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**Interviewee:** Father of 2 daughters ages 6 and 10

Interviewer: Tell me about your family. How many children do you have? What are their ages?

Derek: Sure. I have two daughters, a 10-year old and a six-year old.

Interviewer: Perfect. It fit in our study perfectly then. You've got both ends of our studies.

Derek: Yeah. The bookends. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. That's fantastic. Okay.

Derek: Yeah, we live, my wife and I, and our dog, that is our family.

Interviewer: Okay. Do your children use any screen devices that I mentioned at home?

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative). We have a laptop and a tablet at home, and then we also, my wife and I have smartphones, and then we just maybe a month ago or so got Kindles as well. Those were actually in preparation for a trip that we were taking, and easier to bring that than to bring as many books as they like to go through. Those are ... We have some old iPods lying around but those aren't really used.

Interviewer: Television? I forgot about television.

Derek: We do have a television. Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Any game consoles?

Derek: No.

Interviewer: No? Okay. Do you children use devices in other places like friends, homes, relative's homes, daycare, at the library?

Derek: Yeah. I mean they both have computer or tablet time at school, and so those are ... They actually both have programs that they use at school that they absolutely love mostly on tablets.

Interviewer: Okay.

Derek: They have that. My parents are in town, and so they'll look at a laptop or a tablet there. Occasionally, I mean sometimes TV, but not too much there. I don't think they do too much with screens at friends' houses.

Interviewer: Okay.

Derek: Then, there isn't any regular childcare or anything like that other than just the babysitter here and there.

Interviewer: What's the name of the program they love at school?

Derek: Lexia.

Interviewer: Oh, I haven't heard of that one.

Derek: As you guessed, it's learning literacy, learning to read, and yeah, so they're both at Crestwood, and it's setup with different levels and they get, particularly my six-year old, gets so motivated by moving from one level to the next doing that. My 10-year old, they're doing Reflex Math, which is something that her teacher and one other teacher, they got a grant, I guess, to get to use it and it's mostly kind of a math fact as supposed to higher level math. But learning, and she's not as passionate about that as the younger one is about Lexia, but they seem to both enjoy those.

Interviewer: It is so exciting when you first realize what reading is, and you can actually do it. It's just the most empowering thing. I can understand why that's so motivating.

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay...Let's talk through the different devices, kind of taking each one and thinking about who the primary users are. Yourself, as you said, they're your cellphones, primarily. Their smartphones, do the girls ever use them?

Derek: They do occasionally. There are a few ... We have just a few kind of kid-focused apps on the cellphones.

Interviewer: Tell me about what you mean by kid-focused.

Derek: We recently went to a trip to Costa Rica, and none of us really speak Spanish. I took a few semesters of it in college, but the rest of the family, no. There's a Duolingo, was the language-learning one. There's also, I'm trying to remember, but something like math and reading. I don't remember the names of them right now, but those types of, yeah.

Interviewer: Educational kinds of apps?

Derek: Educational, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. That's your smartphones. Laptop, did you say?

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: You have one laptop?

Derek: One laptop and a tablet.

Interviewer: One tablet, okay. Who are the primary users of the laptop and tablet?

Derek: My wife and I.

Interviewer: Okay. The girls have access to?

Derek: They're setup as password protected, so they have access when we give them access to it. For my fourth grader, in their class, they've been doing a lot with using Google Docs as the way that they'll work collaboratively. She'll sometimes, either device, she'll access that and do some work or just do something with ... They have some freedom to set something up with friends also so that they just set, she'll share a document back and forth with some of her friends. The 10-year old does a little bit with e-mail but not a whole lot.

Interviewer: Is that e-mail setup through school?

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: It's all Google, because it's Google Docs?

Derek: Yes. I guess it's all Google based.

Interviewer: Is it a one to one school? Do all the kids have laptops in their classrooms?

Derek: No.

Interviewer: Okay.

Derek: No. I mean they don't have enough that everybody can be on it at the same time, but they set up work stations and centers, and whatever else so that every week, each kid gets some time on the tablets.

Interviewer: Okay. Do they also use them for accessing the two apps that you ... Or the reading and the math programs?

Derek: Yes. Yeah.

Interviewer: That's on your laptop and on your tablet?

