

Nicki: Welcome to The Healthy Rebellion Radio. This is an episode of Salty Talk, a deep dive into popular and relevant health and performance news pieces mixed with the occasional salty conversation with movers and shakers in the world of research, performance, health and longevity. Healthy Rebellion Radio's Salty Talk episodes are brought to you by Drink LMNT, the only electrolyte drink mix that's salty enough to make a difference in how you look, feel, and perform. We co-founded this company to fill a void in the hydration space. We needed an electrolyte drink that actually met the sodium needs of active people, low carb, keto, and carnivore adherence, without any of the sugar, colors, and fillers found in popular commercial products. Health rebels, this is Salty Talk.

Nicki: And now the thing our attorney advises, the contents of this show are for entertainment and educational purposes only. Nothing in this podcast should be considered medical advice. Please consult your licensed and credentialed functional medicine practitioner before embarking on any health, dietary or fitness change. And given that this is Salty Talk, we should expect the occasional expletive.

Robb: Welcome back wife, welcome back everybody else.

Nicki: Welcome, welcome, had a nice, or several days of consecutive rain here in Kalispell, which has been amazing.

Robb: For our water table. Not great for my mental health.

Nicki: True.

Robb: And on the mental health front really quickly here before we get rolling, today's show is going to be different than usual. And if you have kids and they sometimes listen to the show with you, you might consider pausing and running this one on your own. This might be something that you share with them later, but.

Nicki: Depending on their age.

Robb: Depending on their age, and it's not profanity, we've probably mapped that one, but I'm going to give you all a minute to just contemplate that, get yourself squared away. We'll talk a little bit more about-

Nicki: The weather.

Robb: The weather, and then we'll talk about what we're going to talk about.

Nicki: That was good. I didn't think about giving a disclaimer. So that was good.

Robb: Every once in a while, like a broken clock, I do the right thing.

Nicki: Yes, this is true. This is true. So, we don't really have any more to say about the weather other than we're getting rain, which is good because it's been a little dry here the last couple of years, inadequate snow pack and fire danger as a thing. So we're hoping that the rain that we just got, and hopefully we'll get a little bit more, will help in that regard.

Robb: Or make it worse because it'll make shit grow like crazy. One or the other.

Nicki: Right. Well, let's jump in. As Rob said, this is a very different topic than one that we've had on this show, The Healthy Rebellion Radio. But I do think it's applicable to a modern

life and anybody with kids, especially school-aged children, and anybody without kids, you probably know a kid or two. Aunt, uncle or whatnot. So it's an important topic. And two things popped up over the last three weeks that brought this to the forefront for me. And Rob and I talked about it, whether it would be an appropriate topic for the show and we decided to give it a whirl.

Robb: And part of that is we've talked about health and mainly physical health and nutrition clearly, but we talked some mental health stuff also and risk assessment and trying to minimize downside risk exposure and whatnot. And this topic of child sex trafficking appears to be a massive risk exposure to virtually everybody and something that gets shockingly little airplay, both sides of the political aisle are suspiciously quiet about it. Although I would point more fingers one way than another on that topic, but once we dig into this, it's kind of appalling how little is being said, being done around this topic. And again, this hit home because Nicki from multiple different angles had this really thrust upon your radar of your person.

Nicki: On my psyche, yeah.

Robb: On your psyche.

Nicki: And I'll just say that I always thought, naively, that when I would hear sex trafficking is happening, or there was a staying and they got some people that were involved in sex trafficking, I always thought that that was happening by the strangers that separate a child from the parent or the child's wandering around in Target or Walmart on their own and somehow they managed to coerce that kid. There was a story my sister shared with me where a young girl approached another girl at a mall, like we're talking eight or nine years old. And the young girl was like, "Come outside and play with me." And the mom saw her daughter leaving with this little kid and was able to intervene. But so in my mind, it's like a thing that's happening physically, where we also have friends in Reno and a gal was at a gas station and had her four kids in their van. And she noticed two people coming at different angles from her. And her kids saw that too and the door and they all laid down because they train martial arts. And so they're very aware of being-

Robb: They're aware, but they're not paranoid.

