“Normalize this issue as a kitchen-table conversation”: Rosalia Rivera of CONSENTParenting on parent engagement, political activism, and changing narratives.

Ashley Hopkinson
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Ashley Hopkinson: Can you please introduce yourself and tell me a little bit about yourself and your organization as well.

Rosalia Rivera: I'm Rosalia Rivera, and I'm the founder of Consent Parenting, which is an online platform, educational content, direct to parents. I'm a survivor. I work predominantly with adult survivor parents, although all parents are welcome. I teach them about body safety education and how to educate their children as well as other adults in their lives about abuse prevention, about the issues of child sexual abuse and ways to reduce risk from it happening within their families and communities.

Ashley Hopkinson: That's really powerful work. How did you determine the problem that you wanted to solve and that this is the audience you wanted to set out to help? What were you interested in bringing awareness about specifically?

Rosalia Rivera: That's a really important question to the origin of my work. Being a survivor, which I actually didn't know until I was older, I have varied memories. I didn't realize this until my

oldest son turned five and I started getting into abuse prevention education because he was going into school day camp that summer and then school that fall. I started realizing I need to educate myself about how to teach him to be safe.

When I started digging into the information and education that was already available, I started finding it really triggering. I didn't even know why at the time because I hadn't really come to terms with varied memories. But as I started educating myself and teaching my child, a lot of stuff just started coming up. And I couldn't understand why it was so triggering. There wasn't anyone speaking to the experience of it being really... I mean, everybody who addressed it was like, "Yeah, this is an uncomfortable topic, but we need to talk about it with our kids." And it was just coming up over and over.

Finally I went to a therapist, and through that a lot of the buried memories started finally coming to the surface. I came to terms with the fact that much like my sister who had come out and said that she had been abused by our father, it turned out that it was the same with me. I knew I had memories that were weird that I couldn't make sense of. Then, when they all started really coming to the surface, everything connected and it made sense.

From that point on, I realized I needed to step into a healing journey to cope with this education because I didn't want to not teach it, and I wanted to learn what I could about it. Since my mom is also a survivor, I realized this is going to be generational if I don't do something about it. So it became a priority to learn this information and teach it to my kids.

Through that process, I realized, I'm sure I'm not the only parent who's going through something like this, but I hadn't heard anybody talking about it. There wasn't anyone saying, "If you're a survivor, you're probably going through this," or, "If you're a survivor, you're probably finding this triggering."

For a long time, even when I was coming out of high school, I knew I wanted to work with survivors because of my sister. She had come out and shared what happened to her when I was in high school. There was always a part of me that wanted to work within this field. I just didn't know how, and I didn't know at the time that everything around the topic was triggering because I had my own stuff that I had never come to terms with or dealt with.

So, all of this came to a head as a mother, as a parent, realizing there's got to be other people dealing with this. As I started talking to people, they were like, "Yes, me too." It was like the #MeToo movement, but for survivor parents dealing with these same issues. This felt like my

calling. I was in marketing and advertising and photography as my career for 18 years. And I loved it because I was good at it, but it never felt like the satisfying thing that I wanted to do. When I decided to step into this, it felt like my soul was like, yes, and I just went full force into it, and I got trained and educated and certified. Then I decided I'm going to be public about my own story.

Through that I found my audience. My audience found me. I originally had the intention of talking to all parents and saying, this is obviously something that all parents need to know. But what I quickly found was that there are two distinct segments of parents, and this is what I was talking about at the Envision Conference, which is that there's the parents who have no awareness because it's never happened to them or anyone they know. It's never impacted them. Then, of course,there are the parents who are acutely aware of the issue because it has happened or they've been impacted by it in some way within their family. So, the messaging to speak to these parents to help them understand the importance of this education had to be different.

When I started saying this was also my experience, the outpouring of interest and support to learn and be part of this conversation by those who were impacted with lived experiences was incredible. So I realized nobody has been speaking to this audience. Knowing what we know about how big this audience is, we need to be talking to them and addressing their concerns and helping them find the mental health support systems that they need to continue doing this prevention work.