Derek: They are, yeah, we really use the laptop and the tablet kind of interchangeably. In terms of how they function in our household. They don't really have very different purposes. They have the same software and all that.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay.

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Smartphones, laptop, tablet, Kindle, and Kindle's for reading. You bought it for a trip and you downloaded books on it?

Derek: Right. We used the Libby system [Overdrive], whatever, to checkout books during the trip. Haven't used it as much since, but have used it somewhat and they were actually both reading books on there this, we were up to Devil's Lake this afternoon, and so in the car they were reading those.

Interviewer: Okay. Audio books as well? Can you do audio books on Kindles? I don't know if...

Derek: I don't know if you can. They've done all ...

Interviewer: ...they have speakers on.

Derek: Print, graphic.

Interviewer: Yeah. Digital, eBooks, right.

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Then television. Do the girls watch any kind of screen media?

Derek: We'll check out DVD's from the library, but that's about it. I would say, on a rare occasion, if the Badgers are having a good basketball season or football season, and they're on network TV, I might have that on. We might watch that, or watch the Superbowl or something like that, but that's about the extent of it. Otherwise, they will occasionally checkout some DVD's like the Peppa Pig and some Reading Rainbow, and that sort of thing.

Interviewer: On the laptop or the tablet, do they watch any television shows, or kinds of screen media?

Derek: Sometimes look up YouTube videos. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, thinking about each girl individually, I want to just kind of get a sense of a typical day of their life, which I know this is spring break, so it's probably not typical, so maybe think back to a typical school day and their use of screen media across that day. Let's start with your six-year old.

Derek: At school, there will ... Depends on the day and maybe there's some, I think they Lexia about three or four times a week. She'll have some time on that. After

school, and then before bed, I wouldn't say it's a regular part of the day, but it's not altogether uncommon. We've noticed that particularly with her, she has an extremely hard time stopping once she starts. She's just totally engrossed in it. Either it seems unable, or unwilling to stop, so we always limit to no more than half an hour a day. But that's definitely not every day. I would say that's maybe two or three times a week that she would have that.

Interviewer: That's on what, laptop and tablet maybe?

Derek: Laptop and tablet, yeah.

Interviewer: Doing the school app?

Derek: The other thing that she really enjoys doing is she likes sending texts to my parents. She'll send very emoji filled and sometimes with a picture, because she also really likes using the phones for taking pictures. Yeah, especially sending that to my parents or to my parents are in town, my wife's parents are not in town, so sending something to grandparents.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Okay, that's super important. Does she do video as well?

Derek: She loves video. She will completely fill up my memory if I let her go on that. Yeah.

Interviewer: She uses the tablet for video and photo?

Derek: Phone mostly.

Interviewer: Okay. On the laptop and tablet, she's doing the educational kinds of activities?

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Interviewer: Okay. Now, let's switch to, let's talk about weekends. Is it kind of similar in the weekends, and maybe half hour here or there?

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, let's switch to your 10-year old. Yeah.

Derek: Pretty similar. I'd see the main difference is that for example, after our trip, she was really excited about doing a presentation for her class on our trip. She wanted to put Google Doc together with a bunch of pictures, and few sentences about this is what this picture is about, this is what that picture is about. We kind of relaxed the limitations on that because that seemed like just a really opportunity for her to do something constructive out of this trip and to share her excitement with her friends. But otherwise, pretty similar. Since they do use e-mail, she and all of her

classmates have e-mails, she will occasionally say, "can I check my e-mail," or, "I need to send something," because there'll be some interaction going on with a friend that she wants to check in on.

Interviewer: Okay.

Derek: Otherwise, in terms of amount of time, similar.

Interviewer: Similar?

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Cellphone, your smartphones, does she use them to send grandparents messages as well?

Derek: Yeah. Say, she's less excited about that than the six-year old. But she'll occasionally do that too.

Interviewer: Photographs?

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, I'd like to know, well, you've kind of said this a little bit, but maybe more specifically how then those half-hour slots or little 15-minute segments fit into your daily life, your family routines?

Derek: I'd say they're probably most likely to be some time between getting home from school and dinner, which is usually in somewhere kind of 5:30 or 6:00 range, rather than after dinner and before bed. Occasionally might be after dinner, but yeah.

Interviewer: Sure. Sure. Then, traveling you said?