Nicki: Right.

Robb: These are not over the top, hyper reactionary people, but they definitely detected ill intent from these people.

Nicki: They train in self defense and so our friend is, she's very good in that regard. And nothing happened, but she was like, "I know that had I not been more confident, I was staring them down. Had I not done that and had my kids not locked the door, something could have happened." So I just wanted to say that because I thought that all of these sex trafficking cases were kids were getting physically taken, removed from their family. And that appears not to be the case.

Robb: That's not the end of the story.

Nicki: Right. It's not how most of it appears to be happening. So anyway, the first, excuse me, the first thing I want to share is just last weekend, Sharyl Attkisson, who I've mentioned before on the show, her book, *Slanted and Whatnot*. She has a podcast called *Full Measure After Hours*, which is where she talks in audio form about some of these actual video news segments that she does on her website, which is called *Full Measure*. So I

listened to her episode, it came out, I think on May 22nd. And just in like the first bit of that episode, she mentions that in 2019 and 2020, that more than 786,000 children went missing. And I was just like, holy shit, that is an enormous number. Had, somebody asked me, "Nicki, how many kids do you think went missing in 2019, 2020?"

Robb: I would've thought 20,000.

Nicki: Yeah.

Robb: When you just think about how many cities there are and each city, you had some number of kids and maybe that's incredibly naive.

Nicki: Yeah, my number would have been around there or maybe even lower, because you never hear about it. I feel like you heard about missing children way more in the eighties and nineties, at least I did, the milk curtain thing.

Robb: The milk carton deal, yeah.

Nicki: And then now, it's never in my Apple newsfeed. It's never, not that I look at the news all that much, but it's just not coming across my radar. So this was a staggering statistic that just blew my mind. And she mentioned that many of these are considered endangered runaways, but they often end up being trafficked. So in the episode, and we'll include a link to this episode in the show notes, because I think it's worth a listen and it's not very long, it's like 30 minutes. She speaks with Floriano Whitwell, he's a guy from the US Marshall service that deals with sex trafficking and missing children. And he said that last year, they, the US Marshall service, recovered 387 missing children, which was the most they've ever recovered. Almost a hundred more than they recovered in 2019.

Nicki: So then I was like 487,000 are going missing?

Robb: 700, yeah.

Nicki: And they're only recovering this total between the two years, 700, this is crazy. It's a teeny tiny fraction. And that doesn't count, you know, that's US Marshall service specifically. So it doesn't count, I know lots efforts are happening with other law enforcement agencies. So but again, those are tiny, tiny numbers. And the episode touches on the topic of Hollywood and the Netflix movie Cuties, which there was a lot of controversy around that. If you didn't hear about that, it's a movie that features 11 year old girls moving and behaving in sexualized ways. And so there was a big controversy that that was sort of providing fodder for every pedophile in the country, in the world.

Robb: And there was some interesting back and forth we're on the one hand Netflix defended itself saying, Hey, we're trying to highlight some of these problems. And then other folks said, no, you're trying to exploit it and normalize pedophilia. And I don't know what the right answer is on that. So there was some back and forth on it, but it's a good cover story, maybe it's true. Maybe it was. I think that that was all probably a negative thing to do for society and for kids, but it's a decent cover story, I guess.

Nicki: So, anyway, I don't know that I want to touch, she does go into a lot about the Hollywood situation. She has a couple of actors that speak out and that she about their experience, that performing sexual favors as a kid was sort of expected in order to get certain roles in Hollywood, which I think some of that is known if people are following this stuff, it wasn't surprising to me to hear that, but it's also appalling nonetheless.

Robb: And there was one individual in there that was talking about this pretty openly. And then the police report said that he forced himself off of a bridge into traffic in Arizona.

