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Interviewee: Father of 1 son age 5

Interviewer: Alright. So thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I'm just going to ask you some questions today, and feel free to answer as completely as you like. How many children do you have?

Interviewee: Two.

Interviewer: Two? And what are their ages?

Interviewee: Three and five.

Interviewer: Okay. And are they boys or girls?

Interviewee: The youngest is a girl, the oldest is a boy.

Interviewer: Okay. Alright. So our project is on children ages five to eleven, so I would like you to answer primarily related to your five-year old. Okay?

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Alright. You said two and five?

Interviewee: Three and five.

Interviewer: Three and five. Sorry. Okay. Alright. So we'd like to chat with you about electronic devices such as TV, smartphones, laptops, iPads, eReaders, desktop computers, and game consoles. Basically, anything that you have that has a screen. Okay? So tell me about the devices your family owns and how your family members use them.

Interviewee: We have a computer, which we use in the main room as our television actually. It's hooked up to our television, so use it on there. Me and my wife both have smartphones, and the kids both have their tablets, which are the Amazon Fire tablets.

Interviewer: Okay. And you have a television as well?

Interviewee: No. Well it's a television, but I use it as a monitor for our computer. So it's a television, but we don't have cable or satellite or anything. It's just used as a monitor, and we stream TV shows and movies through that.

Interviewer: So you have Netflix or whatever, Hulu, one of those services?

Interviewee: Yeah a couple of those different subscriptions.

Interviewer: Okay. I'm learning a lot about how people are moving away from cable nowadays.

Interviewee: It's a lot cheaper.

Interviewer: I can imagine. My children would die if I took away their cable. I think they'd be just fine.

Interviewee: So they've never had it, so they don't know anything different.

Interviewer: That's true. Yeah, okay. So does your child use devices anywhere else, such as friends or relatives' homes, daycare, or the library?

Interviewee: They take their tablets with them if they go spend the night, say with my mom or anything like that. Yeah, they take their tablets.

Interviewer: Okay. And do they use computers here in the library?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, and how do they use those?

Interviewee: I think they generally go to PBS Kids, which has just some little educational games and videos that they watch, play with.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. So we're gonna come back to this list in just a few minutes. Do they go to daycare or anything like that?

Interviewee: No. They are at home with me. Well, the boy is in Kindergarten, just started Kindergarten, so that's where he's at during the day, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. So let's talk through each of these devices. So the primary user of the computer is basically your family as a monitor. I mean, as a streaming device?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. And then the two smartphones, you say one is yours, one is your wife's.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, how do you use those?

Interviewee: Mine is just mine. I use it for texting, calling, browsing the internet. My wife's the same thing, but the kids also use hers. She lets the kids use her phone to watch videos or play games on her phone.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Let's see. And the tablets, how do they use their tablets?

Interviewee: They watch videos, and they can download games from Amazon, so that's what they do. They play video games or watch videos.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. And we talked about the TV, use it mainly as a monitor for streaming, and you have Netflix, Hulu, things like that?

Interviewee: Yes. So they watch children's programs on it, and we watch adult programs on it.

Interviewer: Do you use it to surf the internet?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: We watch, I don't know, YouTube and listen to music, and basically everything you can do on the computer.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Let's see. Think about your child's day yesterday, or a recent day you were together, walk me through the day from the time your child woke up until bedtime, paying particular attention to the devices he or she used. What devices did she use and what did he use them for? Excuse me.

Interviewee: Well, typically when we wake up in the morning, they get breakfast. They get up at seven, we take Job to school at about 7:45. So they get up, they eat breakfast, I tell them they can watch a cartoon after they eat their breakfast. So once they're done eating their breakfast, I usually turn on the TV in the main room, and we watch a cartoon while they're getting dressed and going to school.

When he's in school, he does whatever he does at school, but we try not to watch a whole lot during the day. They have their tablets. I usually won't give them their tablets until afternoon, usually two or three in the afternoon. But after that, they'll usually spend an hour, hour and a half watching video games or watching videos and playing video games.