That really became the mission of my particular work and how I speak to audiences, but also never ignoring the other parents who are still interested because they've heard about it now, they've become aware of the issue, maybe they heard a news story. Again, even though they haven't been impacted. I've started to have more and more parents that reach out to me through social media and say, "I heard about this thing that happened in my community or this thing that happened in my children's school." Now they've become aware of the issue and they want to learn and they see the value of me being someone with lived experience who's very invested in this [and] interested in helping parents. Originally it was like, “Oh, well you're only focused on this because it's happened to you.” Now, it's like,” I get how big of a problem this has become.” In raising the awareness for those parents, they're becoming interested in learning about prevention education.

Ashley Hopkinson: Do you feel like sharing your own story became a part of your communication strategy in terms of reaching the audience? And I use the word “strategy”

loosely. I know you're sharing your story because you're sharing your story, but did that become a part of how you felt like you were reaching people, by being transparent about your own journey to the work?

Rosalia Rivera: Absolutely. One of the reasons I started a podcast was to communicate not just my own story, but that of others as well as bring experts on and share other aspects. The main goal was to help break taboos around this conversation, to open it up. I developed the "About Consent" podcast, which actually came out before "Consent Parenting." But it was specifically with the intent of it reaching survivors and those who support survivors. I say that in the introduction every time, and it was with the goal of saying, "I see you if you're out there and you're going through this." I was able to share my story through that and then bring other, not just survivors, but experts in the field of not just child sexual abuse, but all kinds of sexual violence.

Initially, the podcast was for anyone who's experienced it at any stage of their life, and then it progressed more and more into specifically child sexual violence. But I wanted to reach anyone. Even if you are an adult and you're dealing with this struggle of the triggers that could come up if your child is now experiencing something, or if you fear that they're going to experience something and you don't feel like you have any tools, you haven't done your own healing. These were conversations around why it's important to heal and what you can do if you are not ready to step into that healing journey. All of those pieces that are equally as important as the prevention education itself.

If you feel like you're continuously getting triggered and you keep dropping off or stopping because it's so hard, which I get and understand, [I want] to say, "I see you struggling and I get it. I've been there and there's a light at the end of the tunnel. Keep going and find ways to move through it. Find mental health support, find someone to talk to, know that you're not to blame, know that there should be no shame on your part." All of these empowering messages. It was also very much about helping them become empowered to tap into their own power. That was a key part of this messaging that drew people to my work.

At the time, a lot of what I had seen, even when I started searching for online education or accounts that talked about the issue, it was all very fear-based. And it was all very sad imagery or negative imagery. It was triggering content. I wanted it to confirm there are many positive things we can do as parents, and we have more influence and power than we realize. Shifting it to not just talking to kids about this issue, but to other adults [too]. And going from being afraid to have this conversation to being courageous and having the conversation with everyone in

your child's life. Moving them through that arc of empowerment to get to the place where they're the changemaker in their family and community.

Ashley Hopkinson: You've already touched on this, but what would you say is distinctive about the work that you do? What do you think makes your approach distinctive and why do you approach the work the way you do?

Rosalia Rivera: It has been from personal experience, and then also working with parents. I'm not an organization in the same sense as a nonprofit like Darkness to Light, for example, a phenomenal organization. They educate and train adults to go into schools and talk to other adults, and there's a whole program and process there. Unfortunately, however, it's still very much a surface education. There's awareness raising, and there are some specifics, but parents are always going to be left with more questions, or adults working with organizations are always going to be left with more questions. Although there's a framework that's being taught, there isn't any way to go deeper with that organization. They have lots of blog posts on there you can read, and most of them will share more information, but again, there's no other point of contact that an educator parent would then have with the organization.

With myself, what I felt was lacking was that one-on-one [connection]. Much like you said, if someone wants that support, who do they go to? So what I would say is different with me, is that I wanted to go deeper with people because I had a lot of those questions.

Here's a very simple example. You might have an organization say, “Use body safety books to teach your kids about body safety." It helps provide the language. It gives you tools; it gives the child a character to relate to. There are visuals. It keeps it interesting for them. You get all the reasons why. You go out and you buy the book and you read it with your child. And one of the things that the book might say is, "You should have a safety network and you should have five people that you trust that you can tell if something happens." That's great advice, and absolutely you should be doing this. But let's say that I'm a survivor parent and I experienced intrafamilial abuse, and there's no one that I feel like I can trust. So how do I implement this if I can't trust anyone?

