

SPEAKER 1: You're listening to Brains On, where we're serious about being curious.

SPEAKER 2: Brains On is supported in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

[BUZZER BLARING]

SPEAKER 3: Warning. The following episode asks the question, why are butts and poop so funny? Obviously, there are lots of butt and poop jokes. If this is not your thing, we suggest any other episode of Brains On. Except the other one about poops. Or the one about sewage. Or either of the two-part episodes. But the rest should be fine, right? Sure. Now, on with the show.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

LUNGS: Hey, heart, how are you doing?

HEART: As I live and beat, if it isn't the lungs.

LUNGS: Oh, heart, you're such a breath of fresh air. Hey, thanks for hosting this body parts party. We really don't hang out enough.

HEART: I know. I was just telling the eyes, I'm always too busy working. In fact, I'm working right now. Blood's not going to pump itself, am I right?

LUNGS: Tell me about it. I'm multitasking, too. Got to keep those breaths coming and going.

[KNOCKING]

[DOOR OPENS]

BUTT: Hey, party people.

LUNGS: Oh, hey, it's butt.

BUTT: Butts up, everyone. [LAUGHS] Hey, sorry I'm late. I feel like I'm always running a little behind. [LAUGHS] Hello.

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah.

LUNGS: Behind. Because he's the butt. So good.

BUTT: Yeah. I just ran over from hanging out with my pal toilet paper. And boy, am I wiped. [LAUGHS] Yeah, it's a good one, right? [LAUGHS] Oh, hey, eyes.

EYES: Oh. [LAUGHS] Hey, butt.

BUTT: Hey. It's always nice to see you. [LAUGHS]

EYES: Oh, hi. Oh, thanks. I do look at stuff. Butt's just so funny. Right, lungs?

LUNGS: Yeah, he's a real jokester.

BUTT: Speaking of looks, people always ask me, how do I look so good? And I say, it's all in the jeans. But probably Levi's. [LAUGHS] Am I right, yeah?

[LAUGHTER]

I crack myself up. [LAUGHS]

MOUTH: He has a crack. Get it?

BUTT: Oh, is that mouth? Hey, what's the good word, buddy? [LAUGHS] I'm only teething you. [LAUGHS] Oh, say, ears, you got a second to listen? Boy, have I got a story for you. Oh, man. So this one time, I was-- then I came--

HEART: How is but always so funny? [SIGHS] I wish I was good with jokes like that. I'd be so cool.

LUNGS: Butt's just full of hot air. And anyway, I think you're cool as you are, heart. I mean, you're good at rhythm, you keep things moving, and you're a vital organ. I'd say you're as cool as they come.

HEART: Oh, thanks, lungs. You know, I think you're pretty rad, too.

LUNGS: Thanks. Besides, have you smelled butts breath? Peeh yoo!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: You are listening to Brains On from APM Studios. I'm Molly Bloom, and my co-host today is Colby from Boston. Hi, Colby.

COLBY: Hey, Molly, this has been my lifelong dream, so I'm so happy to be here. So happy.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] We are so happy that you're here, Colby. And the reason you're here is that you asked us the question that inspired this episode. Can you remind us what it was?

COLBY: Yeah, it was, why do people think butts and poop are so funny?

MOLLY BLOOM: It's a great question. So what inspired the question?

COLBY: I don't know. I just think it was like-- I just thought butts and poop are so funny. I wonder why?

MOLLY BLOOM: Are there people in your life who don't think they're that funny?

COLBY: I mean, like my mom kind of thinks they're funny, but kind of not. My brother's a baby, but when he was three months old, I said butt, and he was like, ha, ha, ha, ha.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] So even though he probably didn't understand the word butt, he thought the sound of it was funny?

COLBY: Yeah. And it is kind of a funny sound. And you know what? Just one more thing is kind of unrelated. But butts to have so many other names, like tuchus, fanny, heiny.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] That's a really good point. What do you think is the funniest name for a butt.

COLBY: I got to say tuchus. It's just weird. Just like, tuchus.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah.

COLBY: Like, you just kind of want to--

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah, you got to get "ch" in there. You got to say tuchus, right?

