

## Parents Are Hard To Raise S02 E76P.mp3

[00:00:00] The world's becoming a dangerous place for us women. Lipstick bodyguard looks just like an innocent little lipstick. But it'll instantly drop any attacker to his knees so you can get away unharmed. Lipstick bodyguard. Fear no evil. Get yours today only at lipstickbodyguard.com

**Announcer:** [00:00:37] What do you get when you combine technology with a small army of college students eager to serve the needs of seniors in their community? This week on Parents Are Hard To Raise Diane's special guest Andrew Parker, CEO of Papa an innovative new senior care solution that's taking Florida by storm.

[00:00:57] Parents Are Hard To Raise is now available on Spotify and its 180 million monthly subscribers.

**Diane:** [00:01:15] Welcome to Parents Are Hard to Raise, Helping families grow older together without losing their minds. I am elder care expert Diane Berardi.

[00:01:25] What happens when dad needs a ride to an appointment or mom needs some help learning about that new smartphone you gave her or even a day out at the mall, and your schedule is packed so tight, you couldn't fit a breath of fresh air in it. Most times we enlist the grandkids. But what if the grandkids are not around to help. That's where this week's guest comes in.

[00:01:47] When Andrew Parker's grandfather was diagnosed with early onset dementia and the family had difficulty managing his daily needs, he devised a creative way to combine technology with a small army of college students who were eager to provide companionship, assistance, and support to those in need. He named his new Florida based company Papa, in honor of his grandfather. Through its mobile app, Web site or 800 number, Papa provides assistance and socialization to seniors through young and enthusiastic team members called Papa Pals. It's kind of like grandkid's on demand. And it's an idea that's sweeping through Florida like a hurricane. And here to tell our Parents Are Hard To Raise family all about it is Papa's founder and CEO Andrew Parker.

[00:02:35] Andrew welcome to Parents Are Hard To Raise.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:02:39] Thank you so much.

**Diane:** [00:02:41] Your company, I have four points that just popped out to me. That I love.

[00:02:51] First of all, your inspiration came from your grandfather, as mine did many many years ago. And secondly, the socialization. You'll hear me talk about socialization for our parents. That's my thing. You know they have to have socialization it's so important. We worry about them being lonely which leads to so many things. And then you're linking two generations together. I love that intergenerational combination. They help each other they learn from each other and they bring each other joy in experiencing things together.

[00:03:26] And finally we as children of aging parents that we know mom is okay she's going to the doctor or she's going shopping she's getting food so she's not just sitting there all alone. So your concept, your idea is just fantastic to me. So can you tell me, how did it all come about?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:03:49] Yes, sure. And your comments mean a lot. So, funny enough, I did not think of this as a business idea in any way shape or form. My grandfather, as you mentioned, we called Papa. He actually was an entrepreneur who had moved to Florida many years ago from

Argentina. You know he had dementia. He needed help, but we didn't find a traditional home care was what he needed. He was able to bathe himself. He was able to go to the bathroom himself. He could get around. But the primary need that he had was companionship. He needed someone to help him with stuff. He need someone to take them to doctor appointments. And frankly alleviate my grandmother and my mother who were the primary family caregivers, from really traditional homecare wasn't a good fit for him. So I kind of on a whim said why don't we just hire a college student?

[00:04:35] I ended up putting up a little Facebook ad on my personal Facebook saying recruiting college students, nursing or med students preferred. And I had actually had a bunch of people apply which was kind of surprising. We found one who was great. I took them through kind of a rudimentary version of the onboarding process we have now including a background check. And then I connected them to my grandpa and he loved it and my grandmother loved it. It was something that alleviated my mother as well. So looked into the data and recognized that 10,000 people turn 65 every day, and this is a huge opportunity. And so I really quit my leadership role at another start-up I had helped start as well and started Papa.

**Diane:** [00:05:16] So now were you in college when you thought of hiring a college student?

[00:05:21] No, I started Papa when I was 28 years old. I was not a college student. But I was a college student was a very versatile group of individuals that should be empowered in a bigger way and that's a really big part of our mission. This is really benefiting both older adults and college students.

**Diane:** [00:05:39] I can see that. Because you're giving them the opportunity, experience and the learning from another generation. Which I think is great. Because you know I came from a family where I lived with my grandparents. So I always had that intergenerational connection. And then of course, you know, people moved away. Grandkids moved away. Children moved away. So you don't have that anymore.