I've had this actually spoken to me by another survivor parent when I initially started teaching this work. Because they were able to reach out directly to me, they could go deeper into this and say, "I want to do this, but I don't trust anybody. How do I create a safety network with my child?" So we solved this problem, and it became part of the next layer of work that I started teaching. I said, "If you're someone who feels like you can't trust anyone, here's what you can do, and here's

the things that you should know to vet a safe person. Here's the qualities of what a safe person is. Here's what you can teach your child about who a safe person is so that you're verifying, not just assuming that uncle and grandma or grandpa are safe, because sometimes they're not."

In the same vein, you can have a parent who's never been impacted by this, who's like, "Oh, sure, we can do five people. Let's add uncle so-and-so and grandpa so-and-so and our neighbor so-and-so." They haven't gone deep enough on the issue of understanding what a safe person is. You can't just assume that because of their title or position in the family or position of authority that they are a safe person without knowing the markers of a safe person or what grooming means.

I felt like there was a lot of great information out there, but it wasn't connected in the right ways and it wasn't comprehensive enough. It wasn't going deeper in the process. What's the best way to create a safety network? You should be doing it with your child, if they're a certain age. You should then have conversations with those safe people to let them know that you're including them in this idea. You should talk to them about what a safe disclosure looks like, because if your child's going to come to them, then they should know how to respond appropriately. Otherwise you could do a lot more damage by re-traumatizing or getting that child to feel unsafe and not be able to share the rest of their story. There are layers to it.

I ended up creating a whole workshop on how to create a safety network. So it wasn't just: create a safety network. It was, here's how you do it in a way that's comprehensive that allows you to talk to people. Now you're opening up these conversations with those five adults. It goes beyond just that initial, “Here's what you should do.” It’s “Here's how to do it” and the whys behind it so that you feel more empowered to have those conversations and have more education so you can educate others about it. My work is distinctive in that it goes deep, and it also speaks to those two segments of parents who are survivors and those who aren't.

Ashley Hopkinson: Can you share a story or share something that illustrates the impact of your work? How do you know it's working? Something that has happened or an experience or a story that demonstrates why you followed that calling.

Rosalia Rivera: I get messages almost daily, specifically on social media, with parents who say, "It's changed the way I parent because I was always scared and now I'm not scared, because I realize I have the power to change the direction of things." But I'll give you one very specific one based on a consultation.

I do prevention consultations with parents, so people can book time to meet with me if they have questions. I focus a lot on school safety, particularly because that was my own experience of how do I make sure that I'm sending my child where it's going to be safe and how do I trust? Also, a lot of people aren't aware of the prevalence of rates of either educator misconduct or peer-to-peer violence, sexual violence within schools. I do a coaching program for parents who are sending their kids to elementary school. It's focused on the younger age group.

Anyway, a lot of parents know that I talk about this. I'm actually in the process of writing a book about school safety. I had a parent who did a consultation with me because she was in one of my previous cohorts of this program, and she said that her daughter, who was somewhere between five and seven, was going to a summer day camp and they had water activities and they would have to change into swimwear. She said her daughter came home excited and proud that she was able to change in and out of her water outfit by herself. She haphazardly mentioned that the changing was happening in a room where all the girls were changing, and it was everybody undressing together.

The mom felt like this was not appropriate, but she wasn't totally sure. She's like, "Is it normal for kids to all change in the same area, and if they're all getting nude, doesn't that go against what you're teaching?" She added, "There are two teachers there." We had talked about the rule of twos. You should always have two educators with a group of kids. That's one of the safe policies that you're supposed to have in a school setting. She said, "There are two women, two female teachers. That doesn't necessarily make them safe, but at least there are two of them together. It's girls on one side, boys on the other, and they're not seeing each other, but the girls together are changing, and they can see each other and is that okay?" She was doubting herself, and there was something that was telling her, "I don't feel like this is right. Shouldn't they have privacy if they want?"

I said, "Well, they should have a better policy, but they can offer privacy," and that it does go against what we're teaching because we're telling kids that they shouldn't be exposing private parts. They shouldn't have other people show them private parts. So if you're in a room changing with a bunch of kids, then that really contradicts what you're teaching. I said, "The school really should have some way of providing privacy for them." She said, "Okay, I'm glad I wasn't wrong on this. How do I address this now?"

