



Episode #127:

**Behind the Scenes of the Resource TECA—
Twice Exceptional Children's Advocacy**

September 18, 2018

Debbie: Welcome to TiLT Parenting, a podcast featuring interviews and conversations aimed at inspiring, information, and supporting parents raising differently wired kids. I'm your host, Debbie Reber. There are many aspects to running TiLT and doing this podcast that I love, and one of them is introducing the TiLT community to helpful resources that have the potential to improve the quality of their family's lives. Today I'm happy to be dedicating this episode to one such resource, an organization called the Twice Exceptional Children's Advocacy, better known as TECA. TECA's mission is to help parents understand what twice exceptionality is and help them identify whether their children are 2e. They assists parents in finding and advocating for the education and resources their children require and provide a strong, vibrant, accepting community for 2e children and their families.

Today I get two guests for the price of one, and so I have both Melissa Sornick, a licensed clinician who works with children and families and who is also a co-founder and the president of TECA, and I also have Maratea Canterela, TECA's executive director. As you'll hear from the episode, the mission of TECA is very personal for both of these women, and they'll share their stories as well as give us insights into the types of support TECA offers for parents with twice exceptional kids.

And before I get to that conversation, in the past few months the audience for this podcast has grown substantially and so I wanted to share with you one of the free resources I offer on TiLT Parenting in case you're new to TiLT or haven't had a chance to poke around on the website. So far nearly 1500 parents have participated in the Differently Wired 7-Day Challenge. This is a virtual challenge whereby every day for 7 days, you'll get a short 1-3 minute video delivered to your inbox featuring a practical shift you can make in your world to help you have a more positive and optimistic experience in parenting your unique kiddo. You'll also be invited to join a private Facebook group with other parents who have participated in the challenge. I've heard from parents that the challenge has made an immediate difference in their day to day life, which is fantastic because that's exactly why I created it :) I've got some pretty disruptive transitions happening in my world at the moment, and I'm leaning into those strategies more than ever and I they have been so helpful. I'd love for you to join in. It won't add more to your plate but rather give you some helpful food for thought as you go about your daily life. To get started immediately, you can sign up at tiltparenting.com/7day.

Lastly, before we get started, if you get value out of this podcast, please consider supporting it by making a small monthly contribution to help me cover the cost of production. There's an easy way to do this, too... through an online platform called Patreon. My patreon campaign, which is funded by listeners like you, are helping me pay my editor Donna, who takes my recorded conversations and intros and outros, cleans them up, edits them, tags them for iTunes, and uploads them onto my Soundcloud account. This saves me hours of time each week and allows me to focus on all the other pieces of keeping TiLT going and supporting

this community. To sign up, go to patreon.com/tiltparenting -- and PATREON is spelled PATREON. You can find a link on the TILT parenting website on any of the show notes pages. And now, here's my conversation with Melissa and Maratea.

Debbie: Hey Mara and Melissa, welcome to the podcast.

Mara: Hey, it's good to be here.

Melissa: Nice to be with you Debbie.

Debbie: Yeah. So this is only the second time I've done a podcast interview with two different people and you guys are in different locations. So this should be exciting and interesting and I'm looking forward to bringing double the perspective to the conversations. So let's just dive in. And first if you could both just take a turn introducing who you are, you know, I always ask people what their personal 'why' is and what their personal connection is to the work that they do in the world. And I know this is personal for both of you. So would you mind just giving us a little bit about your background?

Melissa: Sure. Okay. So this is Melissa and my background is I am the parent of a, of a 2E. He is now 20... he'll be 26 years old next month and I guess my journey began with him and then in trying to help him, I realized that I also was what we call twice exceptional. And so that journey started and then, um, I really wanted to dedicate my time and my life to helping families of 2E individuals. And so I became an advocate and a licensed clinical social worker and now I have a private practice and I create programs for 2E kids and provide a lot of parent support here on Long Island. And I also teach, uh, I'm an adjunct professor at a local college, Molloy College here on Long Island. And I teach a class to undergraduate social work students on how to work with children with special needs and their family. And I love what I do.