Nicki: In Arizona or something, yeah.

Robb: Which is all kinds of squirrely, particularly, and again, not to derail this into lunatic, conspiracy stuff, but the Epstein situation, the guards now have brokered some sort of a plea bargain that they weren't really paying all that much attention to what was going on in there for this two or three hour period. And it's just really weird, it's really weird stuff. And you start stitching together weird thing afterward thing. It doesn't mean that there's some like Kabbalistic conspiracy, but it's weird.

Nicki: So again, we'll link to this episode, both of the video version, they're slightly different, it covers the same topic, excuse me, and also the, the audio version. Bu the striking thing that she mentions mainly in the audio version, I believe is that the way that these girls are being, predominantly girls, are being trafficked is not by stealing them out of a store, but it's via grooming via text messaging. And these traffickers are so good at manipulating and finding the vulnerability and then preying upon that. So whether the girl is needing to feel loved or needs money, they are masters at navigating that and using that. And then once they're in, then, there's some drugs involved and then at some point the girl doesn't even know how to get out. So that's all I'll say about that. It's definitely worth a listen if this topic is at all of interest to you. The next thing that, well actually happened before this episode, but a few weeks back.

Robb: Really the thing that I would say super put this topic front and center for you in particular.

Nicki: Yeah. So one of my friends, I had this super lengthy text exchange with a friend of mine in Texas. And it started by her telling me that they've just had a hellish week. Her oldest child is 13, a young man. And he had been introduced to porn by a classmate and she found it by looking at his phone. So he is in middle school and he has a phone. And so this was, and this is just like a salt of the earth family. This kid is great too, they have three kids. He is just a great, solid, buttoned up kid.

Robb: Super buttoned up, great kid.

Nicki: And 13 arguably is when a lot of boys, you know, back in the day were looking at nudie pics and magazines and finding the Playboys and whatnot. But today it's like a totally different-

Robb: Well I was probably six. And I tuned in to Wonder Woman every week because Linda Carter was an outstanding actress with amazing assets. So yeah, the curiosity is-

Nicki: There you have it.

Robb: Is hard wired for most.

Nicki: Right.

Robb: Yeah.

Nicki: Right. And so, 13, arguably is, it is what it is. But anyway, this kid that introduced this to her son and was texting him images bragged about having 84 girls from their campus nude in pictures and videos.

Robb: And again, this is middle school.

Nicki: This is middle school, 13, an eighth grader. And also bragged about having hard drives at home, filled with child porn. So my friend, she is a great mom and very protective over her children. And of course this was-

Robb: If you, if you think about the lone individual that stood down the tank in Tienanmen square, she is that individual.

Nicki: Yeah.

Robb: Yeah. There's nothing she wouldn't do if she feels like it's the right thing to do, particularly where it concerns her kids.

Nicki: Right. So she's clearly took this to the administration, took it, they had to file a police report because, you know, she couldn't bear that there's 84 girls that are for one reason or another sending these pictures to this kid, and anyway. So what she did then was she, you know how most neighborhoods have an app where you can communicate with your neighbors. So she went on there and kind of posted an alert for parents, and just basically said, "Check your kids' phones because you might be surprised what you find." And she gets like a crazy number of responses of people finding all kinds of stuff and asking, what do I do? I can't believe what we're seeing, what do we do with it? And so, just appalling.

Nicki: So she was just sharing with me, this has been unreal, it's unreal what's going on in our schools. So one of the moms in the neighborhood found out that her daughter had sent explicit photos to a guy that she doesn't even know. And he was still texting her back to set up a time to meet when the parents intervened. And they took it to the cops who confiscated her phone and they're setting up a sting operation. But again, as parents, and this is hard, Rob, I don't even, our kids are not this age yet, and they don't have the phones and they're not in public school. So I think there's a little bit of, they're not in school, I should say, because this happens at all, I'm sure it's happening everywhere. And I'm sure it can happen among homeschool kids too, if you are in the right environment. I don't know how a parent protects a kid from this other than having frequent conversations about the danger of this type of thing.

