



Series 2. Episode 15
Turning *Little Stones* show notes.
With Misha Bennett (singer/songwriter)
& Steve Bennett

Episode 15
Foundations Matter!

Firm Foundations

Misha Bennett (19) is on the threshold of young adulthood, with new exciting horizons and opportunities. In this podcast we consider how her parenting and early years experiences have helped shape the young adult she is today and prepared her for all that lies ahead.

In this podcast, Misha, her dad, Steve and Caroline reflect on how foundational the early years are. Neither her father, Steve or her early years educator, Caroline, would not have guessed she would become the talented artist she is or that her future may lie in the music industry.

"My mama always said, 'Life was like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get'" (Forrest Gump)

You cannot guess what the future holds... and surely that's the joy of being a parent. (Steve Bennett)

Misha's story...

Misha grew up as the only child born to Steve and Sabine, a close-knit family of 3, where music was always being played. She was exposed to a variety of genres (her parents' tastes are broad and include African influences). "Home was never quiet".

She recalls attending Stagecoach, a weekend theatre school from around 4 years old. She loved everything, especially the vocal coaches. Once at school, she took part in every possible event where she could perform and sing. It was a teacher who first recognised that Misha had a talent and who has continued to be her voice coach.

Misha's parents offered other activities, such as swimming, dance and sailing, but her real passion was to sing and perform.

Misha recalls her nursery experiences (and her childhood) as happy. She was never shy. Looking back, she realises that being with her friends at nursery was the most important thing for her – socialising and having 'fun'. Some friends from nursery remain her closest friends.

She recalls being happy to 'learn' more formal 'stuff' at home (to prepare for school) and that was probably why she saw nursery as a place to play and have fun.

A father's perspective

Steve has always been as involved a father to Misha as he could. He was "very intentional" about this... knowing he wanted to be as present as he could to raise Misha without the



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“prioritising career over family”. He didn’t always do this, but with the benefit of hindsight, he has worked hard to do this for Misha.

I wanted to be the best Dad I could be... it's a genuine joy to be part of what they do.

Steve explains that he and Sabine have never sought to influence Misha about what to do. She has chosen to go to university, “it’s her own choice”.

Steve also uses his skills and experience in Human Resources to support several charities and non-profit early years organisations. He wanted to offer his skills to enable managers and staff to have greater effectiveness in the vital work that they do.

Caroline’s recollections

At nursery, Misha was able to express her feelings well – an angry outburst was quickly over after which all was happy (coined as ‘Doing a Misha’). Caroline explains how important it is for young children to experience and deal with their strong emotions – Misha’s way was healthy!

As a staff team, we were acutely aware of the school (which had its own feeder nursery) that Misha would attend, and we felt some pressure to academically prepare her for this school. Misha resisted. We had a choice. Seeing her resist, we chose not to push water uphill. Instead, we continued to support all other areas of her development, including socially and emotionally as she prepared for school.

What were some of Misha’s foundational influences...

- Misha’s home was filled with music, which she absorbed effortlessly in infancy (ref. *Delving a Little Deeper*, Set 1; *Getting to Know You*).
- Misha was never shy or lacked confidence, which she attributes to her early years.
- Children’s development is holistic. For Misha, nursery provided social and emotional experiences she needed.
- In early years, it is often easy to lose sight of the end. Misha’s talents and opportunities emerged. They were not forced but allowed to develop without pressure or expectation.
- Parenting well required intentionality. (ref *Turning Little Stones*; Season 2; episodes 9 & 11). Steve is clear about the importance he placed on being as present a father as possible, confident that Sabine was providing the care and nurture Misha needed.
- Nursery practitioners can remain confident to respect children’s choices. We learnt much from Misha!



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No-one ever put me down!

Misha's songs

Misha's two singles are available on Spotify. Highly recommended!

Step Back

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5BefdB67T0ViXOOYmqE8D5?si=f907911d03394a0a>

Me, Myself and I

Further information, practical guidance and advice are available through

Turning Little Stones Podcasts

&

Delving a little Deeper

www.turninglittlestones.co.uk