Debbie: That's awesome. Very cool. And how about you, Mara?

Mara: So I also came to this work because I was the parent of a twice exceptional child. I had been working for years and years as a fundraising consultant. And as my son's needs became more and more consuming of my time and our resources, I realized I couldn't do my job and raise him. Um, he was, he was born with bilateral club feet. And so we knew right away that he was going to need a lot of issues. And I think we thought of him as primarily a kid with special needs, but then as he developed and we realized that there were more issues aside from just the, the physical problems he had, you know, we realized there were other things going on. Um, he wasn't a kid who made eye contact. He had a lot of sensory issues. He seemed very uncomfortable in the world and was hard to soothe.

And as he went through the toddler years and into the preschool years, you know, we really realized we had a lot on our hands with this kid. And every time we tried a new strategy to help him with his growing behavioral challenges, we realized he was outsmarting us at every turn. And um, by the time he was in first grade, we had a full neuro psych. And that's when we really got some insight into

the extent of his giftedness and the extent of his challenges. And it helped us really understand why he was such an anxious and uncomfortable kid. And as we went through the elementary school years, I realized, you know, I needed to leave my job and really focus full time on him. And we did the revolving door of schools for a little while until we found, we learned the term twice exceptional from a school that had been recommended to us.

And that was the first inkling that there were other families going through what we were going through, who had children who were maybe not necessarily similar to our child, but certainly different in ways that he was different. And it was the first time that I found community, uh, of a community of parents who were going through similar challenges that my husband and I were going through. And that's where I met Melissa. She was the director of admissions. And it became clear to us pretty quickly that we were kindred spirits. And I started the Parents' Association at that school. And she and I started doing programs together for the parent community. And that's when I realized I really wanted to be working with this population and helping parents who had navigated a similarly heartbreaking and frustrating and lonely path to get to that place. And I just felt like we have all this knowledge, let's, let's share it with people so they don't have to feel so lonely, you know, we're clearing a path basically.

Debbie: It's so interesting hearing your stories and I think so many of the Tilt listeners just based on the feedback I get do have twice exceptional kids. And in fact I think a lot of people, because my book has the word exceptional in the subtitle, assume that that's kind of all that we're about. But it certainly that is a large proportion of our community, that have these 2E kids and you know, you know, that I'm raising a 2E kid. And it was a term that I wasn't aware of and in fact I only stumbled upon TECA after I had launched Tilt Parenting and just continuing to look for resources. So. And it, it is such a valuable resource. And that's why I really wanted to have you guys on the show today because I want to make sure that our audience is aware of its existence. So can you tell us, you know, maybe a little bit more. It sounds like we got the beginning of the founding story. Tell us what TECA is and you know, what you started from and where you're going.

Melissa: Okay. I can speak to that. And actually the interesting thing is that people and what people don't realize I don't think or know is that actually TECA has been around since 2003 and we were actually founded in the same year that the 2E newsletter came out. And it was, it was an interesting time and I was going to speak a little bit more about my journey because that was how TECA really came to be. When my son was little we didn't really think that...we couldn't wait for him to go to school. We weren't seeing any signs of anything except for the giftedness, which I think happens with a lot of families. And he was, he was reading by the time he was three years old and he was very precocious. He was very articulate, he was friendly, uh, we were living in a cooperative apartment building in Queens and he was friends with everybody and we were, I couldn't wait for him to start school, but I think he just went in there knowing so much.

And then the thing was that he was bored, there was anxiety, we hear a lot about asynchronous development and I think this was a classic case of having that asynchrony and the social emotional piece is not catching up and then being very

misunderstood. So it was like almost like somebody pulled the rug out from under me because I thought I've got this brilliant kid. I don't understand why I'm getting calls from the school. And what tends to happen too is that you have questions from other people, like your family says well, I don't understand, you know, so smart. Why, why are things going awry or friends whose kids are starting school and their kids are going into school and everything is just fine. And I felt like I was really losing my cohort and I started to feel incredibly isolated. We moved to Long Island and when my son was still having difficulties, we needed to apply for an IEP to get him some sort of support and that was challenging too because you know, you go in for your IEP and they look at testing results and that's when we found out just how gifted he was.