[00:06:08] And you know you often have our parents just alone. So it's such a great concept. Can you take me through, you know, like let's say I called, as a daughter. I don't live in the area and I want my mom to be taken to the doctor. How do how does it work? Can you take me through the steps?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:06:30] Sure. So we really make it super easy for anyone to access our service. Interestingly enough I think most people believe that it's the adult child of the senior who is calling or using our mobile app. But in fact, it's actually 65 percent of the seniors or the older adults themselves. Which is interesting.

[00:06:46] [laughing].

**Andrew Parker:** [00:06:46] Yeah. It's fun it's fun.

[00:06:49] So when the seniors request the service the majority of them are calling up our 1 800 number. They're talking to one of our member specialists who are part of this process and part of the companionship piece as well. And then they simply create an account, put in the credit card. And once you set up, you never have to do that again. You just can't say hey my mom or I need to go to the doctor tomorrow. I need to go grocery shopping. I need someone to teach me how to use a computer. You know I want to learn how to watch a Netflix movie or upload documents. Or I have a beautiful life story. You know I was part of a political campaign or I was a surfer. I was an actress. And we had a lot of people affords us categories that wanted our service to continue to be

independent and reduce loneliness.

**Diane:** [00:07:31] Now how is how do the seniors find your service?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:07:36] Funny enough, seniors are very good at googling. It's not exactly the way you and I probably Google. They'll look up very long tail things. They'll say like hey I'm Mary and I need to go to the doctor on Wednesday, and my neighbor can't do it, can you help me please? Oh, by the way I have a dog. [laughing]

[00:07:51] And it's pretty funny because of the lessons we've learned there but they find us there, and also word of mouth.

[00:07:58] And what's really exciting is we're now starting to be offered through Medicare Advantage plans which are Medicare offered through health plans.

**Diane:** [00:08:04] Really?

[00:08:05] And so, that's a big focus of ours. Yeah, Medicare came out with a recent ruling that allows for the payment of our services under Medicare Advantage. So we've been putting a lot of effort towards that. Because we'd love for this to be either free or a significantly reduced cost to people that want it.

**Diane:** [00:08:21] That's fantastic and I think it's great that the majority of your calls are coming from the seniors themselves.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:08:30] It's pretty awesome.

**Diane:** [00:08:30] Yeah. Really.

[00:08:35] So do you have to become a member? Is that how it works?

[00:08:40] So yeah we actually just changed our model a little bit. So we have a very simple pricing. You can pay 20 dollars an hour. No membership fee for any of the services you want. You can use it for as little or as long as you want. We only charge a minimum of 20 dollars after that it's by the minute. If you are driving, if there's a requirement of transportation, which you're not dropping people off at the doctor, we go in with them, we sit with them, it's part of the experience. We going to charge 50 cents after 10 miles.

[00:09:07] We do have a premium membership, which is the same hourly rate, but it's an additional thirty dollars a month and the main difference is that you get to actually choose your team of Papa Pals. So our basic membership which has no monthly fee you essentially get who's available. We don't even try to give you a team but we guarantee it with a premium.

**Diane:** [00:09:24] Okay. So I would imagine do you have people who maybe have a regular schedule, like every week, they want to do things?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:09:32] About thirty five to 40 percent of our members are just consistent schedule.

[00:09:37] We have some people doing about 200 hours a month and we have some people that use it for an hour a month.

**Diane:** [00:09:44] OK. And so if you're a premium member you can say I want a certain person or a certain team every week or every time?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:09:55] And the way we handle it interestingly is probably not what you would expect. We actually just send you one based on some of the conversation or somebody inputs you make into the mobile app or the Web site. You can also request services through the mobile app or the website as well. But what's funny. Kind of to us really nice to show that we've been able to create this type of a person, which is a Papa Pal, is that like 95 percent of the time the first three people we send you become your team.

**Diane:** [00:10:24] Really?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:10:25] And it's because it's like a grandkid on demand. The traditional home care. This is typically a person of a different background. Different education level. With us, these are highly educated individuals that are typically used to being in many different cultures and are able to kind of break down that typical stigma and that is why seniors are calling us compared to what you would normally expect in a traditional sense.

**Diane:** [00:10:49] Now I would imagine you know like if you had someone who needs to go to the doctor and they use a walker on oxygen that would be okay too?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:11:02] So, we do have certain limitations. We can support Walkers. For other things we do send it out to partners.

**Diane:** [00:11:07] OK. We're going to continue talking to Andrew Parker from Papa. But now if you're a woman there's a woman in your life. I'm going to tell you about something that you absolutely need to know.

