

## Parents Are Hard To Raise® S01 Episode 110 Transcript

[00:00:00] The world's becoming a dangerous place for us women. Lipstick bodyguard looks just like an innocent little lipstick but it will 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](http://lipstickbodyguard.com).

**Announcer** [00:00:54] It's the most powerful buying group in all of human history. Is your business designed to romance them, or are you just pissing them off? This week on Parents Are Hard To Raise, Diane takes aim at marketers who miss the mark.

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**Diane Berardi** [00:01:11] Welcome to Parents Are Hard To Raise®. Helping families grow older together without losing their minds. I'm elder care expert, Diane Berardi.

[00:01:21] So May is Older Americans Month, and the theme this year is encouraging older adults and communities to connect with friends, family and services. Create, by engaging in activities that contribute to learning, health and personal enrichment. And contribute, time, talent and life experience to benefit others. And the part I want to talk about is connecting with services and businesses in the community. How does your business or your service treat the aging consumer?

[00:02:00] When I consult to companies on the senior market, hospitals included, you know just because you're in the medical field and you may deal with elderly patients it doesn't mean you're doing it right.

[00:02:11] Hospitals, just because you may be certified in a geriatric emergency room it doesn't mean that every employee in that hospital, maybe somebody who has nothing to do with hands on patient care, knows how to treat the aging consumer.

[00:02:29] So I tell everyone unless you immerse yourself in the world of the aging consumer, you observe them, you talk to them, you're never going to understand that customer and you're not going to recognize what they need and what they want.

[00:02:45] And training your employees that's so important. And the first thing I do when I come in is, I observe what's the interaction between your employees and the older adult? Do you even consider them in your training? Do you advertise to them?

[00:03:05] You know the makeup of our society is changing, the longevity boom affects every industry. So we've never seen such a demographic shift.

[00:03:15] Even cities, you have to become age friendly. One of the biggest complaints you hear... In the community I went to a meeting where they had politicians, senators congressmen, and it was open to the public. And it was senior citizens and they were asking them, What do you need from us?

[00:03:35] It was an open forum and we hear it every year... Public transportation. There's a lot of places where the elderly can't get because maybe they don't drive anymore. Maybe it's a woman who never drove, her husband drove, and she can't get anywhere anymore.

[00:03:51] So there was a drugstore chain that noticed that aging customers, which was a lot of their clientele, so it was crucial for their company's profitability, they tended to seek out older employees for assistance. They felt more comfortable with older employees. So what did they do? They encouraged their workers who were of retirement age to keep on working, and they had a lot of people who used to, maybe if they were from the north, they'd go to the south. They had homes in Florida, in the south, for the winter, so what they would do, would they would say, Listen, you can work in the south while you're there. And then when your job would be open here when you come back. So that they could have flexible hours and they can work in multiple locations. And they didn't lose that workforce that understood their customer.

[00:04:47] So we have to remember that the aging consumer, that's a large segment of our population. They have disposable income. They deposit money in banks. But less than 5 percent advertising is focused on them.

[00:05:05] You know they're mature people but you have to remember don't look at them as just the "aging consumer", the elderly, the old people. They're human beings, and they want to be respected for their age. You know these people they're proud that they are 80, they're 90 years old. But they don't want to be treated as old.

[00:05:30] Older people they feel younger than their age. On days when they feel most in control of their lives. So they want to be respected for their age but they don't want to be treated as a doddering old fool.

[00:05:48] It was really funny, I went with my mom. She wanted ribs. And the other day and so I thought we were going to order, that she's ordered from this place before. So I thought OK, we'll just order and we're going and pick up the food. So, nope. She's like, No no I want to go to the restaurant. And she wanted to come. And of course she wanted to come because she wants to pay. She doesn't want me paying. She wants to pay for the food. So I'm like, OK.

[00:06:16] And she can be feeling really well. So she's not moving as fast as she was. She's a lot frailer. She looks frail. She's using a cane. And so we went into this restaurant and, it's a big food chain. And you walk in and she says to me, You sit down. Now she needs to sit down, but she sends me to sit down. So I'm like, OK. You know because she's in control. And I'm not going to take that away from her, so I'm like, OK.

[00:06:47] She says, I'm gonna go get a menu. And there's like a podium. One side you can sit and then there's the bar. And I guess you wait here for takeout. And the other side, there's a podium where people you know, the hostess is, and she's gonna seat you.