Okay. So now it's going on and here on Long Island we have something called a special education PTA in many of our districts. And I joined that group because I needed a group and I needed somebody who might understand me and this was a group of parents whose children had learning disabilities or other challenges. And when I started talking about my son, they all said, well, we don't understand. Your son is really bright, what's going on? And I, I felt very different. I became very much aware of feeling very different and not quite fitting into that group. It was at the same time that they asked me to become a liaison to the gifted group in our school district. I reached out to them and I never got a call back and I said, well, now what do I do? I don't fit here, and I don't fit there.

And it was around that time that I realized that or maybe a couple of, a couple of years down the road when I was still looking. I was still looking for that program. I was still looking for that right thing, that right school for my son. I couldn't find it and I stumbled on this little community where I live now and I've been here for about 17 years and I thought, oh, that's a place where there is a small village and I just needed a change. And so I moved. When I moved here and I became involved with this school district, the director of special education actually connected me with somebody. He said, there's another parent in this school district who has a child who is also incredibly bright but having challenges in school. So I was connected with her and then somebody in another district and that's how TECA came to be.

It was. It was three of us, uh, that formed the organization because what we realized was in speaking with each other, we didn't have to explain. I always felt like I was making excuses or I was rationalizing or felt that I had to defend what I was doing, my decisions as a parent, not being able to get answers about things. But with these two other parents, I realized they would just sit there nodding their heads and saying, yes, I understand exactly what you're going through. And it was at that point that I said, we need to do this for other parents because I'm sure that they're out there. And it was at that point that we, that we decided to form a grassroots organization because we started finding other parents who were in a similar situation, having these really bright kids, not knowing what we were going to do for them. And not having somebody to, you know, to talk to ourselves and to try to find resources with. So that was, that was the beginning of TECA. And that's how we started. And we formed our website back then and we

did some of the things that Mara has now taken and run with and just expanded this into a really new and vibrant online community.

Debbie: Well, I think that, you know, when you said that you didn't fit in here, you didn't fit in there. That really does sum it up for so many of us. I always describe this particular population as being just particularly stuck because it's just such a complicated fit. Everything seems to be a little more complicated and the problems or the challenges are unique for this population. And so I'm grateful for the resource and it is really a relief to find people who really get it, you know, who understand the asynchronicity and all the challenges, especially because these kids often don't do well in traditional gifted education because of the other neuro differences that they have. So yeah, I think it's, there's such a need for this. So what I'd love to know more about is what listeners could expect to find on TECA's website. You know, the kinds of programs that you guys are starting to offer now, you know, I've been a member of the community for a while now and I love getting my newsletter and there's so many good resources. But tell, tell us what parents could gain from tapping into what TECA has to offer.

Mara: Sure. So you know, when I started working with Melissa she, first we were working within our local in our school community that we were both a part of and eventually she asked me if I would be willing to come on as TECA's new executive director and kind of revitalize it after it had been dormant for a few years after the founding families' kids were moving onto college and the initial wave of activity was kind of dissipating and I was really excited to do that. And so we started thinking about, you know, how do we connect families who are scattered all over the place. It's not like there are communities that plant their 2E flag and say come, come here, you know. And even though I happen to live in a community that is very diverse and there, you know, there are a lot of 2E families here, no one really wants to talk about it, no one wants to, you know, put their hand up and say I am struggling in this particular way.

So we really wanted to create an online space where people could come together, feel safe, get information, get validation and feel like they're not alone. So we started with our online support groups and we created a, um, a year long syllabus that is based on SENG support groups supporting the emotional needs of the gifted. Melissa is a trained SENG group facilitator. And so we adapted that to more specifically meet the needs of twice exceptional kids. And we started and their and their parents and we created this support group that was really designed to help parents feel that they're in a safe space. They can talk about what's going on with, with them and their kids and the challenges they face. And parents often talk about their isolation, how their kids are isolated in school. And as we know, we often make friends through our kids, right?