COLBY: Yeah, tuchas! Thucaas!

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] I mean, I admit that I definitely find potty humor funny. And my five-year-old really, really loves potty humor. So naturally, we wondered if there was a reason so many of us giggle at glutes.

COLBY: Or cackle at kaka?

MOLLY BLOOM: And is it just silly fun, or is there an important reason we do it?

COLBY: Funny or not, butts are a big part of our lives.

MOLLY BLOOM: We dress them and clean them every day.

COLBY: We build chairs for them, and we wear pants that flatter them.

MOLLY BLOOM: Famous artists sculpt them, athletes do exercises to strengthen them.

COLBY: And everyone has one of them. And no matter how rich or powerful or famous you are, you can't have two.

MOLLY BLOOM: That's just a fact. One person, one butt.

COLBY: No butts about it.

ANNA Excuse me. Mind if I butt in?

GOLDFIELD:

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, well played, Anna. Colby, this is our pal Anna Goldfield.

COLBY: Hi, Anna.

ANNA Hey, Molly. Hey, Colby.

GOLDFIELD:

MOLLY BLOOM: Anna, are you carrying pom poms and a drum?

ANNA Yes.

GOLDFIELD:

[DRUMS PLAYING]

I had to pop in because I wanted to make sure you knew just how special your butt is. And not just your butt, all human butts. They're so special, I am going to do a cheer for them.

MOLLY BLOOM: You have our attention.

ANNA Think about it. Our butts are completely unique from any other mammal. Go ahead, if you have a dog, cat, hamster, any other non-human mammal handy, take a look at their hind end. They have pretty bony butts.

GOLDFIELD:

COLBY: Animal butts just go from hips to feet, without that big, cushiony rear end that we have.

ANNA Can you think of any reason why that is? Why do we have more rump in our trunks than the average bear, or giraffe, or gerbil, for that matter.

GOLDFIELD:

COLBY: I think one reason might be because they stand on four legs. But I think another reason could be because they have to poop on the ground. So they're just like, I poop on the ground, I poop wherever I want. So basically, I feel like it's kind of better they be closer to the ground for that, I don't know.

ANNA Yeah, those are all good thoughts. The main reason for our rumpage is because we walk on two legs. A very uncommon thing in the animal world, and a super important one. Just think, because our ancient ancestors started walking on two feet instead of all fours, it freed up their hands.

GOLDFIELD:

MOLLY BLOOM: Thus allowing them to high five each other.

ANNA Yeah. And other equally amazing things. Like making tools, or gathering food, or playing drums.

GOLDFIELD:

[DRUMS PLAYING]

COLBY: So our butts are a side effect of walking upright? And walking upright might have helped our species do amazing things?

ANNA Yep. So let's get to know these ever so important additions to our species, shall we? Our butts are made of three major muscles. The gluteus minimus, small butt. Gluteus medius, medium butt. And the gluteus maximus, big butt. Helpfully named in order of size. In fact, the gluteus maximus is the largest muscle in our whole body. The gluteus maximus must be pretty important if it's so big. Plus, it has a name that sounds like a Roman emperor. All hail Gluteus Maximus.

GOLDFIELD:

[FARTING SOUND]

All three of those gluteus muscles are super important for helping us move our legs and torsos, and keeping us stable when we stand upright.

COLBY: So when did humans first start walking on two legs?

ANNA Actually, that happened way before we humans even existed. Around 4 million years ago, our early ancestors lived mostly in trees, and moved around in similar ways to chimpanzees. Their arms were longer than their legs, and they used those long arms to help them climb around the treetops. But some brave individuals started coming down from the trees, and walking on the ground instead, to find food and water, and other things that they needed.

GOLDFIELD:

MOLLY BLOOM: Did they walk like we do right away?

ANNA They didn't. Not right away. It took around a million years for our ancestors to evolve, to be able to walk
GOLDFIELD: completely upright. One important change was in the hips. Early ancestors had hip bones more like a chimpanzee. These hips were straight and flat. Have you ever seen a chimp walk on two legs?

