



## Episode 19 – Looking Back and Moving Forward with CSC’s PA ECYEH Team Transcript

### **Matt Butensky:**

You're listening to the I Will Be Your Voice podcast. We are excited to head into 2025, and we thought we would have a special episode to start our podcasting year, and we're going to keep it all in the family again. Like we started off 2024, we are having a conversation with our team here at the Center for Schools and Communities that works on behalf of our Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program. So yeah. We're going to kick it off. We're going to have just a conversation with our favorites on our team. And my name is Matt Butensky, as you know from other episodes of the I Will Be Your Voice podcast. And I'm joined by my colleagues. And I'm going to have them introduce themselves before we dig into our conversation today. Go ahead, Taylor.

### **Taylor Teichman:**

Well, thanks. Hi, all. Taylor Teichman, youth development coordinator with our ECYEH program. So excited to be back on the podcast.

### **Ben Simmons:**

And I am Ben Simmons. It is great to be back for another family reunion. I'm a youth development specialist, and I am so excited to get to talk about the awesome work that we're doing with ECYEH.

### **Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Hello, all. As you know me, I'm Melissa Turnpaugh, from previous podcast episodes. I am the ARP-HCY project coordinator here at the Center. I'm so excited to talk with you all a little bit about what our team is up to this year.

### **Matt Butensky:**

Yay. Yeah. We're all here and we're sitting here. It's January. We're recording our episode. It's snowing outside, and so it just seems like a great day to have a conversation about maybe

some things to look forward to in 2025. So, I think we wanted to talk about 2024 first. So, guys, what is one word you would use to describe our work in 2024? What comes to mind?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

I can start. For 2024 my word was impactful. I feel that we started a lot of great new projects that you'll hear about. You've already heard about some of them in previous episodes, but maybe in some upcoming episodes. So some of those programs were the Bridge Project, our premier wireless phone program, summer camp, so those are just to name a few. But just excited that 2024 was really the year of launching those and really getting them off the ground running and then just continuing to advocate for more youth experiencing homelessness to be a part of these programs.

**Matt Butensky:**

So impactful is Melissa's word. I like it. What's another word?

**Ben Simmons:**

Similar to what Melissa said in all of the work that we've been doing, I feel like we've been dynamic. Not just dynamic as a team, which I know we all have some awesome strengths and we support each other through some of our challenges, but we've taken on a lot of new projects, and that's something that we can celebrate going into 2025.

**Matt Butensky:**

Dynamic. That's a good word. I like that. Taylor, what's your word?

**Taylor Teichman:**

So I really love connecting back to nature. I find myself doing that frequently. So honestly, the first word that came to mind when you asked was jungle. I thought about 2024 feeling like we were a jungle.

**Matt Butensky:**

Lots going on.

**Taylor Teichman:**

So there was a lot going on. But like in a jungle trees or providing shelter, there's rivers and water supporting life. Every creature, no matter how large or small is important and has a purpose. And so I think our program. Both at the statewide level and our regional approach really reflect a jungle. It takes a lot of collaboration and deep understanding, and so each part of us really play a role in that ecosystem.

**Matt Butensky:**

I love that.

**Ben Simmons:**

That's adorable.

**Matt Butensky:**

We are an ecosystem. We're our own ecosystem as part of the ECYEH program. And yeah, that was described beautifully. I was going to say something more simple, which was, I think, akin to jungle, which was busy.

**Taylor Teichman:**

Very busy.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Certainly it was a busy year, but I think we were impactful in our busyness. We were definitely dynamic in our new projects that we are offering. So yeah, we're really proud of 2024. And yeah, I think we will lean into those words as we head into 2025 too. So with that and thinking about 2024, which project or initiative do you feel was most impactful last year that we worked on? Who wants to go first?

**Taylor Teichman:**

I can go first. Honestly, the first thing that I thought of as well here is our statewide conference. I think the attendance that we had, the content that we offered from workshop sessions to keynotes to our exhibitors and just the space we really created, I think was reflective of our conference and its growth. We had sessions that were filling up. We were needing to move into larger spaces, and we were just receiving a lot of feedback that I think I'm really proud of. I think our conference continues to be impactful and really grow and sets the bar I think, for us and for those who are joining us.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. We always try to do better than we did the year prior. So yeah, we're already excited and looking forward to 2025. We're starting to plan and think about what topics and sessions we want to bring and speakers, and we're looking at locations. So stay tuned for details on our 2025 conference, which will be in the fall. Another project or initiative. Ben? Melissa?