[00:07:01] So my mother goes up to the podium and she says, Oh, can we have a menu? And the girl gives her menu. And my mother comes back and she says, OK what are we going to order? Blah blah blah blah. You know we get the order so I said, Ma I'll go put the order in.

[00:07:13] No no I'm gonna do it. She walks back up to the podium and she says to the girl, Okay, I want to place the order.

[00:07:21] Now... I'd say the hostess, she was probably in her early thirties. And her manager comes by. And they're both standing there, because it wasn't... It was like you know three o'clock in the afternoon. So it wasn't a a busy time.

[00:07:36] And so my mother says, Oh I want to place an order. And they say to her, Oh, You have to go over to the bar to order.

[00:07:44] And I'm looking and I'm saying, hmmm, You know. So I start to get up and my mother starts to walk. My mother says OK. And so my mom starts to walk towards me. I go, Ma I'll go over to the bar and order.

[00:07:55] No no no. Because she God forbid you know that she maybe they're going to take the money at the bar, when we place the order.

[00:08:03] So we go over to the bar, and I'm thinking, now why couldn't they just take the order from her and walk over to the bar and give it to them? Without making her feel incapable, but they could see, I mean she's out of breath, she's walking with a cane. You know, why not make it easier? Why not say, Oh Ma'am I'm, okay. Sure give me your order. They don't even have to tell her you have to go to the bar to place the order. So it's just it's training and observing.

[00:08:33] And what you may train... You know you may not train for every instance. Maybe you know... But someone looking at her, and saying, oh jeez can't go over to the bar. Just you know nonchalantly, Oh Ma'am I'll take your order for you.

[00:08:49] If you're advertising to the senior consumer, you have to remember they are influenced by straightforward language, strong straightforward language has to be clear and plain language. Simple.

[00:09:05] You can't make things complicated or confusing. When you give them instruction if they go to the hospital and they have to go somewhere for a test. OK. And they give you a map and they read you for hours the directions. And then, Here let me highlight this map for you. It's this tiny little map, you can't read it. And then they highlight it in purple highlighter, so you can't read anything on it.

[00:09:32] My mother... I'll look at her, she'll look at me, I can't even read it. So you have to be... You know why can't you... You have 14000 volunteers. Why can't one just take her where she has to go?

[00:09:46] You have to watch them and observe them. You know if you're talking to a senior and you notice that if they ask you, Excuse me. Excuse me. They can't hear. They may not be able to hear so you might have to talk a little louder. Are they reading your lips? You know you might have to write a little bit bigger. So you really have to observe. Not everyone is the same.

[00:10:11] When my mother goes for chemo they highlight her next appointments. And they do the same thing they highlight it in purple. And she'll say to me, Oh I can't read it. If they just did it in yellow. And I'll say her Ma, just tell them to highlighted in yellow.

[00:10:27] Oh well maybe she doesn't have a yellow marker.

[00:10:31] I go, you know, but tell her you can understand it. You know you can't...

[00:10:37] I say to them, Please make my mother's appointments around 11 o'clock. Can you just put that in in the system for her? Because my mother keeps getting 1:30 appointments and they're really late. Trying to get her there, get her home, it's a long process. So every time they keep giving her 1:30 appointments. She doesn't see what the appointments are. And when I call, I'll say to the scheduler, Can you give her 11 o'clock appointments? Can you put it somewhere in your system? You know because someone's coming from two hours away and taking her, and 11 o'clock seems to work the best.

[00:11:11] "Well there's nowhere in our system to put that.

[00:11:15] I said, but well can you make, can you put it somewhere?

[00:11:19] Can you tell whoever devised... You know, you must have I.T. people. Don't they have like a part for comments? I mean these are just simple things.

[00:11:27] "Well when we hand your mother the sheet, tell her to you know, if we give her the wrong time, tell her to tell us at that time. I say, but she can't read it.

[00:11:37] So there are things, things like that that just are simple things.

[00:11:42] If you make an offer to a senior, always offer free delivery. And always if they make a purchase, talk to them after the purchase. Call them up after it. Write to them. They want to be able to feel that you are supporting whatever you sold them. And you have to be that way.

[00:12:02] If you ask them for personal information, tell them why. Because you can't just ask them, Give me your social security number. Give me your date of birth. They look at you. They're not giving you that information. Tell them why you need it and that their information is safe and it's secure.

[00:12:21] And you have to be ready to field their questions.

[00:12:25] I had a client who was discharged from a hospital and there was no one home and the hospital was told there was no one home to help her when she gets home.