Robb: This is something when we sat down to do this piece, we probably could have done a little bit more diligence on here are some actionable steps. And I was noodling on that while we were talking. I'm like, ah, we should have probably, but I see this a little bit parallel to the discussion that we have around just feeding your healthy, your family well. And there's drama and pushback. "Well, I don't want the kids to stand out. I don't want them to be excluded. I don't want them to be the weirdos."

Nicki: Everybody else has a phone, so.

Robb: And I'm just focusing on food for a second.

Nicki: Right right right, okay.

Robb: You're fucking up my analogy here.

Nicki: Sorry, I'm sorry.

Robb: And, and there's drama around that and there's truth to it. It's like, yeah, feeding your family well can out you a little bit. It can ostracize you a little bit and there can be some really remarkable upsides to it as well.

Robb: And we haven't talked massively about this, but we've talked about the dangers of just being online in particular, and some of this runs together because Nicki and I talk internally here, and then it's like, do we talk about that on a podcast or not? But the dopamine nature of these different apps and different platforms, girls comparing themselves to these idealized images of beauty where kids and women and young women will take a picture of themselves and they're already attractive and then they do a little tweaking and fiddling, and then they look spectacular.

Nicki: Magic fairy dust editing.

Robb: Yeah, all this magic stuff. And it's super dangerous. It is just dangerous. There is no way to mince words on that. And we've talked about things like, okay, if you need family calms, maybe the kid gets one of these, these watches that it get five programmable or 10 programmable phone numbers, and that's linked to the parents' phone and you can monitor what's what's going on there. And that's it. And how many kids really need a phone, particularly, and again, it's within the context of there's some really significant risk exposure here. We grudgingly allow our kids to play a few video games on some old I-phones that we have. And one, we absolutely noticed that they're not as happy, they're not as functional afterwards. And so we are constantly debating about is this even a good thing to allow them to do any of it?

Robb: But the one thing that we've really drawn a hard line on is nothing that's networked, nothing that's multiplayer. And we continue to think that they're accessing games that don't have those features or functionalities, and God damn it if there isn't some trapdoor in there that they're like, "Oh yeah, these people were asking me what my name was. And I didn't tell them my real name." And they feel very proud of themselves for that, which we've at least conveyed that part.

Nicki: Because what we've talked about combined why we don't want them to play networked games. Because there's some that they want to play that are like that.

Robb: And it's just well understood that these places are aware pedophiles and traffickers hang out. Like this is providing a gateway to these types of people to our children. And we are paying to have it happen by providing the apps, the phones, the internet connection, the whole God damn mess. And so I think on an actionable deal, like we really need to think about the easy access that these technology platforms provide to our kids. And will it be a pain in the? Yes. And probably having your child sex trafficked is an enormous pain in the too. So and I'm probably putting the what to do part in a a odd spot, but it's just where my head went.

Nicki: Yeah. Okay. I want to share some more. So my friend took this to the school administration and she's been dealing with this, but then she shared a few other things that happened also in that same area of Texas. And I want to share that, but first I want to jump to our today's sponsor. So this Salty Talk episode, and every salty talk episode of The Healthy Rebellion Radio is sponsored by our salty AF electrolyte company, LMNT. Summer is just around the corner, it's important to stay hydrated and especially important to make sure you're getting adequate sodium by hook or by crook. LMNT makes this not only easy, but tasty with over seven flavors to choose from and a brand new flavor coming up next month, which I'm very excited about person.

Robb: One person in our chat picked the correct answer.

Nicki: We were having a live chat in The Healthy Rebellion Radio and people were guessing. I did give a little bit of a clue, and one person did guess.

Robb: Yep.

Nicki: And then she said it was her least favorite flavor of anything on the planet.

Robb: On the planet, yeah.