I've had many experiences with schools where I help parents communicate effectively with them. I helped her draft a letter that not only explained what the problem is with this policy, but here are resources to learn how to implement a better policy, and here's why it matters. Here are

the statistics. Here's why body safety educators are advocating for this. I included my information to say, "We consulted with a body safety educator. Here's what they said. Here's what they shared. Here are some resources that they're offering. If you'd like to learn more, feel free to contact them."

She sent them that letter. She also said, "I don't want my daughter to feel like if we change this policy that they're going to go, 'Oh, well, you're going to have to change over there and just feel ostracized." Then she's going to be like, "I shouldn't have told you anything." Again, there are those deeper questions of how do I address this?

I can also share this on a broader scale with more parents. This story is probably going to go in my book to help parents understand how to communicate with the schools and follow your gut instinct and know this goes against what I'm teaching, so how do I address it?

Anyway, she sent the letter, and about a week and a half later, she sent me an email: "They were so receptive to it. They changed their policy. We're all so happy. I was able to talk to my daughter and share what you recommended." What I shared was, be transparent with your daughter and say, "Hey, thank you for telling me about this. The school actually is doing it wrong, and now that you've told me we can help them get it right. Here's what I'm going to tell them, and here's what we can hopefully expect."

Once they changed it, it felt like a win. She said, "I was able to tell my daughter. We did it. We helped the school become safer." She was happy about the whole thing. It was a good ending in that the school changed their policy, and the daughter felt like telling her that turned out to be a very positive thing.

Ashley Hopkinson: **This is a little bit of a pivot. Can you share a little bit about something that you've tried over the years that didn't quite work as you planned and what you learned from that particular thing not working?**

Rosalia Rivera: One year, when I was doing my cohort for school abuse prevention education, this was maybe the first year I ran it. It was more for a much younger age group of children. The parents' kids would've been between two and four. Now it's between two and eight. But I had a parent, a mom in the middle of a divorce situation, and she had learned that her son was being abused by the dad.

This was an active situation. I explained to her, because I don't deal with those kinds of situations, that I can't offer legal advice. I can't offer therapy. I focus on prevention education.

The only thing that I can help you with is explaining how to teach your child about body safety. Hopefully, through that process, the child will develop the skills to communicate with the appropriate authorities about what's happening and strengthen your case. But again, I can't offer legal advice. I'm not even offering that as a guarantee that that's what's going to happen, but it will increase the likelihood that that could happen. She said, "No, I totally understand."

I invited her to be part of the program. The program includes a full course with six modules. It's now 10, but at the time, it was six modules. Week by week, you would take a class, and then we would be in a coaching group together so that parents who had questions about any of the content that they learned from that week, we could discuss.

In the first week of the program, we did an orientation call, and it was everybody getting to know everybody just so that we felt comfortable, had community and made it a safe space to share and ask questions or share challenges as we move through the program. When it was her turn to share, she did not give a trigger warning, and she overshared what was happening to her child, and it was very triggering for everybody in the group.

I realized two things: One is we needed to have stronger language in our community guidelines that everybody had to sign off on before entering the group. Two, that having a parent who was having an active situation was not a good fit in a program that was for parents who did not have any of those experiences happening and who were focusing on preventing, not on mitigating an active situation.

I learned to not mix those ever again. It was a good lesson on crossing the T's and dotting the I's of a community guidelines agreement and making it clear in every way possible that if you have any potentially triggering content that you need to give a trigger warning and give time and space for people to step in or out of the conversation, but also not to overshare specifics. That's something that could be done in a one-on-one setting, but not within a group. Sensitive aspects of working within a community, within groups was a lesson that I'll never forget because my heart was with this parent, of course, but I also wanted to protect the rest of the group and realized it wasn't the right dynamic to add her into that cohort.

The other thing was, if I do in the future want to work with parents who have active situations, then that could be its own cohort of those kinds of parents who could support each other because I also feel like that's lacking too.

There isn't enough information or direction for parents regarding where to go if there's been a sibling-on-sibling situation or if there's been a peer-to-peer situation. That's less of a community that's available to parents. They feel very lost, especially when it's a juvenile situation. Who do I go to? What's the right thing to do? Do I call the law enforcement authorities or do I deal with this on my own? So there's very little direction for those kinds of parents. That's also something I've been seeing more and more, especially as the rates of peer-to-peer violence increase. There's not enough direction or support groups for those parents.

Ashley Hopkinson: What other insights or teachable lessons you've had from your work could you share with us? Based on your overall wisdom, Rosalia, from the time that you've spent in this space, what would advise someone working in this space?