And when our kids aren't making friends, then we're not making friends. That was certainly my experience. I would, you know, I have a daughter who's older than my son. I would take her to school and wait in the playground for the teachers to line all the kids up and you'd chat with other parents and make play dates and you'd get together on the weekends and the husbands would become involved. And you know, things really evolved, right? You've developed this community. And with my son, I felt like I had two heads, you know, like I'd show

up at the playground and no one would talk to me. I was the mom of that kid. Right. And so we wanted to have a place where the moms and dads of those kids could come and share their experience, share their strategies, and really talk about what, what that meant to feel that kind of isolation.

And we get parents from Maine to Minnesota to, you know, Canada to Florida all coming together to talk about what their experiences are and find community and, and comfort. And knowing that they're not the only ones, they're not bad parents because they don't understand why their kids behave the way they do. So that was our first, our first online venture and I think that's been really successful. We've also tried to infuse our website with lots of information, you know, spelling out the basics of what twice exceptionality is, how to identify it, where to go, you know, what kind of evaluations you might want to get, resources to connect you to professionals who have experience working with twice exceptional kids. What else Melissa, what am I missing?

Melissa: Well, you know, I wanted to go back. I want to jump back to the online parent support groups for a moment because I think that one of the things that I find is so telling is that at the end of a group there is a feeling of it's amazing to me how people become so readily willing to share, first of all, to share their stories. So there's a, there's definitely a comfort level there that regardless of, as Mara said, we have parents from all over the country. They have, you know, different, different areas of the country, have different educational systems, different regulations. Parents have different resources, some are homeschooling, some have their children in private or alternative programs, some in the public education system. But it's always interesting to me that how in one short hour, we form a group where everybody is willing to share and to offer their help. And then there comes the thanks at the end of the call and saying how much better they feel after they get off the call and they're looking forward to coming again next month and joining us.

And to me that's so important because I feel like we've made a difference right there. Just in an hour, uh, providing parents with some validation, I think that's so important that they wouldn't necessarily have or giving them again a piece of community just for an hour. And when they verbalize how that makes them feel and that they felt relieved or they don't feel so alone anymore. So isolated. To me that speaks to the essence of what TECA is and the reason that TECA was founded in the first place. I just think that community piece is so, so important. So I just wanted to add that.

Debbie: Yeah, I think that parents, you know, I love that you said they just want to want to talk, you know, they're, they're so willing to share their stories and I think we do, we have stories to share and we often feel like we could share them and that if we share with the wrong people, it feels pretty icky if we feel misunderstood or judged or any of those things. So it's, it's, it is a relief I think for so many of us to find that that community. Now, could you clarify, because I do have a lot of international listeners, you mentioned Canada, but are these groups that are available to people around the world or is it pretty much North American focused?

Mara: Well, we use the Zoom video conference service, so that does have a capability for people to join internationally. Right now we're doing three support groups every month. We have one for parents of kids under the age of 13 and that's on a Wednesday night at 8:00 PM. We have a second group for parents of teens that's on a Monday night at 8:00 PM. And then we have a third group which is open to all parents of twice exceptional kids and that's at noon on a Wednesday. And we have our, we have our schedule up on our website, which is teca2e.org. So as long as you're awake you can join us.

Debbie: Yeah. I, uh, that team group is on my list. I'm looking forward to some community with parents of 2E teens because it's an interesting time.

Mara: Oh yeah. And we're talking about everything from how do you talk to your kids about sex and homework and hygiene, you know, any, any conversation that you would have with your teen, you know, we are all talking about it.

Debbie: Yeah. Awesome. Okay, a little note here. Um, so tell me a little bit more then about, I'd love to hear about the conference, which I know is coming up. You have an annual conference and then I don't know if you have any big plans that you went to divulge, uh, or, you know, just kind of, I'm always curious to know where people want to go with their vision for their organization.