Derek: Yeah. Yeah. Traveling is a time where there'll be more screen time probably, and then if we're in the car or in the plane or something.

Interviewer: Right. That's mainly reading Kindle, so it's mainly books?

Derek: For the most part. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, think about your 10-year old growing up, do you feel like it's been consistent, or how have things changed with your 10-year old growing up?

Derek: The blessing and the curse, I guess, of being the first born is that you get to push your parent's boundaries, and we probably started out just saying like we want to stay away from screens for about as long as we can. I'd have a hard time saying,

"Well at this age, we allow this much, and at that age we allow that much." We haven't been very policy-ish on it. I think that my wife and I are both on the same page in terms of feeling like we don't want our kids sitting in the front of screens a whole lot. At the same time, we have the world that each of us spends a fair amount of time in front of a screen at our work, and you don't want to say, "Stay away entirely," and be completely unprepared for the world of, as education continues and moving into the world of work to be unprepared and technologically illiterate. Certain not doing anybody any favors either.

We've been really intentional about knowing what they're doing on the devices to make sure that it's really rare that they're using devices outside of our presence. Because we want to, if you're doing Lexia, that's one thing. If you just open up an internet window and now you're looking for who knows what that comes across, that's another thing. At some point, that's going to change. Our 10-year old is not forever going to want us looking over her shoulder and checking out what she's doing, but for now that works.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. With YouTube especially, there's all these things on the side. It's really easy to go down rabbit holes. Do you setup YouTube channels especially for the younger one, or how does YouTube work in your family?

Derek: It would be, it's not just like, "Let's surf and let's see what we can find." It would be, like the kid president videos that, "Okay, let's see if there are any new kid president videos. Let's all watch it together." That's more typical. I'm trying to remember the specifics, but there was one time where we did just kind of let the now 10-year old do some searches. She misspelled something and it came up with the types of results that's totally inappropriate, not because she was looking for anything, but because she misspelled one word instead of the word that she was looking for, and bad news. I'm not sure if I answered your question on that.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Okay, so we were talking about changes and so your older child, you were really kind of ... It sounds like it's more organic in your family. You have your daily routines, and when they get home from school, when they've done their social life, their academic life, dinner, sleep, all of those things are taken account of then they might have some screen time. You haven't had to be really policy driven, you called it, kind of strict policies because their lives are pretty full. Right? They're going to bed at a reasonable time.

Derek: Yeah, exactly.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's been consistent with your six-year old as well?

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, our project is really about understanding how you make decisions and what advice you're getting, and any kind of gaps, and if you see any tensions

and advice that you see things like that, so the remaining questions are about that. How do you make decisions about guiding your daughters' uses of devices?

Derek: Yeah. This is kind of in the side, but had a conversation with my fourth grader's third grade teacher last year, really about screens and what her recommendations were and what she acknowledged. She was a great teacher all around. My daughter loved her, she had a good year, she learned a lot, but what she really acknowledged was that from the education system, they're really still trying to figure out what the scaffolding process is with learning how to use technology, and as much as the way to teach reading or math may change over the years, the idea of how to teach technology changes is just really fluid and trying that. She wasn't able to pry a whole lot of good guidance other than, or solid guidelines or anything like that other than to say, other than to say, "Be aware, use it, don't overuse it." I think that we probably have different approaches than some of our friends, and so it's not necessarily just looking to peers to figure out the norm there. It's not anything we talked with doctors about, or anything like that.

I think it has really just been, used the word organic, and I think that that is a pretty good description of it to see how each child is using and responding to it, than seeing what's feeling right around that. If the six-year old, if we're just seeing this pattern of, "Okay, yes you can use the laptop for 15 minutes," and when it's time to be done, you're throwing a fit about having to stop using the computer, okay, that's a pretty good sign that you're really having trouble handling this, and we probably need to limit more so, or find some other ways to help you transition away from it. Whereas the school project, the project about the trip, well this is a great opportunity to use technology in a constructive and creative way, and go for it. That what's feeling right as far as the kid and the content has probably been our biggest guide.

Interviewer: Just a quick side, the transitioning away from the computer. Are transitions difficult for your six-year old in general or is it technology specifically that she has a hard time transitioning off of?

Derek: It's particularly technology.

