

**File Name:** NavScreensParent38Transcript2018

**Interviewee:** Mother of 8 (son), 11 (daughter), 12 (daughter)

Interviewer: So you already told me you have three kids. You said they are ... Was it eight, 11 ...  
No, eight, 12, and 13?

Interviewee: Eight, 11, and 12.

Interviewer: Eleven and 12.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And could you tell me which is a boy, which is a girl, and what grade they are?

Interviewee: My son is eight. And then I have Jared, who is 11. And Brent is 12.

Interviewer: Oh, that's nice.

Interviewee: Tough ages, but good.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Let's see. We'd like to chat with you about electronic devices.

Interviewee: Sure.

Interviewer: And we're using that term very, very broadly, everything from televisions to cellphones to laptop computers, desktop computers, gaming consoles, e-books, all the little things in life, anything with a screen. Can you tell me about the devices your family owns and which ones your kids use?

Interviewee: Pretty much all of the above. Let's see. They do have laptops. They do have gaming devices. We also have, obviously, television as well as cellphones. However, my 12-year-old is the only one with a cellphone at this point. We did put an age limit on the cellphone.

Interviewer: Oh, what age?

Interviewee: Actually, she just got hers at 11.

Interviewer: And how did you decide on 11?

Interviewee: We decided that, due to her activities at school, that she really needed something to be able to communicate with us in a timely fashion. So we decided that, once we figured that she wouldn't break it and she was responsible enough to care for it, that we decided to get her a cellphone.

Interviewer: I'm still waiting for that with my teenagers. They keep dropping theirs.

Interviewee: I don't know why they don't make the protective glass, but anyway, it's just another marketing scheme, I'm sure, to get you to keep buying something.

Interviewer: Well, it's working.

Interviewee: Exactly.

Interviewer: Is she using it with her teachers to communicate at all?

Interviewee: That's a great question. The school that they're at, currently they do intermingle computer as well as traditional paperwork, so they may use Google Docs to communicate homework assignments or reports or however. So they really activate the kids really early on how to actually even use a computer, more so than I ever was.

Interviewer: Do you think the kids are finding it helpful?

Interviewee: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Oh, good.

Interviewee: Are my answers okay? Are my answers ...

Interviewer: Perfect. Yeah, yeah.

Interviewee: Oh, okay. I get a little nervous.

Interviewer: No, that's wonderful.

Interviewee: I'm a little camera shy or ...

Interviewer: Oh, that's why we don't use videos.

Interviewee: ... tape shy. Oh, God.

Interviewer: Let's see. Can you talk me through the devices in your house? Who is the primary user? You said ...

Interviewee: Oh, that's very interesting. I think they all like to consider themselves primary users. They all have a ... I guess it's called the Kindle, which they use for games, but also to read. So they do a little bit of both, a little education and a little more fun, but also education games. So they each use them, just in different capacities, and they try to use them as much as possible. But we do try to limit that as much as possible, but definitely it is part of their everyday ... A day doesn't go by where they're not using some form of electronic device.

Interviewer: It's probably true for adults too.

Interviewee: This is my handheld computer, and I do everything on this.

Interviewer: Mine's in here.

Interviewee: Yeah, I know. Mine's like ... I think I tucked it in here, as a matter of fact.

Interviewer: So you said sometimes you try to limit media use. How do you determine what limits you want to set, or how do you negotiate that?

Interviewee: That's a really good question. It's hard. It's also hard on the visual to know what they're looking at. Like, for instance, Netflix, they have their own profiles, so we can actually see what they're watching, which has been very helpful, but I think my kids are smart in the sense where they could probably figure out how to delete that as well. So we really try to interact with them to know what they're

watching. It isn't always easy without literally sitting down and watching it with them, but there are parental controls on some of the devices. Also, on Comcast, so the traditional TV networks, you can parental control.

So I try not to let the kids do anything outlandish, but it's getting to that age where they're going to be more curious, and it's much more easily accessible than it has been when we were kids. So it's hard. I'm still looking for a concrete way to be able to say, "Okay, this is so cut and dry," to be able to say, "Okay, this, this, and this." But I don't think it's necessarily the electronics that creates this curiosity. I think it's just messages in the world that are learned from the electronics that you see in ads, that you see in magazines, that you see ... That you hear even just verbally in how people talk and associate with each other.