Mara: Sure, sure. So, well first about the conference that's going to be on Friday, November 9th at Molloy College, which is in Rockville Centre, New York just across the Queens-New York City border and Long Island, and that's going to be a full day of programming designed specifically for parents of twice exceptional kids. This is our third year hosting the conference and we're really excited about our lineup. Um, we're doing something a little different this year than what we've done in the past. We have decided to create three different tracks of programming. So one track is the basics, like for parents who are just starting to dip their toes into the world of twice exceptionality are deciding whether or not they need to hire an attorney or an advocate to help them with their child's education. We have a session with Devon MacEachron, Dr. Devon, on the value of a neuropsych and using that as a tool to help plan your child's educational needs. What else do we have, Melissa? We have, oh, an introduction to overexcitabilities and helping you understand your child tools more. Bridging the homeschool divide, which helps parents learn to be effective advocates at school for their kids.

So it's a lot of like, you know, basics, you know, you're in this world, you're just figuring that out and here's a set of tools to help you move forward. Then we have another track which is for parents who are maybe more oriented and have their team in place but are starting to grapple with the teenage years or more complex issues. So we have one session we're calling 'Sex, Drugs and Deodorant', which was inspired by our team support group. We have one on, we're calling it 2E for life and it's talking to parents about how to help their kids understand their complex identities, including their diagnoses, their giftedness, maybe their sexuality, you know, other areas where we're trying to help our kids come to terms with who they are in that very 2E way. And then teaching them to be

advocates for themselves. So I'm really excited about that session where we have a really wonderful panel of experts on that. And then what else do we have? We've got, oh, compassionate parenting. Melissa, can you talk a little bit about that one because I know you're more familiar with it.

Melissa: Sure. So in order to. I really believe that in my work with families, I believe that there's a lot that goes on with parents and parents giving themselves permission to accept themselves and to take care of themselves and have compassion for themselves before they can even really have compassion for their children. So it's really about saying, you know, I'm, I'm doing what I can, I will make mistakes, but I am, you know, I'm there for my child. And really just how to be accepting. It's very, very hard. Again, we've talked about this. 2E kids are very, very complex. It's a concept and it's a hard concept to understand and explain and there's a lot of frustration. There's a lot of self doubt. So it's really about this, this acceptance and being and allowing yourself to be vulnerable and say, maybe I don't have all the answers, but I love my child and we're out there and we're together and we're doing the best that we can. So it's really a workshop that promotes this self awareness, this self acceptance, and just the notion of being a good enough parent and accepting yourself unconditionally so you can accept your child unconditionally and the frustrations and the challenges that come your way and develop that resilience in yourself.

Debbie: That's so important. I love that you're touching upon that. I think that's a key piece of this equation and that's something that I really appreciate about TECA too is it really is about the parents' support and so much of what we are doing is trying to get tools and strategies to support our kids and their executive functioning and their education or being that advocate. So I love that. Self care. I love the term of just being a good enough parent and I just think that's great that you have that as a piece of the conference.

Melissa: Yeah. And then we have a whole other session on self care for parents. So my, um, so it really is, you know, these two tracks are really wholly devoted to helping parents be effective first by having compassion and empathy for themselves, teaching them strategies and helping them process how to implement those strategies with their kids. And they really come away from the conference feeling like they've got some real tools in their toolbox to help them face the next day with their kids.

This is something that Mara and I focus on so deliberately with this conference. There are some really wonderful conferences out there where resources and the information and all the new information on neurodiversity are out there. What we really make such a conscious effort to do is to bring that information to parents, but to put it in a form where they can take it and use it and apply it. Because as Mara was saying, the tools, yeah, we want, we want parents to leave the conference with a toolbox of strategies and real things that they can implement. And that bridging the homeschool divide, teaching them how to communicate with their schools, because again, we can give them loads and loads of information, but without giving them the directions. Right? It's like getting the game and the game board and the pieces, but with no directions. Here's what you can do with this information as a parent and feel confident that

you can go in and you can, you can get something done for your child or find a resource for your child like that.