[00:12:39] Now she was back in the hospital again. And they said to her, OK well we're gonna be discharging you tomorrow. And again I said to them, You have to call the daughter. The daughter wants to be notified because there's no one home when she gets home. She lives alone.

[00:12:57] "We would never do that. We would never discharge a person, an elderly person to their home if there's no one there."

[00:13:05] And the client and I both said at the same time, But yes you did that just last week. And they look at you like you have four heads. "No that's not possible. That can't be possible".

[00:13:18] Yes it is.

[00:13:19] So you have to be ready to... First of all that shouldn't happen. But ok, it did. So you have to be ready to say, Oh my gosh it did. Let me find out how that happened and let

me assure you it's not going to. Let me make sure that this department knows or this person or I'm going to write it here. I'm going to highlight it. I'm gonna do what I need to do.

[00:13:43] If you're advertising to a senior citizen don't talk about the product. Talk about them. You have to imagine them using that product. Imagine how it's going to help them. Imagine what they are going to do with it.

[00:14:04] And you have to remember that most people see themselves like five to 10 years younger than they are. So you have to realize that when you're advertising to them. They don't want to see people sitting around using a product, you want activity.

[00:14:22] And we're going to continue talking about our beloved parents. But first if you are a woman or there's a woman in your life there's something you absolutely need to know.

[00:14:33] 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** [00:16:32] You're listening to Parents Are Hard To Raise®. Now... Thanks to you, the number one eldercare 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. Want a great new way to listen to the show? Have an Amazon Echo or dot? Just say, Alexa play Parents Are Hard To Raise® podcast.

**Alexa** [00:17:02] Getting the latest episode of Parents Are Hard To Raise®. Here it is from iHeart Radio.

**Announcer** [00:17:07] It's as simple as that.

**Diane Berardi** [00:17:09] You're right Dolly. There are so many really cool new ways to listen to our show. It's hard to keep track. You can join the one hundred and eighty million listener is on Spotify. You can listen in your car, at the gym, or pretty much anywhere on your smartphone with Apple podcasts and Google podcasts.

[00:17:27] You can get us an Apple TV, Direct TV, Roku. And like Dolly said, you can even ask Alexa to play the show for you. It's great, because you don't have to be tied to a radio anymore.

[00:17:43] You can listen when you want, where you want, for as long as you want. And if you're listening to the show one of these new ways, please do me a big favor... Share this new technology. Help someone else learn about the show and show them a new way to listen.

[00:18:00] One of the biggest, biggest no no's in advertising in hospitals in if I take my mom to the store... Don't direct the language, don't direct the conversation to me, to the caregiver. Don't talk over them. You talk to that senior. You talk to that customer.

[00:18:26] And in your advertising don't use "elderly" in your piece 14 15 times or "senior citizen." Because, I'll tell you, senior citizens, they read newspapers. They read every word. They read every word in an article. And a lot of seniors, my father is one, they use "the computer" in quotes. They use the Internet to comparison shop.

[00:18:58] So... And you have to remember when they're using "the computer" they click on images that they think they should click on. Titles. They can't click on links that are small. They click on larger links. And it takes them a while to maneuver. But they'll do it if you allow them to do it.

[00:19:23] Packaging. Anytime we get takeout if even if you go to a supermarket and they have cookies or doughnuts they have those plastic containers that are so hard to open. I even have a hard time opening them. So imagine someone with arthritis or someone who doesn't see that well trying to get them open. It's really difficult. And my mother takes everything out of those. And she, I don't know why, And she has to put everything into those plastic containers, those Tupperware containers. She doesn't want anything cardboard, anything and plastic. "I hate cardboard." I don't know why. She just puts everything in these containers. But that's what they do.

[00:20:05] Remember that often times it takes a little longer for them to process information. And if you have an advertisement online or you have a commercial you know they can't ignore noise or other stimuli. So it has to be something clear cut.

[00:20:25] Doctors. Health care professionals. You have your own language. The aging consumer doesn't speak the same language as you. I don't speak the same language as you. Not a lot of people do. So you have to take the time to explain the information at a level that they can understand. You have to also remember they may not be able to see what you have written down. They may not be able to hear. You may have to speak louder. It takes them a longer time sometimes to learn the new information. So it may not

be that they have no questions, because you're only in there, you have 15 minutes to get your point across. You're spending 15 minutes with them, and you're like, OK you have no questions. BAM.