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah, they kind of like waddle. It's equal parts cute and funny. I love it.

ANNA Right. Their bodies aren't built to walk upright. Our early ancestors were like that, too. But over generations, they
GOLDFIELD: started developing different bone structures that made it easier to walk. Their hips became wider and more bowl-shaped. Perfect for walking, and closer to what we have today. The more they walked, the more they built up those gluteus muscles, and eventually, we got butts.

[DRUM HIT]

COLBY: Wow, I'm really proud of our butts. They've come a long way.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah. Way to go, butts.

ANNA Yeah, go, butts. Oh, and speaking of, are you ready for my cheer? A cheer for the rear, if you will?
GOLDFIELD:

MOLLY BLOOM: Always.

[DRUMSTICKS TAPPING]

ANNA What do we want? Butts. When do we want them? Gradually over millions of years. Butts, butts. We don't mind,
GOLDFIELD: they always run a little behind. They may have taken millions of years, but now we have amazing rears. Wanted to walk, our problem was solved. We're so glad our buttocks evolved. Yay, butts.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] That was amazing. Thank you, Anna.

ANNA Always happy to talk, tushes. Later.
GOLDFIELD:

ELECTRONIC (SINGING) Brains On. On. On.
VOICE:

MOLLY BLOOM: Knock, knock.

COLBY: Who's there?

MOLLY BLOOM: It's the--

[MYSTERIOUS MUSIC]

WHISPERING Mystery Sound
VOICE:

[SQUEAKING]

[BLOWING]

[FLUTTERING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Colby, do you have any guesses?

COLBY: This is kind of weird, but someone blowing up a balloon, and then some animal just comes and trying to eat them?

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] I like that, it's a whole story. I appreciate it.

COLBY: Yeah, but I also think it could be some sort of animal farting, and then just growling or something.

MOLLY BLOOM: So we heard some potentially blowing balloon type noises. But then some animal came in and did something.

COLBY: Yeah, just like, raaargh.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] I enjoyed that answer very much. But we'll be back with the answer and another chance to guess, right after the credits.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

We're working on an episode about telekinesis. That's the word used to describe the superpower of moving things with your mind. If you had this superpower, what would you use it for? Colby, what about you? What would you use the superpower of telekinesis for?

COLBY: I saw this in a show that I was watching the other day, it was really cool. And I think I might use it for just like super wedgies. Like, you can just give them a wedgie, and then no one knows.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS]

COLBY: Like, you can give someone in school. Like, no one knows that you were the one who gave them a wedgie, and they could just blame someone else.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] OK, Colby, I have to ask. Why are we giving people wedgies? [LAUGHS]

COLBY: Um, because. [LAUGHS]

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] So maybe you're not using your superpower for good. Maybe it's turning you into a villain. [LAUGHS]

COLBY: I like being a villain.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] No. Listeners, we want to hear your answers. Send us a recording at BrainsOn.org/contact. And while you're there, you can also send us mystery sounds, drawings, and questions.

COLBY: Like this one.

ALEX: My name is Alex, and I'm from Westfield, New Jersey. My question is, where does a candle go when it burns?

MOLLY BLOOM: You can find an answer to that by heading to our Moment of Um podcast. We're bringing you bite-sized answers to your big questions every weekday. Find it wherever you listen to Brains On. And remember, you'll hear an answer to the mystery sound after the credits.

COLBY: So keep listening.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[NEWS INTRO MUSIC PLAYING]

SANDEN We interrupt this broadcast of the Brains On podcast, with a late breaking edition of Bowel Action News.

TOTTEN:

MENAKA Your number one source for Number 2 News.

WILHELM:

SANDEN I'm Sanden Totten.

TOTTEN:

MENAKA And I'm Menaka Wilhelm. Tonight, we bring you a shark meal gone wrong, an excrement experiment, and some
WILHELM: monkeys contributing to biology with their boom booms.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SANDEN Today's top story. Imagine if you did something embarrassing. Like say, bite into a poopie, and everyone found
TOTTEN: out about it. That's what happened to an ancient shark. Millions of years ago, a massive shark cruised slowly through the water looking for its next meal. It's all-promising shape, floating in the murky depths. And--

[CRUNCHES]

Oh, no. The taste of poo. Ugh!