[00:11:21] I Want to tell you about my friend Katie. Katie is a nurse and she was attacked on her way home from work. She was totally taken by surprise. And although Katie is only 5 feet tall and 106 pounds she was easily able to drop her 6 foot 4, 250-pound attacker to his knees and get away unharmed.

Katie wasn't just lucky that day. She was prepared.

In her pocketbook, a harmless looking lipstick, which really contained a powerful man stopping aerosol propellant.

It's not like it was in our grandmother's day. Today just going to and from work or to the mall can have tragic consequences. The FBI says a violent crime is committed every 15 seconds in the United States. And a forcible rape happens every five minutes. And chances are when something happens, no one will be around to help.

It looks just like a lipstick. So no one will suspect a thing. Which is important since experts say, getting the jump on your attacker is all about the element of surprise.

Inside this innocent looking lipstick is the same powerful stuff used by police and the military to disarm even the most powerful, armed aggressor. In fact, National Park rangers used the very same formula that's inside this little lipstick to stop two-thousand pound vicious grizzly bears dead in their tracks. It's like carrying a personal bodyguard with you in your purse or your pocket.

Darkness brings danger. Murderers and rapists use darkness to their advantage. We all know what

it's like to be walking at night and hear footsteps coming at us from behind. Who's there? If it's somebody bad, will you be protected? Your life may depend on it.

My friend Katie's close call needs to be a wake up call for all of us. Myself included. Pick up a Lipstick Bodyguard and keep it with you always.

**Announcer:** [00:13:23] You're listening to Parents Are Hard To Raise. Now... Thanks to you. The number one elder care talk show on planet earth. Listen to this and other episodes on demand using the iHeart Radio app. iPhone users can listen on Apple Podcasts and Android users on Google Podcasts.

**Diane:** [00:13:46] So there are so many new ways to listen to our show, it is hard to keep track. Spotify. Roku. You can listen on your smartphone with Apple podcast and Google podcasts. You can get us on Apple TV, Direct TV and even just ask Alexa to play the show for you. It's great, because you don't have to be tied to a radio anymore. You can listen when you want. Where you want. For as long as you want. And if you're listening to one of the shows in a new way please do me a favor please share this new technology. Help someone else learn about the show and show them a new way to listen. And if you're in Florida have a Papa Pal show you how to listen to the show.

[00:14:28] A big shout out to Diana from Cape Town South Africa, who listens to the show and her iPhone while she's cooking dinner for a family. And this week, she showed her younger sister had a listen as well. Thanks so much Diana.

[00:14:42] And Devon from Paintsville, Kentucky who listens on a Samsung Galaxy smartphone using the Google podcast app while driving to work. And this week Devon showed his 84 year old mother how to ask Alexa to play the show on her new Amazon Echo. That's fantastic! It's great. Thank you so much.

[00:15:02] So Andrew... I have another question for you. We talked about how we go through the process of becoming a member or getting a Papa Pal.

[00:15:13] Now how do you become a Papa Pal?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:15:17] Yeah that's the critical piece. For us having quality experience that's fun an enjoyable and safe it is number one most important. And so we actually have over 2000 students apply for Papa a month and that's just in our first market in Florida.

**Diane:** [00:15:31] Wow!

**Andrew Parker:** [00:15:31] It's pretty overwhelming. And I think it's because when we really thought of this as a nice job, we now see this as something much bigger. It's an opportunity for someone who wants to be a nurse or a doctor or go into healthcare or hospitality to build out their own future opportunity. And it's fun. It's a way to give back to the community and that's something that really aligns with millennial's goals. So they apply online. There's a long questionnaire. They do an interview, personality test, background check, motor vehicle check. We insure them. We are consistently monitoring them and it's a critical part of our business.

**Diane:** [00:16:09] So you just strictly recruit from colleges?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:16:13] Right now, that is our model. Most students are coming to us through either word of mouth, hearing about us on shows like your show or just going to joinpapa.com.

We've been getting some good press on that of course helps. But mainly looking at college students right now. We are considering other options in the future.

**Diane:** [00:16:32] I guess it's great for them because it's a flexible job as well, if they are going to school.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:16:40] Exactly. And for students that want to go into a field that kind of aligns with us, this better than you know being a bartender, not that there's anything wrong with that, but if you're trying to build this in your career, this makes a lot more sense for you.

**Diane:** [00:16:52] You know it's interesting because even... I'm always saying to to people sometimes nurses... I love nurses, but sometimes I don't know if it the Education now... You know there's not a lot of sociology in there or you know or a social component of it. And I'll say to a nurse, "didn't you have any of that?" And so I think this is great because this is a great opportunity. It's not just learning from a book and then just maybe doing an internship in the hospital, but this is...