**Ben Simmons:**

I'm really proud to have ... It's bittersweet, but seeing the entirety of the ARP-HCY Consortium in Philadelphia. I'm really proud of the connections that I made with homeless liaisons and Colleen and Morgan and the rest of the regional staff. I also think that we provided top-notch, unparalleled support to the liaisons because of the resources that we had. And by doing that,

we made some real impact on students and their families. I continue to be proud of that even though we've concluded.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Melissa, what would you say?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Well, no surprise from me, but camp is my baby.

**Matt Butensky:**

Summer Camp.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

It is always my favorite thing, and I've loved watching it grow from virtually being held to now being in person and moving into our second year of being in person. But I always find that the most impactful because I used to always do direct work, and I miss direct work. And so it's always such a highlight for me to get a week to just be surrounded by young people, especially those who are coming from disadvantages, specifically our population working with homeless. But I think that's the most impactful. You're giving them a week away what might be very unsettling for them every single day of their life to giving them a place of safety and comfort, and they're able to know what's going on. They can predict, okay, tomorrow I'm going to get all three meals. I'm still going to have the same bed to sleep in. I'm still going to have different adults and other kids around me who care about me and want to do things. Yeah, camp is always going to be my answer.

**Matt Butensky:**

We love the Build your Best School Year Summer Camp, and it's coming back in 2025 so we're super excited about that. And I think, definitely, when we reflect on 2024, we do need to think about and address all the work that we've done in Pennsylvania. And of course, this includes all of the school districts and the regional offices around the American Rescue Plan-Homeless Children and Youth. We were really able to scaffold in so many additional supports with that additional funding, and we were able to do things like we've never done before, as Ben said, being dynamic in our approach and offering new activities and projects and resources and supports. So I think, yeah, we have to reflect back on ARP-HCY sun setting in 2024 when we think about all the work we've done last year.

So with that what about thinking about a memorable moment? It could be silly or serious, but what's a memorable moment from our work together this past year that captures the essence of our team and our work?

**Ben Simmons:**

If you want to capture our essence, I think any time we load in for a conference, that's when all of our personalities really shine. I am usually complaining. Melissa is lifting things and assembling.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Blowing up balloons.

**Taylor Teichman:**

And say, don't forget the balloons.

**Matt Butensky:**

Melissa and a balloon arch are a match made in heaven.

**Ben Simmons:**

That's what I got her.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

That's a bit extreme, but-

**Ben Simmons:**

That was her Christmas present from me was a balloon arch.

**Matt Butensky:**

Balloon [inaudible 00:11:15].

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

No. It was balloon animals.

**Ben Simmons:**

Oh.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Now I'm moving on to balloon animals I guess.

**Matt Butensky:**

A new skill to unlock.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Resume builder.

**Ben Simmons:**

I think most memorable is Matt's renowned-

**Matt Butensky:**

Florals.

**Ben Simmons:**

Florals. His mum selection. He really knows how to make a conference room feel like home.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Especially when he makes you rap burlap around each and every one.

**Matt Butensky:**

It's the details.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Yeah. We know.

**Matt Butensky:**

What else? Another memorable moment.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

I will talk about our time at camp. Again, you will hear a lot from me about camp. But one of the fun things that we got to experience was how much our kids loved ice cream, which is a no-brainer. What kid doesn't love ice cream? But when you put them on a college campus where there is unlimited ice cream, they realize they can then eat it for all three meals. And so shout out to Charlie in London if you're ever listening to this. Yes. They signed a waiver so I can say their name. But they were our queens of having ice cream for breakfast, and eventually the lunch ladies realized that it was happening at all three meals so then they got it restricted down to two meals. And then I think by the time it was the end of the week, I think it was only dinner that they could have the ice cream. But I always laugh at that because literally that's all they cared to eat the entire time. And they were like, "Well, I'm getting all my food groups. It has

protein and dairy and everything else." And I'm like, "Okay. I'm not going to argue with you. You're going back home."