Interviewer: Does she get more immersed in the technology than reading a physical book, do you think, or playing a game, playing a physical game? Like a physical game?

Derek: Yes. Totally immersed in it.

Interviewer: Interesting. Okay, that was just in the side. I had a question about ... I can't remember what it was, so I will keep going about ...

Derek: I guess, maybe one thing I would add there is that it does seem to be a little bit of a characteristic of her personality though, in addition to just being technology. She'll really get focused on something, and whether that is, "I really want some

candy," or whether it's, "I really want to see this friend," or, "I really want to play my game on the computer." Those are, once she's really set on something, that's part of who she is.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, thinking about how to handle that in those different contexts is important, yeah.

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Thinking about the different purposes, you've talked about educational purposes of using technology for educational purposes. How do you decide if something is educational or not?

Derek: Good question. We've trusted that the games that they're doing at school have educational value and are worth doing at home. If we're looking at downloading a new app onto a phone, look at the ... I don't remember what the sites are, but we'll read reviews of it, and is it just worthless, yes they use words but really they're not doing anything, or is it more, yeah, does it have a little bit more value. Our six-year old is academically pretty advanced, and so we've also kind of thought about how we can use technology to challenge her in ways that she ... Her teacher is aware of this and is certainly doing a good job of trying to support her in finding ways to challenge her also. But that can be a good way for her to find that challenge if it's not necessarily in the classroom.

Interviewer: Yeah. With the reading app and the math app, and then do you see the communication with her grandparents as a challenge, or is that just about family, family relationships, or how would you kid of classify that purpose?

Derek: I think it has educational value in it, but the main purpose is just because she loves her grandparents and it's a fun thing to do, and they'll send her something back, and yeah, it'll be fun.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. We've got social purposes. Entertainment, you said YouTube, you'll search specifically for an entertainer on YouTube.

Derek: Yeah.

Interviewer: Then, games as well. Do they do games for entertainment?

Derek: I don't think that they think of the educational games as being for education rather than entertainment. I think they think of them as being for entertainment.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Any other purposes of their entire screen media diet, if you like?

Derek: With the 10-year old, communications. Starting to have more of those relationships with friends that have some electronic connection as well. I think that's probably about it, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Anything you worry about, specifically, with these devices or the kinds of apps or games, or sites that they might access?

Derek: I think mostly the addictive nature of screens and being consumed. The difficulty transitioning away, the way that it was captivating. We, and I notice this in myself also, but we stop for Culver's for dinner on the way back from Devil's Lake this evening, and they just had screens up that are basically playing Culver's ads nonstop the whole time. Both girls had a really difficult time not staring at the screens. Even though it's kind of this loop of Culver's ads, which sure, ice cream looks yummy, but beyond that it's not that captivating of media or images to put out there and they just really had a difficult time bringing themselves away. I don't know what the biology behind it is but I also notice that where some people can seem to have a TV going in the background and still carry on in very coherent conversation, I have a lot of trouble. Unless it's something on TV that I'm able to just say, "I so don't care about that," that it's completely out of consciousness.

Similarly, I don't spend a lot of time watching TV, so I don't know if that's a symptom of you don't watch a lot of TV, and therefore when it's there, it's more captivating. Anyways, all that's to say that that addictive captivating nature of it is one thing that I worry about. Then, in addition to that, as they get older, figuring out how to let them use devices with screens in a way that's going to prepare them to interact with the world while helping them steer clear of the more, I don't know if dangerous, but getting into all the drama that can happen, the unhealthy sites. Yeah.

Interviewer: Content as well as kind of social interactions. None of that has started with your 10-year old in e-mail, as far as you know?

Derek: Not that I ... It doesn't seem like it has.

Interviewer: Do you monitor her e-mail? I'm just curious. You don't have to answer that.

Derek: I mean, she's not very conscious of here's how I need to keep my privacy, and so she'll sometimes leave her e-mail open.

Interviewer: Right, right, right.

Derek: Since there doesn't seem to be anything going on that is a cause for concern, it might be like, okay well, subject lines or it has kind of a preview mode, I kind of glance at it just to see is there anything that should be raising concerns here, and haven't run into anything yet.

Interviewer: Right. Do you feel a tension around her growing into a more independent young woman, like soon, coming up, and kind of knowing how to be providing that safe environment that you want to as a parent, kind of like, how do you that?