So I think it's just almost like a perfect storm, if you will. Kids are going to be curious, and it's so easy to fascinate that curiosity by just a click of a finger and doing a search. "Hey, what did this mean that this person said? Or what was this that I saw in a magazine?" Does that make sense?

Interviewer: Absolutely.

Interviewee: I don't know if I answered the question, though.

Interviewer: You did. You definitely did. You talked mostly about limitations on either Netflix or television. Do you have other limitations with media or other ...

Interviewee: I mean, even in traditional media, I try to ... It's hard when you're in a supermarket aisle to avoid those magazines with everything is ... whether it's weight conscious or somebody's having an affair with somebody else in the Hollywood scene. It's hard to shield your children from that because it is part of life, a different life, more of an obscured life.

But I'm very traditional, and I grew up in a very traditional family and a very strict family. And values and family are incredibly important, so the best thing that we have found with communicating with our kids is to try to keep open lines of communication, whether it is questions about media or questions about what they see online or in the newspapers or even what they read just in a traditional library book. I mean, there's even controversial writing that's going on out there. That's still media. It's just traditional, more traditional than what we see online. But anyway, this is interesting to me, so I don't mean to babble, but it's ...

Interviewer: Oh, no. It's wonderful. I'm learning a lot.

Interviewee: But it's really hard to shield. I think probably our best defense is a good offense in the sense of being a close family and letting our kids know that it's okay to talk about things, because I think that kids lean towards media as almost a scapegoat to maybe escape into a fantasy world, or that people aren't able to communicate with them, so they communicate through media and social media. And that can be disturbing, but also positive.

Interviewer: This is wonderful. You know you're doing something right.

Interviewee: Yeah, she took out six books today.

Interviewer: Wow!

Interviewee: And they're due the 23rd of June, and there's no doubt in my mind that they'll all be read.

Interviewer: Oh, my gosh.

Interviewee: But she will ... She'll watch a movie tonight. And she'll play on the computer, or she'll grab my cellphone before we leave here to check her email.

Interviewer: That's interesting. Does she email with friends or ...

Interviewee: She does. And texts.

Interviewer: Wow! Interesting. I was going to say text is one [crosstalk 00: 08: 33].

Interviewee: Text is her big thing. I find that that's how they communicate now. It's not a picking ... You never hear your phone ring anymore. And even, in this day and age, nobody even picks up their phone anymore.

Interviewer: I don't.

Interviewee: I don't either. So everything is done via text, and it's short. And even just the way people talk to each other too has changed, I feel, because of media. It's very short, concise, and not necessarily even grammatically correct, for that matter. But yeah, they're all about text, or she is. The little guys are ... They get it. Like, Snapchat, they understand that, but they don't use it as much as the 12-year-old.

Interviewer: Have they expressed interest in having phones, or is it just too early?

Interviewee: Yes, the 11-year-old definitely, because she knew when my 12-year-old got one. So she knows she's right on the cusp of getting one. And we probably will get her one as she enters the middle school next year because she'll be more active and just ... I also feel it's almost a, I know it sounds terrible to say, like a rite of passage, if you will, because it does teach them responsibility.

Interviewer: Absolutely.

Interviewee: And it is such an integral part of our lives now that ... although it's still hard to get ahold of people.

Interviewer: Let's see. Oh, can you think about your children's day yesterday or a recent day you were together and walk me through the day with each of them, what they did media-wise from morning till evening?

Interviewee: A very good question. It depends on the day. School morning, I don't let them turn on a thing until they are ready, everything is done, teeth are brushed, rooms cleaned, ready to roll.

Interviewer: Rooms clean. Wow! I'm impressed.

Interviewee: Well, actually ... I know. As clean ... Their clean, their version of clean. And I usually will give them a couple minutes to check or text or even watch a cartoon before school. When I was a first-time mom, I was like, "Oh, I'm never going to turn the TV on. I'm never going to do that," but I found myself using sometimes the television as a, I hate to say it, like a little instant babysitter while you were getting ready for work.

Interviewer: That's the only way I could shower when my kids were little.