MENAKA So embarrassing.

WILHELM:

SANDEN Extremely. Worse yet, that half-chewed dukey fossilized. And just recently, scientists found it. Complete with the
TOTTEN: impressions of the shark's teeth.

MENAKA Yikes. Now everyone knows, that shark tasted a turd.

WILHELM:

SANDEN Indeed doodie. The scientists studying it analyzed the shark's teeth marks, and they determined the shark
TOTTEN: probably chomped the poo by biting through the belly of its prey. So less embarrassing. The shark could not be reached for comment because it died millions of years ago. Probably of embarrassment.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MENAKA Next, we turn to the world of archeology. In 1998, a book was published that told a story of an Inuit hunter in the
WILHELM: frigid Arctic, using a knife made of his own frozen poo. People have wondered for years, was the story true? Ta-da-da-da.

[TRUMPET PLAYING]

Enter science. Archeologist Metin Eren and his team of researchers tested the story by freezing multiple samples of human poo into the shape of a knife. The end result. The blades just didn't cut it.

SANDEN Poop, good for flushing, bad for hunting.

TOTTEN:

MENAKA So true.

WILHELM:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SANDEN And finally, biologists in India have found the seeds of a previously unknown species of tree. Thanks to the poops
TOTTEN: left behind by local monkeys.

MENAKA That's right. The fruit of the gala tree that grows in Indian rainforests is very bitter, and the people there avoid
WILHELM: eating it. But monkeys love the stuff. Biologists sifting through monkey poo found the seeds of two previously unknown species of gala tree.

SANDEN Thanks, monkeys. It goes to show that you never know where a new discovery is waiting. In this case, it was
TOTTEN: waiting in dudu.

MENAKA Thank you for tuning in to Channel 2 News. Where all the news comes out in the end. And remember, we're
WILHELM: better than number one, we're Number 2.

[NEWS OUTRO MUSIC PLAYING]

COLBY: And we're back. This is Brains On from APM Studios, I'm Colby.

MOLLY BLOOM: And I'm Molly. OK. Let's get to the reason we're all here.

COLBY: Butt jokes?

MOLLY BLOOM: Why, you got one?

COLBY: Mm-hm. What did one butt cheeks say to the other one?

MOLLY BLOOM: What?

COLBY: Between you and me, it stinks in here.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] Very cheeky. I love it. But no, the reason we're here is to answer your question. Why do people find
poop and butts so funny? It turns out, this is a question that gets at how we develop humor in the first place.

COLBY: Oh, really?

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah. You see, no one is born laughing at butts. And babies poop all the time, and never so much as snicker at a
soiled diaper. Thinking this stuff is funny is something that happens over time. So let me walk you through the
stages of humor.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

When babies are born, they have zero sense of humor.

[BABY COOING]

SPEAKER 4: Hey, baby. Do you know why a parent can't change a light bulb?

[BABY COOING]

Because they don't make light bulb diapers. Huh? Nothing?

SPEAKER 5: Move over, let me try.

[BABY COOING]

Hi, darling. I love you. I love you. Hey, how do you get an astronaut baby to sleep? You rock-et. Rock-et. Like a rocket ship. Because-- forget it.

SPEAKER 4: See, she's a terrible audience.

SPEAKER 5: She gets that from you.

MOLLY BLOOM: But pretty quickly, babies start to find things funny. Vasu Reddy is a professor of developmental and cultural psychology at the University of Portsmouth in England. She studies humor in kids. And she says, often, around three or four months, babies start to laugh, just like your brother, around three months, laughed the word butt.

VASU REDDY: Which is ridiculously early, when you think about it. I mean, they've been smiling a bit before, but they actually can laugh like belly laughs, very unexpectedly. Like when you're making faces at them, or wobbling your lips and going, brmm, that sort of thing. And then you get this sort of gut laugh. And it initially just takes you by surprise. So what's happening there?