Rosalia Rivera: If you're interested in the issue, there are so many areas that need support, people working in this field of abuse. Not abuse prevention, but just the issue itself. There's prevention, healing, criminal justice. There's so many aspects of this issue that need addressing and attention, but prevention always gets the shortest amount of funding, the least focus.

A lot of the focus is on adults educating children. But it's important, if you are going to go into the prevention space, to help adults develop the skills to communicate with other adults. Even within prevention, if you have any kind of communication skills, marketing skills, finding creative ways to help people talk about this topic is just as important because the less we can make it taboo, the more likely people are willing to step into the conversation. If we can find ways to normalize this issue as a kitchen-table conversation, we're more likely to get adults talking to other adults. That can help reduce risks because offenders who hear these conversations are less likely to target families who are talking about it in an open and confident way.

The other aspect if you are in the prevention space, even if you're just a therapist working with the healing aspect of it, is helping people learn about strengthening their own ability to set boundaries, to learn about grooming. One of the things that I talk about is that adults who are looking to teach their kids about how to set boundaries, they may not be good at setting boundaries themselves, especially if they're a survivor and they were never allowed to set boundaries. That's not a skill that they learned. They're on their own and probably not very good at it, and they need to learn how to do that work. Part of the healing can be learning how to set boundaries. When we model boundaries, that's really the way that kids learn best. We can be telling them a certain thing, but if we're not modeling it or acting it, living it ourselves, kids don't pick it up as much.

For anyone in the mental health field, helping adults learn how to take back that power, learn how to set boundaries, learn how to understand the concepts of their own rights and consent is going to go a long way in making them a stronger advocate for their children. They will have more confidence to set the boundaries for themselves and their kids, if they have better skills at setting boundaries. Whether you're specifically looking to work with this group or not, that in itself can be very powerful, especially in helping even a matriarch within the family become a stronger, fiercer advocate for the children in that family, whether they are a mother or grandmother or aunt. That can be powerful, too, as well as learning more and deeper ways of teaching prevention education to parents.

Parents are also such an untapped force in this overall strategy of reducing rates of child sexual abuse. We talk about educating the public and educating people and educating educators, youth-serving organizations. All of that is definitely important. But parents are the ones who have the highest stakes in this, and we're not talking to them enough, and we're not empowering them enough to be the leaders and the changemakers in this work. If we have them be the ones who put the pressure on policymakers and governments and schools, they are a force to be reckoned with. If we look at other past examples in the US, for example, for car seats, there was a mother lobbying group, I think in California. It took them a year to put that law in place nationally because they were like, "We're not messing around."

If we can get galvanized parents to mobilize in that same way together, if we can raise their awareness, it's like cracking that code of communication to parents that you have the power to push for change and to put this on the national agenda like nothing else. That call to action could mobilize significant change. For some reason, we're missing the mark.

That's always been my focus for parents, when I see how they can shift and change once they get the information, the education and the empowerment to do it. They want to see that strength in numbers. It's always like, "I'll do it, but I'm afraid to be the only one." If they can see that there are others who are like, "No, we're all doing this together," it really galvanizes everyone to push for that change and be more vocal and open to talk about it.

Ashley Hopkinson: **What role would you say shifting cultural norms plays in your work? How are you doing it? Do you have strategies for how you are doing this?**

Rosalia Rivera: There are a couple of things that I specifically try to do that come from just knowing and using my own marketing skills from my own past career to approach this. So, if I

see something in the news, I try to pitch a media outlet on my take on it and what deeper insight I can offer about it.

As an example, if I see a story in the news about someone who groomed a child and was apprehended because the parents or police found out that they contacted the child or whatever, I'll reach out to multiple news agencies and say, "Here's my pitch on this as an educator. Here's what I can teach parents about grooming and the signs that they should be looking for." Then I had a piece about that that I was asked to write, and I try to humanize it. I try to get parents to feel like they're putting themselves in that seat and make it as relatable as possible.

I'll also do that on social media when I'm posting a story about a parent who had this happen with a person they thought was safe. A big part of it is getting them to connect to stories on a human level without exploiting someone's story or a survivor's story and being conscious of that.