Derek: Absolutely. I don't feel like there's a clear road map on that. I think it will probably be organic in the same way that things have been to now, and that at the end of the day you have to try to provide the good influences and the guidance that will lead to healthy interaction, or as healthy as possible. Interactions with digital media, but we're going to have to see what effect it seems to be having on her, and I think we will try to continue to have, sort of set up the house and the expectations around using devices so that they're happening in areas where everybody is rather than behind closed doors, typically.

Interviewer: You've heard that advice, and you found that useful as a kind of marker, right?

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Is there any other advice that you found particularly helpful?

Derek: I don't know. I think there's some comfort in what the third grade teacher said about this isn't ... There aren't hard and fast guidelines yet on this, and that it's not something, the right answer isn't to totally eliminate it. The right answer doesn't seem to be spend four hours a day in front of a screen. It's somewhere in the middle there and you just have to figure it out with the kid.

Interviewer: Yeah. You have, it sounds like a soft thirty minutes that's kind of an estimate of how much total they might spend. Did you come to that 30 minutes by kind of observation or do you think it's like in the ether somewhere, like 30 minutes is an appropriate amount of time, or?

Derek: It's a good question. I don't remember how we ended up at that 30 minutes exactly. I think that there is some element of saying you can only have so much time between school and dinner, and then between dinner and bed. Spending much more time than that, and all of a sudden you're not doing much else. Probably sort of thinking back to growing up, and well, watch one and a half TV show or something like that, I think that might be about as rationalized as it is, I don't know.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. You said you looked to some websites for reviews of apps. Common Sense Media, have you said it all? Does that ring a bell?

Derek: I think we have used that. My wife is more, she has more of the apps that the kids would use on her phone, and has done more of the reviews and, I don't know.

Interviewer: That's fine. That's fine.

Derek: Common Sense Media, I think, is maybe one of them but I'm not really sure.

Interviewer: That's fine. It sounds like you're really trusting your gut instinct rather than you said ... I mean it's interesting that you acknowledge that peers, peer parents are a possible source, because I haven't actually heard parents say that before. I've done other research with parents. They all acknowledge that there's a lot of pressure from other parents, but hadn't thought about them as potential advisors, so that's really interesting. You've gone to a teacher, one teacher?

Derek: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you can think of for advice?

Derek: Yeah. I think that, I mean, while we have talked with parents and friends, and our friends out how they're doing screens with their kids, it's definitely not to say that we've, we're probably on the more restrictive side among those groups now. I can't think of other sources. I think we've probably done a few Google searches of what's, or read different articles, but I can't think of specifics.

Interviewer: Do you feel like there are any gaps? What else you ... In the future, where do you think you're going to need to know about for your 10-year old?

Derek: I think that just being aware of what are the sites and the apps, and stuff that a 12-year old is likely to be interested in using that may be good or may be not so good. We're kind of fortunate in that. My wife works at a church and her focus is on really working with kids up to just a little bit older than my older daughter. As a result of that, having some read on what the issues are around technology and kids is kind of built into her work, but she won't necessarily be at that job forever. Before that, she was a music teacher in public schools, and she's always kind of worked with kids. She has that connection. I think she enjoys sort of trying to keep on top of what kids are up to in terms of media. I think that having resources around what's being used and what to be noticing, is something that we probably feel pretty good about now, but especially in the next five, six, eight years, is going to be a lot harder.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. I think that makes sense that when you're around, kids, and especially that age when they're really getting into more independent use of technology, when you're around that, you're aware of, oh yeah, SnapChat, because they always talk about SnapChat, but as soon as you stop having access to that, then it's so easy for the world to move on.

Derek: Yeah. Exactly.

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. I think that's really about it. The last questions are, it's really helpful to have some just basic information about demographics for the study. How

would you describe your ethnic background? African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, White.

Derek: White.

Interviewer: Your wife as well?

Derek: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Then, the highest levels of education both you and your wife have completed?

Derek: I have a bachelor's, and my wife has a master's.

Interviewer: Okay. That's it. Anything else you'd like to tell us about screen device?

Derek: I'm glad you're going this research. It sounds like it has the potential to provide some of that informing that I think will be helpful.