you could go back in time and give yourself a piece of advice, either as a pediatrician, a mom, or as anything to your younger self, what would that be?

You know, I think looking back now with everything I've learned, unlearned, relearn, try to learn again. I would say is question everything, number one, and that a lot of the science, quote unquote, science has is some of it is fraudulent, some it has been done by industry, that it may not be exactly the signs that you think it, is to learn to

trust your intuition.

And that the way we were trained as a pharmacology model, I wish I could learn more nutrition science at that time and not the two hours I had with the year of pharmacolgy.

that every symptom doesn't require prescription. That was back in the old stone age days. And that when parents, that there was a term that I heard all throughout the clinics I worked with that, oh, difficult parents.

The difficult parent were parents who pushed back. Like, what do you mean my kid needs this or that? In retrospect, I would support those parents now for questioning whatever rhetoric we were doing.

So ask questions, push back. You deserve and should receive informed consent whether your physician is telling you get a surgical procedure or giving you some acetaminophen, Tylenol.

It's informed content. We as practitioners have to tell you the risk benefit rate explanation for anything we do and that's what parents deserve. Yeah, and follow your intuition.

Develop that sense because no one knows your child like you. So when you say there's something wrong, the best and smartest thing I ever learned to hear mom or dad and say, yes, there is something, wrong.

If you said it, it's my job to help you as we work together as a team, not hierarchical, maternal, paternal, no, we are a, team to figure out what is causing whatever we're working on.

So I think those are some of the things that my advice to my younger self Yeah, I think those are great things. And yeah, definitely trying to take those and learn more about nutrition and step away from all the pharmaceuticals that we were taught in school and training and see definitely there's other ways to probably do things better.

There are, and they were pushed down a lot by John D. Rockefeller in the 1910, he wrote a report. In the early 1900s, 20th century, medical schools were mostly holistic.

They offered herbals and homeopathy and natural ways for doing everything from childbirth to you name it. And then John B. Breckfeller had some spoils of oil that he put into the pharmaceutical industry and he created something called the Flexner Report.

Advice to her younger self and the history of medicine

And they literally single-handedly went across the country and created quackery medicine from natural medicine. So that was the shift. And so many hospitals in the 20th century were homeopathic hospitals, UCSF, New York Medical, Hahnemann in Philly, Temple.

They also got rid of women's medical colleges and black medical college. It was a mass attack. on anything that wasn't under the construct of John D. Rockefeller.

So historically we know what happened and we're regaining what our grandparents, and perhaps in your case, your great grandparents once knew. What I write about is not new information, I'm resurrecting old information.

Yeah, there are new spins, new diseases, but I am resurrect what we knew on what are great-grandparents or grandparents knew and bringing that to the table.

Yeah, no, that is terrific because otherwise it's going to be totally lost because it wasn't passed on to us as practitioners. It wasn' t even passed onto us from grandmother to mother to daughter sometimes because that has now been back there so far.

So I think that's terrific, because all these plant medicines, they've been around for eons. And it's always interesting to me that a lot of our pharmaceuticals are based off the plant medicines or pharmaceutical companies will go to

indigenous areas and see what's working and then try to take and like trademark their plant medicines.

So it's like, oh, wait a minute. You can't patent vitamin C. Right. That's all. It's ascorbic acid, you're not going to patent it. Also, that's why they are creating all these genetically modified seeds, because they can patent them.

yes i call it the patent parade rachel yes they feel like someone's got to make some money on that um all right so to end up our talk here for all of our parents who hopefully had some not discouraging information um but what's one message you would like to leave our families with today yes so i would say uh once again that I would say the message of all the things I can think of is that this is a family endeavor, and I ask families to create their family tribe.

Everyone's in. It's not just your kids who are going on this diet. Its mom and dad and grandma, whoever is in the family constellation, number one. But in addition to your family, you need your friends' tribe, Because as you start to shift as a parent to bringing tangerines to your kids' soccer match instead of the cupcakes like I did, you know, to the soccer matches, then it can create a disturbance in your parent flow.

You may feel like the outcast in you community or always the difficult one or like, oh, God, yeah, there's Rachel again, or there is Michelle again with her tingerines.

And I'll share one little vignette with you. My own daughter was in high school. And it was the prom, and all the moms were baking cookies and bringing desserts.