Nicki: Which was funny. But anyway, this is my personal favorite flavor of all of our LMNT flavors. So I'm very excited about it. We'll see if other people agree with me or not. I also want to mention that if mock tails or cocktails are something you enjoy in the warm summer months, LMNT makes those super easy. We've got citrus, raspberry, orange, chocolate, lemon habanero, mango chili, and raw unflavored. And you can grab yours at drinkLMNT.com/Robb. That's drink L-M-N-T.com/Robb.

Nicki: Okay. So I just want to share a few other things that she shared with me that happened and that she discovered. So one, there's a local elementary school and on the bus ride home, apparently kids were sharing different pornographic images from their phones. So that's elementary, so what we shared, isn't just only happening necessarily in middle schools, it's also happening younger ages. And who knows if this was as rampant pre COVID as it is now, clearly having kids home on devices far more than previously during lock downs and what, I don't think has really helped this situation.

Robb: Somewhere in all the stuff that we were reading, it suggested that trafficking has more than doubled during COVID, relative to its previous baseline. And we read a lot of this. We're not, by no means experts on it. So a bit of a caveat on that, but it wouldn't be entirely surprising Parents are stressed out, they're working from home, they're trying to just navigate this stuff as we all are. And these devices cause your kids to disappear magically for sometimes hours at a time. So and the ubiquity of opportunities for bad actors to access kids through these devices. Maybe it's not double, whatever it is, maybe it's double, maybe it's quadruple, I don't know, but it makes a lot of sense. And it's another one of these knock on consequences of this whole process that we've been on.

Nicki: So this one that she shared was just absolutely appalling to me. She said that there was a horrible fight that went viral at the middle school a few weeks ago where some kids busted another kid's head repeatedly against the toilet bowl until he passed out and he's now hospitalized. Apparently, and I wasn't aware of this at all, but apparently there are platforms where kids get paid to upload videos of this sort, including nude pictures of girls. And then it turns into a viral, hot mess and within seconds in the hands of thousands of bad actors, thousands of pedophiles.

Robb: So this is something I was completely unaware of. I had peripherally understood that people engaging in the production and distribution of child pornography, big boots come stomping on you. And very rightfully so, what I had not appreciated is that a way that is circumventing this and creating potentially millions of producers of things like this is directly accessing kids and paying them to film and then subsequently upload this material. And I have no idea what the legal situation is on this. I'm sure that there's some ramifications for paying kids to do this stuff. But I suspect that it's fractionally as enforceable and litigable as producing the stuff directly. So they're paying miners to do these illegal actions. And so then, and I don't even know, who knows with the way that online exchanges can occur.

Robb: Maybe this stuff happens largely anonymously, and there was no way to even track back where these people are generating these things from. But it's again, to the degree that kids have access to these devices, to be able to generate this material, then there is a massive potential to film violence and sexual acts and all kinds of other things. And I suspect it creates a remarkable blanket or insulation between the production of this material and being able to do anything about it, as far as the people primarily involved in this.

Nicki: And then the last one, which was pretty eye-opening as well. So she said there were three girls that went missing a few weeks ago from campus and from a gas station surveillance camera, they saw that the girls willingly got into a car with a guy. And apparently he'd been grooming them for weeks via text and drive by shout outs. And they were not seen for three whole days and parents rallied and did search parties. And thankfully they did rescue them and they found them alive. But apparently this isn't typical. Normally these kids go missing and they get swallowed up.

Nicki: So I guess this is sort of just, I don't know, like we said at the beginning, these things came across my radar pretty, within a couple of weeks of each other. And it just felt to me like we could use this podcast to do a little PSA for parents to keep a little bit of closer tabs on what your kids might be doing on their phones, have conversations with your kids about this. My friend also has a 10 year old daughter and she's been having a lot of conversations with her and explaining why she won't be getting a phone in middle school. And also just talking about the danger and what can happen if you go this route, and again, I don't know. This is like uncharted territory, right? Because all of us who are parents, we didn't have phones-

Robb: We don't have an experience base to pull from on this.