**Andrew Parker:** [00:17:35] It's practical.

**Diane:** [00:17:36] Yeah this is life. And this is great. And matching the millennial with the elderly's is fantastic.

[00:17:47] You know transportation is a big issue for the elderly. They say that 30 percent of patients skip doctor's appointments, and transportation is the key problem. Do you find most of the calls are for transportation or will I be surprised that it's something else?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:18:08] Slightly Surprised. But I would say 50 percent of the time someone reaches out to us the first time is because they need a ride somewhere. But what's been more interesting to us is, someone needs to go to the doctor and that's the reason they called, which may be like an hour and a half, two-hour visit, maybe a little bit more. Ends up a turning into an eight hour, several time a week visit. So it's almost like Incognito. We are solving for the loneliness problem, which is really our primary focus, but not many people call and say I'm lonely.

**Diane:** [00:18:35] Right.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:18:36] Because there's stigma. But they call and say I need you to teach me at his computer. And then now they're doing that every week multiple times a week and then essentially it's become part of their life. What's cool is we've actually started to build what we call encouraged experiences. With the mobile application on the students side, which that's how they access the available visits, actually provides kind of recommendations on what to do with the senior so they're not just sitting in a room, you know, talking, they're doing more than that. Think that positively impact one's life with that encounter, as well as in the outside community.

**Diane:** [00:19:07] That's fantastic. It's great. What do you see... I Bet some of our listeners are like, are you going to come to other states, you're in Florida. Is that in your plan?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:19:22] A hundred percent. Right now we're saying and our plan is tentatively to open up five more states in 2019. Right now we are pretty focused on partnering with some large organizations in different markets, which is essentially allowing us to open up these areas. So anyone that wants to bring us there maybe talk to some local health plans or health systems. Because that allows us to open it up, have a secure opportunity and then offer consumers the benefit in addition.

[00:19:50] Right. Okay. I was reading that Papa Pals are working with seniors participating in clinical trials in Miami Jewish Health?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:20:04] Yeah. So that was one of our first customers, Miami Jewish Health Systems. They have a memory care unit. They're a senior facility. Many other things separate older adults. And part of our initial program with them is actually getting people from their house to these memory clinical trials and dementia trials. And we're not just dropping them off, we go in and they have like 10 hours worth of doctor appointments and tests. And in between those tests, we're playing brain games and encouraging them in different ways. So that's been really powerful and we have some really exciting partnerships like that with others that we'll be announcing very soon.

**Diane:** [00:20:38] That's it's fantastic. Do you know for that for those Papa Pals, is there special training for dementia patients?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:20:49] So with certain programs, we have what we call Pal Plus. It's kind of an internal thing, but we've developed the dementia training. They're not going to be clinically providing anything. They're still just Papa Pals but they now at least have awareness. And we're doing that with other plans as well as other systems.

**Diane:** [00:21:07] And I would imagine what's a great thing is if you have a Papa Pal take someone to the doctor, and the doctor says well I want to talk to the daughter or son. I bet because you have a college student who's... I bet could get the son and daughter on face time or something, where that would happen before.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:21:31] Yeah. Someone had referred to the Papa Pal's as pre-detection Ninjas and it's a really good way to think about it. We had essentially at least technically advanced individuals in the home or hanging out with the seniors at the doctor where they're able to capture information. And so those are all things that we're exploring right now as well.

[00:21:48] You know someone said to me the other day, You know, they're going to have cars that drive themselves, so people are in can you need anyone to take them the doctor's. And I say, How do you think the person's going to get out of their home? How's the elderly person going to get out of their home and get in the car and then get into the doctor's office? And the car can't just drop them off. [laughing]

**Andrew Parker:** [00:22:14] Yeah, maybe we'll have Papa Pal robots [laughing] No. For us it's really important for us to not pretend that technology can solve our problems. We believe technology enables us to do this at scale and really efficiently and at an affordable price and make it easy. But at the end of the day the problem resolving is a human problem which is I'm lonely. I'm having a profound effect on my health. This is affecting the health care systems costs. And the human is there is the resolve. And so, we believe you're matching humans with technology is critical. We're fans of autonomous vehicles. Were fans of technology. We're technology providers ourselves. But the human aspect is really our secret sauce.