And I was asked to bring a dessert. I said, sure, I can do that. So all of the mums baked these cookies with colored dyes on them and making them festive.

i brought in organic strawberries that were dipped in dark chocolate that I froze, a huge tray of them. Those were the first thing to go. So the kids chose the healthier option, and the cookies were still there.

And I just observed, I thought, that's interesting. I though kids would do the cookie, right? And the doughnut, they didn't. So we need a parent tribe, a friend's tribe.

What that looks like is, get the emails, the phone numbers, contacts of your kid's soccer group, their music group their piano class, whatever group they're in, Boy Scouts, Girl Scout, and create community events, potlucks.

I'm not saying cook for parents, maybe in your backyard, in front of your house. Maybe at some community center, or maybe at the soccer field, at nobody's house, and everyone brings stuff.

And ask people, listen, never you take responsibility, parents. Blame it on Dr. Rachel or you heard it from Dr Michelle. Like she said, she didn't really want people bringing cupcakes.

Can we do other choices? These are the choices she suggested. And so you shifted to Rachel. She'll take the heat, right, Rachel? Totally. I do all the time.

Me too. Blame me. That Dr. Michelle said make sure there's trail mix. Tangerines, so many healthy choices. Hummus and carrots, lots of kid-friendly snacks.

You can make coconut little date, coconut date treats. So many delicious things. Bring those along and create the sexy buzz with your parent community of your children's friend group the best you can.

Family tribe, community support, and closing resources

If you don't have one, look for them. I tell parents, find your tribe. Find your And sometimes you're going to take a lot of heat from your in-laws, from you sister.

Everyone's giving you grief as you make these shifts. Sometimes it's hard. They want you to stay in it. Like what? No cupcakes? Kids love the cupcakes.

Yeah, they do. And they taste good. I like the cupcake. You can feel the pressure. But when you have community around you, you don't feel so isolated, so alone.

You're not doing it by yourself. you're doing in community. So I couldn't stress enough to find the tribe and do it together. It gets lonely out there.

People made fun of me for being a homeopath. Oh my God. I took more heat, more jokes. Quake, ornico, stat, 1M. The jokes, it was just endless jokes until last vignette, Rachel, and then we can wrap up.

One of my bosses, he's no longer my boss, was here at a Christmas party. He developed severe tummy ache and he had to go, he's like, Oh, Michelle, my God, wasn't my food people.

He came here with a stomach ache. And I said, well, um, sir, not selling you his name. Can I give you a homeopathic? I've got like 500 looking at me right there.

Anyone. Yeah. Okay. I quit over homeopathy by the way, but long story short, I gave him one remedy. You said I'm not feeling anything. Start screaming for the drugs.

I said, let me just try one more. I gave him one, more remedy. Cause sometimes you don't hit it right. The first time I might have to try several, gave me a second remedy and in five minutes he was better.

And my boss, ex-boss said. Wow, this stuff really works. So sometimes I get a little lonely out there and you take some heat, grow some thick skin. It's cause you might take.

Heat and then build your own, your, own little community. Excellent, thank you for that. Thank you so much for joining us today. For parents who want to learn more about you and the work that you do, where can they find you?

Thank You Rachel. Sure, my non-profit 501c3gmoscience.org has been around since 2014. My new book, MakingOurChildrenWell.com, it's on Amazon. It's self-published.

I self published it because the publisher wanted me to take out some things that I wouldn't. I have a podcast, The New MDs, newmds.com. I am coming on Tuesday, Patti Lemur, and Pattie is a specialist in autism and just wrote a book not too long ago called Total Low Theory.

She's the author of four books. she's amazing. 12 noon on The new MD's doing that. And right now I'm working on pesticides and forest fires. So you can find nopoisoncalifornia.org if that's something that interests you.

But I invite for your parents to look at Making Our Children Well. This is my new book. And I'm really proud of it because, oh, mine's all marked up, people.

Look at that. But it's my brain download. Before I become compost with my chickens in the backyard, I really wanted to share with parents how to do what I do.

When you can't find a Michelle or a Rachel, what do you do? So that's why I wrote about nutrition homeopathy. Well, perfect, thank you so much. Thank you for joining us today.

Rachel, Thank You for having me and good health.