**Taylor Teichman:**

Anytime we have an event, I echo Ben and all the personalities showing up and we just really shine in all the ways when we're literally hauling in multiple vehicles, massive SUV rentals in order to get everything there. So I guess we could on a side business, start a moving company. It feels that way a lot of times. Another highlight though would probably be when we had our spring regional retreat where we bring all of our regional teams together for some professional development and we held the retreat at the Milton Hershey School. And I just really loved how we were able to take an afternoon and really tour the campus. I think that was definitely a highlight for the year and I think hopefully a highlight for a lot of our regional teams and just having that opportunity to be on the campus and explore all that Milton Hershey School has to offer. Yeah. I really loved that we had that opportunity to take the time to tour and learn more.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Certainly whenever we have an event, we definitely see the little unique details of all of our personalities coming through. But again, we're a work family, so we work through those things. Thinking about not just memorable moments, but what about takeaways and things that you've learned? So what is one thing you've learned from a teammate or a colleague this past year that you want to carry forward into 2025?

**Taylor Teichman:**

I can jump in and start.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Please jump in.

**Taylor Teichman:**

So a colleague and shout out to our partner Dr. Rajni Shankar-Brown that we've been a collaborating with since the beginning of ARP-HCY. She said something at our conference. She was one of our keynote speakers that has stuck fast with me since then, both personally and professionally. And she asked the question, how do you want to use your heartbeats or some version thereof. Again, going back to impactfulness, that struck a chord that I feel like when I show up to work each day, when I show up at home as a partner, as a mother, as a daughter, as a sister, as a friend, I'm really wrapping myself in that and pausing throughout the day or at least once a day to ask myself that question, how do I want to and how am I using my heartbeats today?

**Matt Butensky:**

That's a really great mantra. I like that. Yeah. We've loved working with Dr. Shankar-Brown for a few years now. She's offered so much to our program here in Pennsylvania. Anybody else have something they've learned from a teammate or colleague they want to share?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

I'm not going to put any names specifically to it. I think it's more of learning how our team works and utilizing strengths and weaknesses the best that we can. And I know that we've talked about that loading in and out of conferences and who is great at setting up this or putting up that or running this and running that. So I think it's just more of learning who is the best person to go to maybe when you are struggling in one specific area or sometimes I could be the person that someone would come to from our team. So like I said, I wouldn't specifically name, but I think just understanding the dynamics and the strengths that each of us bring and then how to best utilize them.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. I think that's my answer too. I think that I have learned something from each of you in some way this year. You all are passionate about your work and you bring different interests and you have different expertise in different things. So I learned from all of you just day to day and how you approach tackling certain topics and tasks that we work on. So that's something I would say.

**Ben Simmons:**

Yeah. We've definitely hit our stride together I think. That was something I was reflecting on thinking about one word to encapsulate 2014.

**Matt Butensky:**

Wow. From the archives.

**Ben Simmons:**

2014. 2014 was a weird year.

**Matt Butensky:**

Wow. 2014.

**Ben Simmons:**

But 2014 I feel like we've all grown so well together, starting at the beginning of ARP-HCY, along with Melissa I've gotten to see a lot of development and redevelopment and innovation and that's great for me. So from one to another, I'm very proud of all the work we've done as a unit.



**Matt Butensky:**

Yes. How nice. Thank you for sharing, Ben. Okay. So let's think about another topic. And that topic is ... We talked about a lot of the good work we've been doing, but what is an area or an opportunity or initiative that you think maybe we should explore that we haven't ventured into yet or that we could spend more time in? Or what would strengthen the ECYEH program here in Pennsylvania that we can reach more students and just make improvements to our work? And I'll let you think about that because some of these questions are coming cold. But I was thinking about how I would like to tap into our community organizations that assist homeless youth and families even more than we already do. Obviously our program is the Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness so we work most frequently with school districts and charter schools in our work. But it's so important that those students are referred to for community services and they are. But I was just thinking about other ways that we might be able to further engage and partner with community organizations working even more with our continuums of care and just so we are confident here that we can also connect students to those resources. So that's what I was thinking about, but I don't know if you all have any ideas.

**Taylor Teichman:**

We just had as our January topic for our ECYEH webinar learning series that we're doing throughout the school year, our topic was on positive childhood experiences. And I'm really hoping that we can continue to dive into that and explore that more. I think our homeless liaisons, our work here at the Center, we're very well-versed in trauma-informed care, trauma-skilled, trauma-skilled care, and the ACEs. But I think looking at positive childhood experiences is taking it to that next level. I love that it looks at that framework from a framework of hope. And so I am hopeful that we can just continue to bring more of that both to our personal and professional learning, but also out into our regional teams and to our schools.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Taylor, you've been organizing some really cool new topics for us as part of our learning series. So we offer a webinar every month. We've had an arts integration webinar already this year, which was so excellent. And these sessions are recorded and they can be referred back to and looking forward to learning more with that series as well. I was also just thinking about how I'd like to work more with cross-population youth. A lot of us, even on our team, we work with other special student populations, myself and Ben for students in foster care placement. On our team we work with individuals that support pregnant and parenting teens and migrant students. And there's just a lot of cross-population youth in those student groups that experience homelessness. So how can we better connect and share with those cross-population youth as well? So that's another thing. Any other thoughts from anybody?