I also try to get on podcasts to talk to people. The long-form content is helpful for people to hear. One of the questions I get a lot is from parents who want to teach this to their kids, and then they'll have family who push back, say a grandparent who's like, "Well, this sounds ridiculous. We didn't do this when I was a kid, and this sounds like overkill." I give them strategies on how to do that in a way that keeps communication lines open. It goes back to understanding communication and helping parents use those same strategies.

For example, when I'm teaching them that grandpa shouldn't ask your child to keep a secret such as, "I'll give you ice cream before supper, but don't tell your mom." It may seem like an innocent secret, but if you just say, "Grandpa, don't do that," they're going to think, "You're overreacting. I'm just trying to treat my granddaughter to a little special thing." But if you say, "Grandpa, the reason why we don't do that is because this can lead to normalizing grooming. I know you're not grooming them, but now my child is more susceptible to it because grandpa did that and it must be okay. It's just an innocent secret."

If you can help explain why, you have to remember that you've got the education, now you have to help educate others. You can't just dictate rules without helping them understand and have compassion for the fact that they didn't grow up with this information, and they don't know it. So your job is not to just set the boundary, but to help raise awareness. Now that they know, they're more likely to buy in and be part of the solution instead of you feeling like it's you against the world. The more we can raise awareness, the better. I give them those kinds of strategies and help them learn communication tools that help them have those conversations.

Another thing that I did was create consent letter templates, which are these ways of, if you feel like you can't have that verbal conversation, here's a letter that's an icebreaker to explain what you're doing in your home, why you're doing it, how you'd love for them to be part of what you're doing. It feels like you're calling them in instead of calling them out. Helping create these ways of communicating is what's going to help them have a little bit more courage, a little bit more willingness to have those conversations with other adults.

It will keep empowering them by reminding them that they have a lot more influence than they realize, and they can be using that for good. As long as they're continuously working towards developing their own resilience and stepping into their own healing journeys, they can do this. It's about continuously guiding them towards the steps and resources to do this work, and then providing them with the tools, templates, and resources to do the work.

Ashley Hopkinson: I know that you talked about funding for prevention not being as robust as it is for other areas, maybe healing, maybe the clinical spaces or other spaces. But aside from the funding, what would you say is one of the challenges that you face in the work that you're doing and how you work to overcome that challenge?

Rosalia Rivera: There's a lack of funding even for research that's up-to-date. I was just at the Envision Conference, and I was pleased to see that there was more research being done, but I feel like it's still not fast enough or being funded as much as other aspects. Funding even for the research is important. There is also a lack of up-to-date resources available for those teaching prevention. Quick example is that for a long time, I was seeing educational resources still talk about teaching kids about good touch versus bad touch, and there's such a disconnect from the fact that touch doesn't always feel bad, and we need to talk to kids about this aspect and have resources that point to language that's appropriate, like safe versus unsafe instead of good versus bad.

Even creating the educational resources for educators to teach or a PSA campaign on where parents can access that information so that it's very accessible. Creating more resources that are accessible for all income families. We're still seeing some of the highest rates being within marginalized communities and them just not having access to this information. So how can we make that information more accessible?

I wish that I was a nonprofit, but even becoming a nonprofit is such a beast of a process. Making it easier for organizations like myself, and I consider myself a social entrepreneur, but I offer either sliding scales or scholarships because I want to make it accessible. To go into the

nonprofit space and then fight for the very small amount of dollars that are in the space is just as challenging. It deters people from entering that space in the same way and making it sustainable for them to keep going versus focusing on programming and making that the focus of their work versus trying to beg for dollars from funders.

That's another aspect of how we can make this a national priority where we are giving all parents of all demographics and socioeconomic groups access to this important information in a deep way, not just superficial. Then making sure that they know they have access to it. We need public service awareness campaigns to lead them to the information and get schools involved in that process. That is part of the work I'm doing with my book is helping parents and schools understand that they can be a powerful vehicle to deliver this education, not just from teachers, but as a medium from government to the parent. Here's a great way through the public school system to deliver that content or access to that content, which is another really big gap.

Ashley Hopkinson: This has been so insightful. Thank you very much. I really appreciate your time.

Ashley Hopkinson is an award-winning journalist, newsroom entrepreneur and leader dedicated to excellent storytelling and mission-driven media. She currently manages the Solutions Insights Lab, an initiative of the Solutions Journalism Network. She is based in New Orleans, Louisiana.

***This conversation has been edited and condensed.*