MOLLY BLOOM: What's happening is that babies are really good at learning patterns. Vasu says they start to pick up on rules for how things usually are in the world, like normal patterns of speech. And when something breaks those rules, it's very funny to them. Like unusual sounds coming from your mouth. Like, can you-- is there a sound you make besides the word butt, Colby, that your brother finds funny?

COLBY: Yeah, kind of just like a spitting sound like, brrrr.

VASU REDDY: That kind of violation of normal rhythms or normal sounds in itself seems to be funny. And you can get this, not only in babies, but children of all ages, and in adults, too. Doing a funny walk, for instance. It's funny because it violates that which it should be. It looks different from that which it should be. And that kind of in itself seems to provoke laughter.

SPEAKER 4
AND 5:

SPEAKER 5: Ba, ba ba, ba ba, ba.

[BABY LAUGHS]

SPEAKER 4: Tipi, tipi, tupi, too.

SPEAKER 5: Ba, ba ba, ba.

[BABY LAUGHS]

Bub, bub, bub, bub, bub, bub, bub.

[BABY LAUGHS]

SPEAKER 4: Yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum, yum.

[BABY LAUGHS]

SPEAKER 5: Wow, this material is really landing. Maybe we should try it at the open mic tonight.

SPEAKER 4: Yeah. If our baby is any indication, the audience will love it.

SPEAKER 5: Egu, begu, goo-goo, gee-goo.

[BABY COOING]

SPEAKER 4: Ah, ah, ah, ah.

MOLLY BLOOM: Within a few months, babies start not just laughing, but trying to make others laugh, too. They might make silly noises, or maybe they'll break the rules in other ways, like using physical humor. Like putting a spoon to their ear instead of their mouth.

COLBY: Or putting pants on their head.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yes, classic toddler humor right there. Vasu Reddy says they also might break the rules by doing things more extreme than we're used to. Like banging something really loudly, or wiggling really frantically.

COLBY: So it's kind of like clowning around. Like overacting to get a laugh.

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah, exactly. And that reaction is a big part of the next step of developing humor. As kids start learning language, they learn that some words or patterns of speech tend to get big reactions. Like a joke or a riddle, for instance. Doris Bergen is a distinguished professor with Miami University. She studied children's humor for decades. And she says, kids are quick to pick up on a joke or riddle pattern, even if they don't get why it's funny.

DORIS BERGEN: And they learn the riddle pattern sometimes before they really can tell a good riddle. I had one child who told a joke. Why did the boy salute the refrigerator, and the answer was, because it was a General Electric. And so then his younger sister said, why does the boy salute the refrigerator. And then she said, to be a baby. And then she laughed and laughed.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

LITTLE GIRL: Do you know why the chicken crossed the road?

MOM: Why, honey.

LITTLE GIRL: Because it had feathers. [LAUGHS] Oh, it's so funny.

MOM: Hmm. I see what you're trying to do with that joke, but it's not working. Maybe workshop that one a little bit more.

[TOY SQUEAKS]

MOLLY BLOOM: And now we gift of the holy grail of humor.

[DRUM ROLL]

Potty jokes. These often happen after kids learn to use the bathroom on their own. And there's a good reason for that. You see, we often joke about things that were once kind of scary or stressful, but that we no longer feel worried about.

COLBY: So joking about a tough test after taking it, or making fun of some sort of embarrassing moment later on when you're no longer embarrassed about it.

MOLLY BLOOM: Exactly. Grown ups do this all the time. They make jokes about their awkward teenage years, or that time they split their pants playing softball. Guess my pants didn't make it through the seventh inning stretch.

COLBY: Ooh, nice one.

MOLLY BLOOM: Thanks. And so when you're little kid, potty training can be very stressful. I mean, up until then, you just made boom-boom or pee-pees wherever.

COLBY: Oh [LAUGHS]

MOLLY BLOOM: Now you have to go to a special room, or else you're doing it wrong? Yikes. Doris Bergen says, the jokes start after kids have mastered that big skill.

DORIS BERGEN: For children, the potty humor is their way of saying, this is something that really was challenging, at a time, to control, and so on and so forth. I'm not worried about it now, so I can joke about it, and I can really think it's funny.