Interviewer: Okay. And that's your typical day. Okay. How do these devices fit into your family routines?

Interviewee: Mainly they're used as entertainment for them. That will keep them busy and also more like as an incentive to them, 'cause a lot of times if they don't get what I tell them they have to get done during the day, then I tell them they won't get their tablet or anything, or I could say if they don't eat their breakfast or anything, then they won't have any time to watch a cartoon before school. So basically entertainment and incentive.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. How has this routine changed as your child has grown older?

Interviewee: They used to watch more. It used to be on, especially in the living room, the TV would be on basically all the time, and they would just watch it and do other

things on there, smaller. Especially they used to watch it and not eat, when Job started school. So that's why I started, and now they have to eat before they turn it on. So they used to watch it more, more or less, without too many rules to it, but [inaudible 00:07:15]

We have to incentivize them and make them watch it. That was another thing. We used to let them use it, anytime we weren't doing anything, we would let my son play with his tablet, but he got where it would be the first thing he would ask for in the morning. He would come downstairs, he would just be like, "Where's my tablet? Is it charged?"

So that's when we started to not use it until the afternoon, but.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Let's see. Do you remember how routines were established when the children were very young?

Interviewee: Yeah. Usually the tablets or the TV is for when I'm doing something that I needed to keep them occupied, usually making breakfast or something while my wife was gone to work. So that's basically it was the babysitter times when I had something I had to do.

Interviewer: Do you participate or sit down and watch movies or play games with them when they're on their tablets or on the television?

Interviewee: Yes. They like to show you, so they'll come and sit down with you, and they like to show you what games they're playing and what you can do on it and tell you all about it. And also with my wife on the smartphone, they like to watch whatever she's watching, usually a cooking video or something. They like to sit with her and watch those.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. So let's see. Does your child have friends or relatives who make suggestions or model things to do on the devices?

Interviewee: No, not really. They have some cousins, but their cousins are younger, and so they don't really make suggestions. And I don't know if their older cousin even has a tablet or anything.

Interviewer: How 'bout grandparents?

Interviewee: No. Grandparents, they don't have tablets or anything. They just watch TV, I guess.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Okay. So who primarily helps your child with the devices? For example, when they need help getting started on something or if something needs to be fixed.

Interviewee: Me.

Interviewer: You do?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. And who makes decisions about purchases, about screen media?

Interviewee: Me.

Interviewer: Okay. Who makes decisions about what the child is doing on the devices?

Interviewee: Me.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Which of these devices does your child use independently?

Interviewee: Their tablets.

Interviewer: Their tablets? Okay. So they don't really know how to start the television and get that going?

Interviewee: No. Yeah, they're not allowed to have our phones or anything.

Interviewer: Okay. So their tablets. So if you give him his tablet in the morning, he can start it and games-

Interviewee: Yeah, he can turn it on and go to where he goes.

Interviewer: Okay, alrighty. Does he access the internet on this tablet?

Interviewee: Yes, but it's limited. They have a minor account. So they can access some internet access. I think mostly they watch Nick Jr., and it's children's programming, but anything else requires a password.

Interviewer: Okay. So you have a filter on your browser?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Do you put the limits on the tablet? The time limitations. Do you set that? What is it called, curfew or-

Interviewee: The one on theirs is called screen time, where you can set how much time they have. No, I do that manually, I don't set it.

Interviewer: You do that?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, okay. Alright. When do you feel a need to guide your child's use of these devices?

Interviewee: Mostly just with the time that they're spending on 'em, because like I said, with the way it's set up with their accounts, they can't access anything that I would have trouble with them accessing, so really it's just the time that they're on it.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. And on my next question is what ways have you provided guidance in how you use them? How they use them, excuse me.

Interviewee: I guess the only way really is we'll show them certain things. They like to watch cartoons, obviously, so a lot of times we'll make 'em watch or show 'em more scientific videos, like animal videos or videos about bugs and stuff. Stuff like that. If they show interest in a subject, then we'll go on YouTube and find some things about it.