Nicki: We don't have anything to pull from on this. Yeah, I didn't get my first phone until I was like 21. So, and we've talked about the social dilemma and all of the stuff involved with phones and particularly with regards to social media. But this is a whole other other layer. And do you have anything else you want to say on that?

Robb: I wish I did, but I like your point that we don't have an easy template to, well, when I was a kid we did this and this is the way we responded to it. I guess I would just reiterate that there are a lot of socially acceptable things, including feeding ourselves and our kids garbage, and allowing access, we debate every day, whether we keep any social media presence at all.

Nicki: For ourselves.

Robb: At all.

Nicki: Yeah.

Robb: And to the degree that I shut all that shit down and at a minimum, just distanced myself from it. My life is better and I can currently see virtually no upside. We use some things like I Naturalist occasionally to identify plants and animals and, and critters of various types. And it's very, very cool. We use this thing called Sky Guide. We'll go outside and look at the night sky and be able to ID some of the constellations and really get this other kind of view of things. So there are some really amazing features to this. We're we're doing our summer science project. Like, how many turtles are we going to encounter this summer? And we've learned-

Nicki: How to tell if it's a male or female.

Robb: Yeah. We learned what a plastron is, and it's not a drunk robot, so that's super cool. And then there's all this other shit. And I don't speak from any spot of authority on this, other than it seems like really, really limiting access. Access to phones, definitely access to the ability to interface in some sort of a networked fashion online. We are desperately searching to figure out a way to get an actual copper wire phone line in our house, which they, there appear to be virtually no one who supports these things.

Nicki: Supports this area.

Robb: Even these things are supported on the internet. And, I'm just wanting a redundancy, but I kind of just want a phone that, it's a phone. You, you talk to people, you don't FaceTime them or do anything else on it. You talk, so that when the girls want to talk to friends and coordinate play dates and stuff like that, that's how and where they do it.

Nicki: They get to use a landline.

Robb: Yeah, they get to use a landline.

Nicki: If we can find a service to provide us a landline.

Robb: And you kind of wonder about that, is that all part of something so that there's, there's no way to opt out of this stuff? Conspiracy theory again. So I guess I had a little bit more to say about that, but don't have answers per se, but it seems like being super aware of the dangers here and acknowledging that taking these steps will absolutely make you an outlier, will absolutely make you someone that stands out and a little bit of a weirdo, and that's probably okay. And probably the right thing to do as a parent and a steward of these kids.

Nicki: And I'll just end on reading a couple of things that my friend wrote at the end. I had asked her is the administration of the schools-

Robb: School administration, yeah.

Nicki: Are the school administrators aware of what's going on? And she said, "They are aware and my fury fell on exhausted ears. I literally had to make a scene and kick some butt for the admin to try and help think of different avenues. But overall, I'm starting to see what an impossible task this is, but it just can't be one we give up on." And then just, and she said, "It's so vast, so rampant, and you don't even know how to get ahead of it all. So you fight and yell like hell in the hope that it will bring awareness to at least one soul in clog one drain, but it's overall just devastating."

Nicki: So anyway, my friend is fighting a battle and I'm sure many other parents are fighting similar battles. I'm not sure why this stuff isn't getting more attention. 786,000 kids went missing in the last two years. And we, nobody, I don't know, maybe some of our listeners knew that number. It blew me away. So anyway, folks, sorry if this was too far of a departure from what we normally talk about, but I do think it's a super important topic and one that we wanted to give some voice to.

Robb: And if you guys have thoughts on this, please share. If you have some resources on this, please share. And thank you for being part of The Healthy Rebellion.

Nicki:

And be sure to check out our show sponsor LMNT for all your salty electrolyte needs. You can grab yours at drinkLMNT.com/Robb. That's drink LMNT.com/Robb. Thanks everyone.