[00:21:10] They haven't even thought about, they haven't even fully processed maybe what you said. They have to be able to self pace the information. I know my mother and father, they'll call me a day or two later and say, You know, what that doctor said... They're still processing all the information. Sometimes it's not that they're not compliant, it's because they didn't understand. So you have to have somebody in there explaining things. And you may you know you may list numbers call us with any questions. And that person has to take the time. You can't be rushing them off the phone.

[00:21:49] I was in getting ice cream the other day and there was all just young kids you know probably high school college kids. You know who else is hired and who else works in an ice cream shop? But you have older people going in there getting ice cream. And I could tell, they had so many flavors and there's no description of the flavors. It's just what they are and you're looking at. And this older woman kept asking this young kid, Oh well, what is that? What is that? And the kid kept, I was watching him, and he was rolling his eyes. I know there was a long line but it was six or seven kids. What's the difference if it takes you longer to wait in on her? It's not like you're the only person and there's a line out the door. There's other people. So she didn't understand, didn't know. But she's buying ice cream.

[00:22:37] There were other people in that shop. There were older people in there, sitting there, eating ice cream. They're not going to buy ice cream. So what if she takes a little bit longer.

[00:22:48] A big plus is if you reconnect those 70 year olds, those 80 year olds with experiences they had when they were younger. From events you know that were special to their generation, their music.

[00:23:03] They are very cautious. As I said, on the Internet they're cautious. They're checking every object. They're looking at every object that looks click clickable.

[00:23:15] So you have to remember that it takes them a long time. Things have to be simple for them.

[00:23:21] Even malls, now. Cities. Like I said, malls you have to remember a shopping area... It's going to be very difficult for someone with a wheelchair, or someone with a walker to walk in crowded narrow, walkways. Or displays. A lot of stores with displays poking in the aisles. Or like my mother, she doesn't...

[00:23:46] I wanted to go into IKEA the other day.

[00:23:49] "I can't go into that store," she said.

[00:23:51] I'm like, Why?

[00:23:53] "The displays are so high. I am afraid they're going to fall on top of me."

[00:23:58] Who thought that? I wouldn't think that. You know but, "I don't want to go in...". The aisles are so crowded. Or there's nowhere for them to sit.

[00:24:07] My mother goes into Bed Bath and Beyond and in the store that she goes to they have they do have a bench, one bench somewhere, where she can sit. She gets tired. Even in a mall, you need a lot of benches.

[00:24:21] Can't have glaring lights. You need signs that are big enough. So we have to remember the senior citizen segment. They're a big market. They want to have control.

[00:24:34] They do have control. Their buying power affects every industry. So we have to look at them as part of a vital part of our society, of our consumerism society.

[00:24:51] OK. So doctors. Hospitals. Business owners. That was a lot of food for thought.

[00:24:58] And now on to a more personal note.

[00:25:01] People caring for your parents, you know you're going to get a lot of people, because there's so many, you have friends you have family, you may have co-workers, there's so many people who have gone through what you're going through now. They've taken care of their parents, they've taken care of an elderly relative. And sometimes, people will say to me, this is what you should do. You need to do this.

[00:25:25] You know I don't know if you're like me but, I don't want to hear that. I don't want to hear what I should do or what I need to do.

[00:25:32] It's different if, for me anyway, maybe I'm sensitive to it. And maybe you are too. You do want to go to the professionals. You do want to go to like the Rosalyn Carter Institute. They have training. They have places that have different professionals telling you what to do. You know you're going to go on the Internet you're going to absorb as much information as you can. But it's different if people say you know I went through that with my mom and this is what worked for me. That's different than the language you need to do this because no one wants to hear that or feel that way. So you know we might be sensitive to it.

[00:26:14] But people do mean well. So remember that.

[00:26:19] And I'll let you hear this... Global alcohol intake is rising, and the trend is likely to continue. Just so you know.

[00:26:30] So I'm going to have a glass of wine after I do this show. [laughing]

[00:26:36] Parents Are Hard To Raise® family... I love getting your e-mails and questions so please keep sending them. You can reach me at Diane Parents Are Hard To Raise® dot org or just click the green button on our home page.

[00:26:45] 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.

[00:26:53] Our New York producer is Joshua Green. Our broadcast engineer is Well Gambino. And from our London studios, the melodic voice of our announcer Miss Dolly D.

[00:27:04] We love our parents but they sure are hard to raise. Thank you so much for listening. Till next time... May you forget everything you don't want to remember and remember everything you don't want to forget.

[00:27:15] See you again next week.