Interviewer: Does Fire allow you to download apps, like The Science Channel and Animal Planet apps?

Interviewee: Yeah, you can download stuff off there.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Okay. Let's see. How do you make decisions about guiding your child's use of electronic devices?

Interviewee: Basically just what I think is good for them. I guess developmentally, I want them to spend time off of it, so I'm pretty tight with how often they're able to go on there, how much time they're on. I mean, I don't know, besides that, I just try and make sure they're not accessing anything they shouldn't.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. Do you consider your own childhood experiences with media when you're making decisions?

Interviewee: Yes. But mostly in the way that when I was younger, the internet was just now becoming a thing, and so we knew more about it than our parents did, so we could access all sorts of things that they didn't know how to access or keep us from accessing. So I keep that in mind, but I mean, I think today with most the stuff, as long as you're not just giving them a PC with an internet connection, then it's set up to keep 'em in appropriate areas.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay, alright. When making decisions about guiding your child's use, do you think about whether an activity is educational or not?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. And how do you decide if it's educational?

Interviewee: ... I mean it's pretty easy to tell educational programming from non-educational programming, especially, they do like to watch some of the cartoons that are non-educational, they're just purely entertainment. But, like I said, we make sure that they like things that are educational too, and show them things that are educational. But I mean, they also like purely entertainment cartoons.

Interviewer: So this kind of answers my next question, whether what other purposes do you see for your children's use of electronic devices?

Interviewee: Education, entertainment, and also is the education's that they're learning how to use the technology of the day, especially earlier than we were. 'Cause now everything's touch-screen stuff, and I was actually surprised at how young they learned to navigate things that I didn't encounter until I was a teenager.

Interviewer: Well, and some people still are not deft, tech-savvy with them. They're okay. Are there any uses that you worry about?

Interviewee: Just what they're able to access when they're older, and they're no longer held back by simple parental controls, but I mean, that's something that I think people my age went through and everything too, so I guess they'll figure it out.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. Excuse me. Are there websites, magazines, TV shows, or other resources you have seen or heard about parenting children's use of electronic devices or screen media?

Interviewee: Yes. Most of it I've seen has come from actually in the library. Here, they've had some handouts and stuff on screen time and suggestions like that. And I mean, Google. Every once in a while I'll come across an article or something that talks about the effects of using screens on children, so I'll read through that.

Interviewer: Okay, so there's not a particular sight or a blog or something like that that you can go?

Interviewee: NPR, and [inaudible 00:16:50] NPR, The Atlantic. Things like that.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Have you been offered a chance to get advice from professionals in the community, such as from librarians, teachers, police, doctors, or others you could think of?

Interviewee: The only thing I can think of is there was a program here. I think it's just called playtime, where you're bringing your kids, but they have, I guess, child development professionals from different areas where you can talk to them and ask them any questions that you might have.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. And probably you haven't had the experience with teachers yet, since your son is just starting Kindergarten.

Interviewee: No, not really. I mean, yeah he was in Pre-K last year, and I know they did some stuff with screens. They played the Leap Frog games, but I mean they didn't talk to us about those. It's just what he told me. He liked playing the games at school, so.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. Did you find advice that you've received useful to you?

Interviewee: Yes. It was about just the living in the time and getting them to where they're not obsessed with it like my son was for a little while. That's all he wanted to do. He didn't want to do anything with us until we started just not letting him have it, except for very little, and now it's fine.

Interviewer: Okay. What else would you have liked to have learned?

You're being very patient.

Interviewee: I'm not sure. What else I would have liked to have learned? ...

I don't really know. I don't really know how to answer that, I'm sorry.

Interviewer: No that's okay. Alright, so how do you know whose advice to follow?

Interviewee: ... I mean, the bottom line is I can use my own judgment, but I mean when I'm looking at an article or something, I'm usually trying to make sure it's coming from some sort of academic, rather than a blog or something, that may or may not be someone that has any idea what they're talking about.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. In what areas do you feel comfortable guiding your child?