MOLLY BLOOM: Plus, like we mentioned before, kids find things funny when they get a big reaction from others around them. And words like butt, and poop, and fart, and pee are kind of taboo. We are told not to say them in polite company. So when you break that rule and say them, you get a big reaction, and that can be hysterical to a kid.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

LITTLE GIRL: OK, how about this joke? Knock, knock.

MOM: Who's there?

LITTLE GIRL: Doctor.

MOM: Dr. Who?

LITTLE GIRL: Dr. Poopy McButtface

MOM: [LAUGHS]

LITTLE GIRL: [LAUGHS]

MOM: Oh, it's unconventional, but it works. I mean, I don't get it, but you did say poop and butt, so I'm laughing.
[LAUGHS] Our kid is a comedic genius. Get this kindergartener a Netflix special ASAP.

MOLLY BLOOM: So to recap, it's a relief to laugh about something that used to stress us out. We also laugh when things break the rules about what we should and shouldn't say, and we often find things funny when they get a big reaction. Toilet humor hits all these points, and so it's no wonder we love a good potty joke. Like, hey, Colby, why didn't the toilet paper cross the road?

COLBY: Uh, why?

MOLLY BLOOM: Because it got stuck at a crack.

[DRUM ROLL]

COLBY: Ooh.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS]

COLBY: [LAUGHS]

MOLLY BLOOM: So that's the psychology of why toilet humor tickles children. But why do many adults, myself included, still find this stuff so funny?

COLBY: Yeah, is there something about butts and poop that makes them such a perfect topic for jokes?

MOLLY BLOOM: To find out, Colby actually interviewed a comedian a couple of weeks ago. A comedian named Tim Platt, who's also a full-grown adult, who also still thinks butts are funny.

COLBY: Why are poop and butts funny?

TIM PLATT: I have a few thoughts about why I think they're funny. I think butts are funny because every part of our life tries to keep butts hidden.

COLBY: Mm-hm.

TIM PLATT: Pants, dresses, bathing suits, underwear. And then when it's time for the butt to do the one thing it's supposed to do, which is poop.

COLBY: Yeah.

TIM PLATT: You take it out for a second, and then you have to hide it again in the toilet, so no one can see it. So there is so much effort to hide the butt.

COLBY: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

TIM PLATT: We're supposed to pretend butts don't exist. And when someone says, a butt. Look, there's a butt.

COLBY: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

TIM PLATT: There's just something funny about how that contrasts with the way we all are supposed to behave around butts, which is pretend like it doesn't exist. It sort of makes all that effort for nothing. And that's sort of funny. When you work really hard at something, and then the opposite happens, there's always something kind of funny about that.

COLBY: Yeah.

TIM PLATT: I do think the word poop is funny. And this is something that's interesting about comedy, when you make comedy. Some words sound funnier than others. And those words are usually shorts, and they usually have consonants in the beginning and the end that really pop. That really sound kind of like percussive. Percussive means like a beat. Like you're beating a drum. So poop, butt, poo-poo. Those words, they pop, they're short, they're powerful. Because it's like, out of nowhere, you're just like. Poop.

COLBY: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

TIM PLATT: You know, that sounds funny.

COLBY: [LAUGHS] Yeah. You're just like, Hello. Poop.

TIM PLATT: Yeah. Because imagine this. Hello, bathroom.

COLBY: Yeah.

TIM PLATT: It sort of means pretty much the same thing, but it's not as funny. Hello. Toilet.

COLBY: Yeah.

TIM PLATT: Hello. Poop!

COLBY: [LAUGHS]

TIM PLATT: Just the sound of the word. It feels fun to laugh at a word like that.

COLBY: Why do kids think it's funny, and why do adults not think it's funny. Or most adults.

TIM PLATT: I think kids think it's funny. And, Colby, tell me if you think it's-- tell me what you think about this, because I'm not a kid anymore. There's so many rules, there's so many things you aren't allowed to do. Just the act of saying butt or poop is sort of you telling to the world, you know, you actually can't tell me what to do. Like, you can tell me sort of what to do, but I can still say this.