Debbie: That's great. I'm just curious, we talked earlier about twice exceptional being a term that we had to kind of discover on our own. You know, it was something that we learned as we discovered more about who our kids were. You know, I've had Tom Ropelewski on the podcast to talk about his film *Twice Exceptional*. And you know, I've had my postman, we've talked about twice exceptional kids. So for me it seems like it's common knowledge. Everyone knows this stuff, but I'm just curious from your perspective, are you seeing an increased awareness in communities in schools for as long as you've been doing this work? Do you think that this is something that people are becoming more in tune with?

Melissa: I've seen some resistance, still and I think that part of it is that again, people don't necessarily understand. First of all, it's not a diagnosis. Sometimes parents will come to me and say, my child was diagnosed with 2E and I explain to them that 2E is not a diagnosis. It's a conceptualization of describing a child who can have many different kinds of giftedness and many different kinds of challenges and what happens when these things wrap together. I think that in my experience, I think that now some people are saying, oh, I've heard of it, but I don't know what it is or that they're looking at this. When I, when I worked with the schools for instance, they feel overwhelmed by it because I feel like there's a box that we want children to fit into and we have certain expectations about how a child should be doing in school and how they should be performing and our kids just don't fit in that box.

They're a little messier than that box. And so when you have this paradigm in the school, anything that falls out of that box really becomes a challenge. And so I think what I'm seeing this year though, actually with the TECA conference, is I've been reaching out to the districts because the other thing about our conference this year is we've added a strand for professionals and Lois Baldwin will be doing a two and a half hour seminar on teaching twice exceptional children or twice exceptional learners in a mainstream classroom setting. And so for the first time this year I'm sending out emails and I'm actually getting responses from these districts saying, oh, we'll circulate this. And so this is the first I would say in the last maybe year or so, this is the first time. And I think maybe it's that maybe more parents are getting into to it and they're using the term 2E or twice exceptionality when they're going to their meetings and maybe people are hearing more about it.

I also think we're seeing more of these kids so we have to be able to explain them somehow. So there's still that little bit of resistance or thinking, well we're differentiating so we can do this, but then they're finding that the kids are still having difficulties. So I'm hoping now that they are opening up to listening to potential strategies and interventions that can make education of 2E kids easier and more successful than it's been.

Mara: And something that we're trying to do is, you know, as we get more and more members from around New York State in particular. But eventually around the country, you know, we are joining together different pockets of local

communities. So right now in New York City there is a group that I'm involved with that's actively advocating at the city Department of Education and now I'm just introducing them to a group of families in the Rochester area who are advocating at the state level. And we're trying to work together to join forces because there's definitely strength in numbers. And so, you know, when you talk about down the road you know one of the things we want to start doing is finding and joining these communities from around the country so that we have a stronger voice to advocate for our kids. Another thing I want to mention, and I help by saying that I'm not violating our 501C3's, but basically where we're serving to introduce people to one another. We're not doing the advocacy because we are a 501C3. You know, we we're not certified to do that work, but we do want to unite the community. The other thing I wanted to add, as you mentioned Tom Ropelewski and Mike Postma. Mike is actually our keynote speaker at the conference this year, which we egregiously failed to mention. We're really excited that he is going to be talking about the inconvenient student as his keynote and then Tom is going to be joining us. We're concluding the day with a screening of 2E2 and he will be doing a Q & A after that. Yes. He did a screening for us when 2E: Twice Exceptional came out and we've been in touch with him since then and yeah, we're really thrilled that he's going to be able to join us for the, for the conference this year.

Debbie: Well that's fantastic and that's great that Mike's the keynote, his conversation that we did for the podcast a year ago and listeners, I'll leave the episode number in the show notes page. It was so powerful. He is such a compelling speaker and it's so personal to him on so many levels and I'm sure that will be such a gift for the attendees of the conference. So I want to wrap up, but I would love if you could just let listeners know, and again I will include all these links in the show notes, but tell listeners the best way if they want to connect with TECA where they can go and how you suggest they start, start joining the community.