Interviewee: Yeah, shower and do your hair and all that. But now they're a little more self-sufficient, where I will let them have a couple minutes before school. And right when they get home, it's the first thing they want to use. So I put a stipulation, homework has to be done, your chores, which is setting the table and helping with dinner, but they want to go right back to it, whether it's TV or their computers. But I try to put limitations on it. It is a challenge, and I wish somebody had a concrete answer, but there really isn't one.

Interviewer: Let's see. Oh, how have, if at all, routines with media changed since your children were younger, and how has media use become more established, or how have you negotiated rules for using media in your family?

Interviewee: Actually, my daughter was the last one in her class to get a cellphone.

Interviewer: Wow! At 11?

Interviewee: Yeah. We saw cellphone usage as early as first grade at her first school. Yeah. And I was amazed that these little six, seven-year-olds were walking around with iPhones.

Interviewer: Really?

Interviewee: I'm not kidding you. And I'm like, "A \$1,000 phone for a seven-year-old?" But anyway ... I know it's getting into a whole different ...

Interviewer: Wow!

Interviewee: But so she was actually ... I know I'm probably out of the range right now, the age range, but just in general, she was the last one to get a phone. And my daughter, who is 11, is the last one to get a cellphone in her class. So there is that element of like, "Oh, geez, I don't want my kid to be ... " You know, but ...

Interviewer: Culturally [crosstalk 00: 12: 55].

Interviewee: Yes. So that gives it ... You give in a little bit to that to a certain degree, but we have kind of kept our feet down in that when we feel you can take care of it, we will get you a cellphone. So I do plan on getting my 11-year-old one next year, but she once again is the last student to have one in her class, and I do hear that on a constant basis. "Hey, Mom, everybody has one. Everybody has one." So anyway, I think I got off on a little tangent there. What was the original question? Oh, the typical day. Okay. So it is intertwined as part of our day, and thank you for bringing it aware to me that, yeah, it is part of our every day, and I

can't think of a day that they haven't used it. So it's a very good point, but it is pretty much intertwined into our day. But granted, the everyday little things do need to be complete before they use it.

Interviewer: I'm still impressed they clean their rooms.

Interviewee: As clean as their translation of clean. The problem is they have to do it two to three times a day before it actually really gets clean. It's like in cycles.

Interviewer: Yeah. With the children when they were younger, how did you negotiate technology use, or did you have to at all?

Interviewee: Actually, we didn't. At that age, it was more just television, more the cartoons. So it did change. It evolved into apps and games as they got older, but at the beginning, it was more just the television, and then it just graduated. And now it's everything, from music to Spotify to ...

Interviewer: Oh, they use Spotify?

Interviewee: Yeah, so everything, every element of media. They're involved in music, television, social, even traditional. So it is ... I mean, this is so interesting to me. I mean, just sitting here talking to you is like wow! It really blew up in my mind how you just don't realize how it really has taken over the world, and it's not going to stop. It's only going to even get more intricate. I was actually a fine art major back when everything was done ...

Interviewer: Oh, really? What medium?

Interviewee: I was a graphic design major, but we did everything by hand.

Interviewer: Oh, wow!

Interviewee: And then just thinking of media, how that whole medium had changed from the first Photoshop in 1989 was ...

Interviewer: Oh, that's going on 30 years. Wow!

Interviewee: Which I was one of the first people to use Photoshop 1, and it was just seeing how different media has changed, how messages have changed, how visual has changed. But anyway, sorry. I could talk all day, but ...

Interviewer: That's amazing. It's interesting. Let's see. Who makes decisions about purchasing media or ...

Interviewee: That's a great question. My husband's an IT guy, so he has a general interest in it. He's more savvy in what's new and what's out there, so he tends to make more of the decisions. I'm more of a ... You know, an economical decision as well. But yeah, I mean, my kids don't own iPhones. They own ... Come on. I mean, they own a ... It's not a flip phone, but they own a cheap version of a cellphone. I'm not going to buy my kids iPhones at age 11. I'm sorry. It's become a status symbol now, like your technology.

Interviewer: Really? With the little ones?

Interviewee: Yes. Yeah, I do. I feel that ... Yeah, their spends, which is really interesting because I find that media companies do target the younger kids because they look to establish that relationship. Like, Apple, for instance, would establish that relationship early on to carry that through when they go to college, when they get there. So yeah, it's become a, "Okay, I'm seven years old, and I have the new iPhone ... " What is it 9 or ...