**Diane:** [00:22:53] It's great. I mean you're so right. I was meeting with a client today and the poor woman she lost her husband, probably about nine months ago and she said her son moved in with her and she said that's wonderful. But she said, he works from two to 10 at night. So she said I'm so lonely. I mean that's such a critical time, you know dinner time. So and into the evening, so she said I'm so lonely. But sometimes I would sit outside and my neighbor would come over, but he's gone. He's gone for six weeks, he's on vacation. And I was like, oh my gosh. My heart is breaking for this poor woman right now, you know. And she shouldn't really be driving either, but that's besides the

point. [laughing]

**Andrew Parker:** [00:23:43] Sometimes that's hard to tell them...

**Diane:** [00:23:43] I know. And I'm thinking you know and she's like, I'm looking for things to do. But at night I don't want to drive, I don't want to do things. So this is such a... there's so many people who can benefit from it. And she did open up and she did say to me she's lonely but you know...

**Andrew Parker:** [00:24:08] Some people do. It depends on where you're at in that in that process.

[00:24:12] I mean, we had a member that started with us early on. He seemingly was very excited. He used the service and then calls us back a month later and says, You know guys, I really like his service, but I'm not able to afford it, because I'm not able to do other things that are important in my life. OK no problem sir. We understand. We appreciate you as a customer. You know, have a good day. So we cancel his membership. Within 10 hours he comes back and says I'm back. I'm a loyal customer. I'm sorry. I didn't lose something. What I lost is you guys. I need you back. And I think what happened was, this is a man who is normally used to being in the corner of a room for the last 20 years with little to no interaction that he was excited about. And suddenly we inserted some kind of a fun, young non-threatening individual, who you could trust and have conversations with, and it could help in other ways. And so that's powerful. helpful. And he's still our member today.

**Diane:** [00:24:59] That's great. Do you have any other clients that you know just warmed your heart?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:25:10] I mean I would say about 70 percent of them do. What, a story that was really hit me pretty hard was, we get a call, again a couple months ago, and someone says, it was a woman herself in her young 70s saying, you know I have stage-four cancer. I'm dying this week. That was the phone call.

**Diane:** [00:25:27] Oh my God.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:25:28] Obviously that hits you really hard. And you say, Okay. You know, we're excited that you're calling us to support you in any way we can. And she at hospice and home care and health care, so we're not providing those services to her.

**Diane:** [00:25:39] Right.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:25:40] But what she needed was a Papa Pal. So we sent that Papa Pal to her and then she ended up having a couple of other Papa Pals a day actually. And what happened is five months later she's still alive.

**Diane:** [00:25:50] Oh my gosh.

**Andrew Parker:** [00:25:52] And I'm getting a little bit kind of the chills here. But she would quote, I'm quoting her, that without Papa I would have died five months ago.

[00:26:00] And you know, our goal isn't to you know we don't want to be part of that. We want to help people. It's sad that that's the reason they're calling us. But it's exciting that we're able to kind of be that excitement, regardless of what stage they're at in aging. So our goal, our mission, as a company is to support seniors and their families through the aging journey. And that's what we think it is. I'm 30 years old and that's just part of my journey and my grandpa was 85 years old when he died unfortunately but that is just different spectrums and we're able to support people you

know really depending on what they have we should be able to help them.

**Diane:** [00:26:38] It's a great concept. It's A great idea. It's a great company. How do people reach you?

**Andrew Parker:** [00:26:45] JoinPapa.com or call us 1 800 348 7951.

**Diane:** [00:26:53] Perfect.

[00:26:55] Andrew, thank you so much. And we're going to be in touch again, because I want to know what other states you'll be in next year.

[00:27:06] I hope you got something out of this episode. I know I did. I love getting your emails and questions, so please keep sending them You can reach me at [Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise.org](mailto:Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise.org) Or just click the green button on our home page. And there are so many new ways to listen to our show. You can Subscribe on iHeart Radio, Spotify, Roku, listen on your smartphone with Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts, get us on Apple TV, Direct TV and even ask Alexa to play the show for you.

[00:27:37] And if you were just do me two favors. If you know someone who would benefit from the show please show them how to find the show and if you like the show please give me a five star rating, 'cause that will help other people find our show as well.

[00:27:51] Parents Are Hard To Raise is a CounterThink Media production. The music used in this broadcast was managed by Cosmo Music New York, New York. Our New York producer Joshua Green. Our broadcast engineer is Well Gambino. And from our London studios, the melodic voice of "Miss Dolly D".

[00:28:05] Thank you so much for listening. Until next time...

[00:28:12] May you forget everything you don't want to remember and remember everything you don't want to forget.

[00:28:18] See you again next week.