Mara: Sure. So our website is a great place to start. Like I said, that's teca2e.org and we have the join link right at the top of the page. We have information about the conference at our events tab. Um, our support groups are also listed under our events tab. We're going to be relaunching our, our online forum called Discussions, uh, later on this fall. And that's um, you know, that's an online discussion group where parents from really all over the world can get online and post questions for each other and look for support and community regardless of what time zone they're in. And what else can they do. They can sign up for a support group. We have advocacy basics on there. People can always call in to our, it's not an official helpline, but people call in all the time asking, asking for help, asking for information, looking for ways to connect. And I'm happy to do, you know, a 20 minute free consultation to find out what's going on with the family and see if there are ways that we can help them.

I'm always glad to help families look for the resources that they need in their community. And we use that information. We, you know, we've been compiling our 2E service provider database, which is a free online database. I think it's the largest resource of 2E providers that exists. We have about 270 professionals who work with twice exceptional kids in lots of different disciplines. They're all

based in the United States that you can do a zip code search by distance and by area of a discipline to find people in your area who have experience working with twice exceptional kids. And we also have a suite of downloadable tools to help parents kind of target what it is they're looking for in terms of assistance, help them articulate what's going on with their child. And also we provide them with a questionnaire that they can use for interviewing professionals that they're considering working with.

Because when you work with, you know, when you have a twice exceptional child, as Melissa said earlier, they can have any number of areas of giftedness and any number of areas of challenge. And so it's really incumbent upon parents to do their due diligence when researching folks to work with their kids. To find the right fit because you know, one occupational therapist who works with some twice exceptional kids may not understand your kid the way they need to be understood. Um, but at least we can with this database, help you narrow and focus your search to people who are more likely to get it than not. You know, one of the things that I went through with my son was, um, you know, in New York, you would think if there's some there must be so many resources in New York. Well, there are, but we worked with five different psychiatrists before we found one who really understood how my son's challenges interplayed with his areas of strength and you know, that was a lot of time and money spent not getting him what he needed. And it was really, it was trial and error finding someone who understood him and how to work with him.

Melissa: I just wanted to jump in on that, but because Mara you just, you raised a really good point there that we talk about too. One of the things that we say is that this is not an either or situation because you really have to find somebody that understands both and understands how the two come together and it's to find that person that understands how the challenge affects the gift and vice versa because our children are whole, they're not either or, they're both and you need that understanding from a practitioner.

Mara: Yeah because the whole is definitely more than the sum of its parts.

Debbie: Absolutely. Times 10. Yes. Well, you know, I just want to say, you know, personally, I'm so glad that, that I found TECA when I was first launching Tilt. It's been already just such a great resource for me. It's definitely any listeners with 2E kids, it's kind of one stop shopping. You can get so much. Um, and the newsletter as well that you guys send out is really helpful with links to articles that are super relevant to parents like us. And so I'm just excited to share this episode with our audience and to tap into more of what you, what you're both up to. I hope the conference is really successful and listeners, make sure you check them out. I'll have links on the show notes page again and Melissa and Mara thank you so much for coming by today and sharing your personal stories and just introducing us to this great resource.

Melissa: Thanks so much Debbie it was a pleasure.

Mara: It was an absolute pleasure and thank you because you are bringing voice to a lot of what we are doing and so we feel like there's a real synergy between TECA and Tilt and we're excited to be part of the same community.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

- [TECA Website](#)
- [2018 Building 2e Awareness & Community Conference](#)
- [TECA 2e Service Provider Database](#)
- [2e Newsletter](#)
- [SENG](#) (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted)
- [Tom Ropelewski](#) (2e: Twice Exceptional and 2e2: Teaching the Twice Exceptional)
- [Tom Ropelewski Talks About His Films About 2e Kids](#) (podcast episode)
- [Dr. Devon MacEachron](#)
- [Dr. Mike Postma](#) (The Inconvenient Student)
- [Dr. Postma of SENNG on the Plight of Gifted and 2e Students](#) (podcast episode)