**Ben Simmons:**

Yeah. Definitely thinking not just cross-population, but I'm always curious and impassioned by students who may have more of a disparate academic experience and life outcome. Not just because of experiencing homelessness, but adding in their status as LGBTQ or presence in a rural environment. We've seen so much interesting and eye-opening research come out of the last few years about all kinds of populations who are experiencing homelessness at disparate

proportions. So I hope that we'll continue our support of those students and giving them a spotlight too.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. It's interesting to look at those trends. Even when we look at other types of programs that youth participate in like career and technical education, we see the participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness as disproportionate to other student groups. So yeah. We talk about silos in this work, but just connecting and keeping those opportunities open so that we can get our youth connected to what speaks to them and what will matter to them. Melissa, did you want to say anything?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Yeah. I actually would piggyback off of the cross-population. That was something I was thinking of, but also the whole family unit as a whole. I know so much of our work is direct to the students, but I think if there's also some way to include more of whoever's responsible for them within our program. And I don't know exactly what that would look like, but I know that we've had our restorative practice sessions before where we've allowed parents to come and join in with their youth for a session. And I know with the Bridge Project, if it's a case by case, sometimes a family is brought in. But I think if there's a way that ... Also sometimes I feel like the parents or guardians from emails I get, they're trying to reach out for resources, but sometimes they don't always know where to go or where to look.

So the idea of doing almost a parenting guardian learning day of how to navigate your homelessness and how to work with your child and work with your school, because I think some of our parents and guardians are so scared to self-identify. And so then it almost becomes more of a barrier for them. And I think if they would realize there's other people like them and that there are these resources and conversations that can be happening that maybe we would have less accompanied youth because we would be able .. Or and less that are not identified because we'd have more of those open conversations.

**Matt Butensky:**

I love that idea. It's a great idea. More to do. Okay. So something a little fun. A little fun question. What do you think is your work superpower?

**Ben Simmons:**

Does outfit design count?

**Matt Butensky:**

No.

**Ben Simmons:**

NO. Not costumes.

**Matt Butensky:**

No. No. Ben, if you were here in our podcast recording room today, you'd see that he is dressed like a skipper I think I commented when you walked in. A captain of a-

**Ben Simmons:**

First mate. I don't know.

**Matt Butensky:**

It's very nautical. It's a very nautical look.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

I Was getting some beast vibes from Beauty and the Beast.

**Matt Butensky:**

Really?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Yeah. That coat that he has.

**Matt Butensky:**

Okay. We have to paint the picture now for everyone listening. It's a white turtleneck with a navy blue blazer that has a white pinstripe detail around.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

But then he has that cowlick, like the beast does.

**Matt Butensky:**

Gold buttons on the blazer. So hopefully that paints a little more of the picture.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Sorry folks.

**Matt Butensky:**

So sorry. Not about outfit. What is your work superpower?

**Ben Simmons:**

Okay. Okay. Well, for me, probably my curiosity. I think that I always am wondering, and I want to know more about the person and the work. So I want to understand who we're supporting, and I also want to understand why there might be a rise in identification for students experiencing homelessness. Does that mean we have more homelessness or we have better identification supports? I feel like that really drives me.

**Matt Butensky:**

Curiosity. Just remember it can kill the cat, so be careful. Teasing. Melissa, what do you think your work superpower is?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

So I changed my word at last minute, and I chose connection. I feel that I really value connection, whether that's personally or professionally. And I really enjoy when we as a team can actually connect AKA on Thursdays when we're all here together. That's our team bonding day, getting to really check in and have conversation and catch up. There's times where we do that virtually, but having it in person is so much more impactful. But I also think just connecting, that was something that was really important to me when I started this role. Really connecting with our outside resources, with our regional coordinators, and even just people here at the Center and learning more about what they're doing and their work. But I feel like for me, connection has always been huge. I've always loved creating space to build connection with people. Yeah.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Connecting is a huge part of our work because it's that saying, it takes a village, which we've all heard of course. But one person cannot just fulfill every need for a student. So it's about connecting. Okay. Taylor, what do you think?