Interviewee: Pretty much everywhere except for some of the technical aspects. I'm probably not as up to date on using these devices as I should be, but I mean content-wise, time-wise on that, I'm perfectly confident, but the only area I'd worry about is that one day I know they're gonna know more about it than I do. So I don't know how I'm gonna help 'em then.

Interviewer: Okay. Are there areas in which you have questions and would like further guidance about for now, or in the future? So you mentioned the technical aspects.

Interviewee: Yeah, in the future, definitely, the technical aspects. Right now the whole parental control thing is controlled by a password system, but eventually they'll figure that out too. I don't know. I will just have to study and learn how to keep up with it as they get better at it.

Interviewer: Technology changes constantly. That's true. We all have to keep up with it.

Okay, so what are the main things you do with technology. So we've talked a little bit about it. So for example, communication, entertainment, work-related tasks, research, creative productions, those are just ideas.

Interviewee: Yeah. Ours is mostly for education, 'cause they watch videos on any subjects they're interested in. They play educational games. Entertainment, and that's pretty much it. Education and entertainment.

Interviewer: And communication.

Interviewee: Yeah, communication.

Interviewer: Alright, so in relation to each device you've mentioned, would you describe yourself as an expert, beginner, or somewhere in between?

Interviewee: Let's say somewhere in between such as the computer and the phones, and probably beginner with the tablets.

Interviewer: Okay. Alright. Okay. Could you tell us about your child's other parent's experience with technology? What are the main things that she does?

Interviewee: Like I said, hers is usually just with her phone, so she will sit down and play on the tablets with the kids, and they like to watch videos on her phone, and she likes to show 'em different apps and things, those things. She likes to show 'em videos, but-

Interviewer: Does she use the phone for checking work email or anything like that?

Interviewee: No. Matter of fact, no, 'cause she can't get into her work email from her phone. She works for a hospital, so you have to be on one of their computers to log in to the system.

Interviewer: Yep, my husband's the same way. Yep. Okay, let's see. So would you consider her to be an expert, beginner, or somewhere in between?

Interviewee: Somewhere in between.

Interviewer: Okay, alright. So it would be helpful for me to have some basic information about you and your family. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Interviewee: Not sure. My wife is Caucasian. I am Hispanic, but not really.

Interviewer: What does that mean?

Interviewee: I don't speak Spanish or anything. My father was from Venezuela, so I don't know. I have a Hispanic last name and appear Hispanic, but that's about it.

Interviewer: Do you consider you more Latino? Hispanic?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No? Okay, alright.

Interviewee: I've always had trouble answering that.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's not something that easy-

Interviewee: Yeah, that's why. 'Cause they asked me that when Job was little, and I'd take him, they'd ask, "Is he Hispanic?" I'm like, "I don't know. He doesn't speak Spanish or [inaudible 00:23:47]"

Interviewer: But your family's background is from Venezuela and from America-

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: I meant your wife. Okay, alright.

Interviewee: One other thing. We don't know the family, that side of the family from Venezuela, so I was raised in an all-Caucasian family, so I don't really know.

Interviewer: Okay. Yeah, it's not an easy question, and I think people nowadays really don't pay that much attention to it. It's just basic demographic information we gather in these kind of studies.

Okay, and let's see. Could you tell me your highest level of education you've completed?

Interviewee: B.A. in Sociology.

Interviewer: In Sociology? Okay. And how about your wife?

Interviewee: Associate's in, I forget what her Associate's is in. She's now a Physician's Assistant.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Or a Medical Assistant, I think is the-

Interviewer: A Medical Assistant?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And she works in a hospital?

Interviewee: Doctor's office.

Interviewer: In a doctor's office, okay. And how about yourself? What's your profession?

Interviewee: I stay at home with the kids right now.

Interviewer: You're a stay-at-home dad, okay. Alright, is there anything else you'd like to tell us on this topic?

Interviewee: No, not that I can think of.

Interviewer: Okay, well again, I want to thank you for participating in this interview. This completes all my questions.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Alright. I'm going to turn that off-