COLBY: It's like when you're potty training, they're talking about it all the time. But then you learn how to poop, and then one day later you can't talk about poop anymore.

TIM PLATT: Basically. And it's that thing that also, you guys see how adults respond. And that's funny, too. When you see an adult do like--

COLBY: Just like, haaa!

TIM PLATT: Yeah. It's funny for that. And I think adults don't think it's as funny because, frankly, when you've lived 30 years with a butt, you know, [LAUGHS] at a certain point, you're like, well, it's not surprising anymore. No one's telling me I can't talk about my butts. Everyone I know has a butt. I have a butt, I use it every day.

It's sort of like, you're over it. You're over having a butt. [LAUGHS] You're like, a butt's just a butt. It's like an elbow, it's whatever, you know? So I think it's about how adults and kids think about butts in general. That means that makes talking about it or bringing them up in conversation funny or not funny.

COLBY: Yeah What's the best poop joke?

TIM PLATT: What's the best poop joke?

COLBY: Yes.

TIM PLATT: It's just somebody going, who farted?

COLBY: [LAUGHS] Yeah.

TIM PLATT: It's especially funny when somebody didn't fart. You say, who farted? And no one and farted. Then everyone's looking at each other thinking that they don't want anyone to think that they did. They're looking to see if anyone else did. They can't smell it, but they're smelling even more because they want to-- because they think someone farted. So I think, just saying who farted is the funniest poop joke.

COLBY: Thank you, Tim, and thank you for joining my Brains On.

TIM PLATT: Thank you, Colby, I'm so happy to talk to you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

COLBY: Butts are pretty amazing. They're made up of three powerful muscles known as the glutes.

MOLLY BLOOM: They help us walk upright, which is an important part of being human.

COLBY: We start to develop humor very early in our lives. But potty humor usually comes after potty training.

MOLLY BLOOM: That's because butt and poop jokes help kids make light of what was once something pretty stressful, but it's now no big deal.

COLBY: And potty humor usually gets a big reaction from adults. Which can be very funny to kids.

MOLLY BLOOM: Some people stop laughing at butts and poop as they get older. But there are many of us who don't. And in fact, many comedians make a career out of joking about this stuff. That's it for this episode of Brains On.

COLBY: This episode was produced by Molly Bloom, Ruby Guthrie, Rosie DuPont, Menaka Wilhelm, Marc Sanchez, Sanden Totten, and Anna Weggel.

MOLLY BLOOM: Anna Goldfield is our number one fellow, and our executive producer is Beth Pearlman. This episode was sound designed by Eduardo Perez, and mixed by Johnny Vince Evans. Many thanks to Katherine Freed, Cameron Eddie, Logan, Brant Miller, Alex Allanson, and Lulu. The executives in charge of APM studios are Lily Kim, Alex Shafer, and Joe Ann Griffith. There are lots of ways you can support the show. You can donate, buy our books, or tell your friends about us.

COLBY: Head to BrainsOn.org to find out more.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Now, Colby, are you ready to go back to that mystery sound?

COLBY: Of course.

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] Here it is.

[SQUEAKING]

[BLOWING]

[FLUTTERING]

OK, what are your new thoughts?

COLBY: Ooh, I know, I know, I know. Someone blows up a balloon, and then he just pops this like flying around the room, and it sounds like fart.

MOLLY BLOOM: 100% correct, Colby.

COLBY: Yeah! I'm so smart

MOLLY BLOOM: [LAUGHS] I really appreciate that. You told me you've never gotten the mystery sound right. But you got it right when you're the co-host. Well done Colby. Very good work.

MAN AND (SINGING) Ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, Brains On.

WOMAN:

MOLLY BLOOM: This list of names is no mystery. It's time for the Brain's honor roll. These are the kids who keep this show going by sharing their questions, ideas, mystery sounds, drawings, and high fives with us.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[LISTING HONOR ROLL]

ELECTRONIC (SINGING) Brains On. High five.

VOICE:

MOLLY BLOOM: We'll be back soon with more answers to your questions.

COLBY: Thanks for listening.