**Taylor Teichman:**

I'm going to say being able to listen and be able to hold a safe space for individuals to share their thoughts, concerns, feedback, opinions. I really like being able to hold that space. I'd also say I love a good rabbit hole when it comes to trying to find fresh or new, different content and or speakers and trainers. So I don't know exactly what that looks like as a superpower, but I love a good rabbit hole as well.

**Matt Butensky:**

That's a superpower. Definitely.

**Ben Simmons:**

What about you, Matt? What's yours?

**Matt Butensky:**

What's my work superpower? What do you think? No. You don't have to answer that. I think ... Wow. Okay. I need to pause. I haven't thought about my own.

**Ben Simmons:**

Let's all three of us give what we think it is.

**Matt Butensky:**

This might get bad.

**Taylor Teichman:**

Attention to detail.

**Matt Butensky:**

Detail.

**Taylor Teichman:**

For sure.

**Matt Butensky:**

Being detail specific and oriented is definitely up my alley.

**Taylor Teichman:**

Being mindful of all the little things as part of that.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Thank you.

**Ben Simmons:**

I think patience. Thank you're very ... And not just being able to wait, but you're thoughtful in how you respond to things. You don't jump to a response or an immediate thought. So maybe more measured. You're measured.

**Matt Butensky:**

And also, patience is important in our work because it often takes a long time to develop and to have things be successful and implemented well. And so that's why I think we're so proud of our projects and we've been able to get out a number of them this last year. But just being patient and being thorough and detailed. So thank you. Melissa, do you want to comment on my work superpowers or is that a question you'd like to avoid?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

No. I can comment. Do you want to hear it? Just kidding. No. The word that came to my mind was flexibility just because you're professionally understanding, but personally understanding. And that's really respectful in a supervisor. I talk about that all the time with my family, that you just are very understanding when it comes to work-life balance and allowing us to understand that the work will still be there. This is our job and our life is our life. We're not brain surgeons, as you usually say. So yeah. I'd say flexibility.

**Matt Butensky:**

Thank you. Okay.

**Ben Simmons:**

What is your cute little ... Saving PDFs, not lives.

**Matt Butensky:**

I don't know if that's my saying, but we can go with that. Yeah. That is true. That is true. All right. So that was fun. Okay. So let's now pivot and think about 2025 all right. So what is everyone most excited about as we head into 2025?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

I can start.

**Matt Butensky:**

Is it about summer camp?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

How'd you know?

**Matt Butensky:**

Well, that was the theme earlier, so I thought that was the theme.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Of course. Is that even a question? Yeah. So mine is our 2025 Build Your Best School Year Summer Camp. So this year it will be held at Camp Fowler in Orfield, PA. They work closely with Valley Youth House. So we're super excited because the people that we were able to contract with have a lot of experience working with this population and have worked with this age group. And the thing that's going to be also really unique compared to last year's program where we did it on a college campus, is they're going to really get to experience camp life. They'll stay in cabins, they'll be able to do low rope, high rope courses, pool time, but there's also going to be some academic components as well that the students will get to participate in. But the other cool thing is that they're going to be the only ones there that entire week. And so I think that's going to be really huge for them to really just get to kick back and enjoy their time as a kid. And you'll get to hear some more about the camp. We will be doing a podcast with our camp director coming up next month as well as a webinar so stay tuned for that info.

**Matt Butensky:**

So excited to bring camp back again. And yeah, it's going to be a different format this year, like Melissa said. So we're looking forward to it. And it will be the end of July into the first week of August.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Correct. Monday, July 28th to Friday, August 1st.

**Matt Butensky:**

So start thinking about students that would be appropriate to send to camp.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Which those would be students entering sixth to eighth grade and fall of 2025.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yes. And of course, McKinney-Vento eligible. Who else? What do you think? 2025. Big year.

**Taylor Teichman:**

I'm excited. I feel like 2025 is the year of some fresh new ECYEH resources in general. I'm really excited. I've been talking with our regional coordinators to co-create multiple different resources on specific content and topics that as our regional teams are really the experts who are living and breathing this work and providing that support to our homeless liaisons and our schools, they've been identifying some emerging needs, some very ongoing needs. And so I'm just really excited that we're going to be doing some very mindful and purposeful co-creating of some resources. And that these resources will also be in plain language, in real time when it comes to scenarios. And I know that I'm going to learn along the way since they are the experts. And so I'm just looking forward to more of that connection and creation time with our regional teams.

**Matt Butensky:**

Nice. That sounds exciting. And also, we have a new human trafficking toolkit coming out as well. Very soon.

**Taylor Teichman:**

We will. Yes, we will.

**Matt Butensky:**

A brand new project coming out.

**Taylor Teichman:**

Hopefully later this spring, we will be able to unveil that toolkit, which will include an assessment and some additional resources that are really centered on and geared for our educators and liaisons to be using within their school settings and with the students that they're connecting with. So yes, stay tuned. We will be having a webinar on that, and then those resources will be available online later this spring.

**Matt Butensky:**

Very cool. Great to see.

**Ben Simmons:**

I know I am beyond pumped to be spearheading some of the support and technical assistance work with Act 1 of 2022. Of course, this supports our population of students being those experiencing homelessness, but also branches out into students with foster care experience and those who are court delinquent or court involved. So this is really something that clearly we're passionate about, but we're looking forward to collaborating and supporting the Department of Education here in Pennsylvania and making this a more accessible way to support students.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. Super excited about the new Act 1 resources and support that we'll be providing our Department of Education here. And I'm so glad you're going to be working on it with me. And you have a whole line of Act 1 outfits planned. No, I'm kidding. I'm just kidding.

I am really excited that we are able to continue many of the projects that were started during the big years of ARP-HCY. So that being, of course, the Bridge Project, which offers teletherapy services for children and youth experiencing homelessness. So please continue to refer students that you work with or people in your community that could benefit from that free, no-cost teletherapy service for students experiencing homelessness. So very excited about The Bridge continuing. I'm just excited to see our team continue to grow out and flourish. And I'm



excited about planning another conference. I know we talk about the challenges associated with that, but also, I think we really love it. And Taylor, I see you wanting to comment.

**Taylor Teichman:**

I'm just Jungle 2.0, here we go.

**Matt Butensky:**

Jungle 2.0.

**Taylor Teichman:**

2025.

**Matt Butensky:**

Jungle 2.0. Exactly. So I think we have definitely shared today that we're all really passionate about the work that we do, and I'm so proud of all of you and the work that you do for the ECYEH program in supporting our schools and working with our regional offices. And is there anything else you want to share about last year, this year, on today's episode?

**Ben Simmons:**

What I'm really curious about since we work in the jungle, what would your jungle animal be?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

No brainer. An elephant.

**Matt Butensky:**

Why though?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Because they're my favorite animal.

**Matt Butensky:**

That's a great question. And one I really haven't thought about since I was in fourth grade. What animal would I be if I could be any animal?

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

In the jungle.

**Ben Simmons:**

Yeah. In the jungle.

**Matt Butensky:**

Oh, boy.

**Ben Simmons:**

Boa constrictor. You're such a predator.

**Matt Butensky:**

Wow. Yeah. I'm going to pass.

**Ben Simmons:**

For some reason, I am drawn to toucan.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Oh, I love it. Good one.

**Ben Simmons:**

They're very useful, I think.

**Matt Butensky:**

At doing what?

**Ben Simmons:**

I feel like that has to be why they have those beaks.

**Matt Butensky:**

Taylor, any thoughts?

**Taylor Teichman:**

Well, I love The Jungle Book. And I used to love ... I still love Bagheera and he's the panther, so maybe that or a tree. I love me some trees.

**Matt Butensky:**

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just a tree.

**Taylor Teichman:**

So I think I would legit be a tree that's housing all of the creatures that are coming to the tree. Now Melissa's giggling at me.

**Matt Butensky:**

That's definitely a Taylor response. You know what, a sloth. I thought about it. I would like to be a sloth. You should be a sloth.

**Taylor Teichman:**

With your patience.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

You should be a sloth.

**Matt Butensky:**

I've very patient.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

You also are very slow to get up in the morning and make it to work.

**Ben Simmons:**

You're covered in moss.

**Matt Butensky:**

Yeah. I'm not the biggest morning person. But yeah, I am covered in moss too. I usually come in like that. So with that, I think we've said all that we can say for this episode of the I Will Be Your Voice Podcast. Glad we can keep our first episode as a team to talk about our things looking ahead. And we hope you tune into future episodes of the I Will Be Your Voice Podcast. And until then, thanks for listening and we'll see you again soon.

**Melissa Turnpaugh:**

Bye.

**Taylor Teichman:**

Bye.

**Ben Simmons:**

See you soon.

**Matt Butensky:**

Bye.