Interviewer: 10.

Interviewee: 10? See, I don't even know what the new version is. So it's become like, hey ... When I was a kid, it was who wore Nikes or Adidas or who had the cool sneaks. Now it's who's got the most up-to-date phone. This is a 6, I think. It's cracked.... And it's the fact that they change so quickly, too. I didn't bother keeping up because I'm just like, you know ... Yeah. Sorry. I know we're getting off on the ...

Interviewer: That's okay. Let's see. Let's see. In what ways have you provided guidance in how they use media?

Interviewee: Oh, good question. For instance, on a traditional note, I will use ... If my kids see a magazine cover or something that's questionable, I look at that as an opportunity to talk to my kids. Like, "I saw you reading. Do you have any questions?" I use it as an opportunity to try to explain to my children. What I've done ... It's hard. Sorry. I got ahead of myself, I think. But I use it as a learning opportunity. I mean, some of these shows that are TV-14 or rated R, what I grew up with ... I don't know how you feel about that, but when I watch some of the TV-14 shows, I'm blown away with the language, with the subject matter. Even there's nudity in TV-14, which ...

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: So I try to screen. I watched a movie last night with the kids, and I was like, "Ooh, shoot." I thought the message was phenomenal, but it was just getting past some of the other elements in the story. But the message was phenomenal. And I found myself kind of translating through some of the stuff that I thought was probably I made a mistake, it may have been a little inappropriate. But yet, they didn't even seem phased by it, but to me, I'm like, whoa, that's a little ... For this age, I think it's ... But I sound like an older person, and I do think that children are growing up quicker, and I don't know if that's really the case, or if it's just I'm starting to sound like my parents.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: But it does seem different. It does seem different, but yet there are still the same aspects that were there. Oh, there's my kids.

Interviewer: Oh, you had a question?

Interviewee: So as you see, they came to the library and wanted to play on the computer, so I let them. They're traditional media.

Interviewer: Does the library have different software, or why would they want to use the computers here?

Interviewee: They do. I think there's some different games on there that they may not have on theirs, so ... But as long as I mix in traditional and reading, I let them have some fun.

Interviewer: They should. They're kids. They should have fun.

Interviewee: Yeah. And we'll be hitting the park, too, so that's also in the ... If it's not raining.

Interviewer: That's nice. What about using media together? You said you guys watched a movie last night together. Are there certain devices or media you tend to use together, as opposed to individually?

Interviewee: TV we do a lot. I play games with my son every once in a while, and we have a blast. I mean, the graphics are incredible on some of these games. So we'll play, but we also play board games, too, as well. So we'll try the old and new, if you will. But mostly television. We do family movie nights.

Interviewer: Oh, how nice.

Interviewee: And the real traditional, popcorn, the whole nine. So we do that. We try to make that as part of our time together, even though it's not necessarily talking per se, but it's time that we're all in the same space, as opposed to everybody is in their own room doing whatever. So yeah.

Interviewer: That sounds so nice. Let's see. Let's see. How about have you noticed, found, or used any websites, magazines, TVs, other sources in teaching about children's use of media or how to guide them?

Interviewee: Oh, you know what? I haven't, and that's a really great point. I'm happy to ... If you have recommendations on some certain sites, or I'll just Google it. I could just Google it, right? But that's great. I mean, that's a good idea. I really haven't. I've really just used my own kind of value and upbringing to hopefully shield them from some, but let them explore others.

Interviewer: You said that the media environment has really changed since you were a child. To what extent has your upbringing influenced how you mentor your kids?

Interviewee: It has changed quite a bit. As you know, cellphones weren't even invented. Computers weren't even invented. It's interesting, though. I think some of the messages in media can be the same. Like, there was social media bullying that went on in a different way when we were kids or when I was a kid. So there's certain messages that are just done differently that have changed. There's ways to do it more mass production, which scares me.

Media has changed in the sense it's become a lot more graphic and, I think, has become a lot more ... I mean, even the news, even just the way the news has changed and the way that news is even reported now. The big news channel that was the BBC, where you can actually see real combat. But when I was a kid growing up, you

didn't see half the stuff on the news that you see now, where you can see racial tension and somebody being literally gunned down from media. I mean, gunned down on television, where I really try to shield my kids from that.

But the other day, something came up on one of the shootings, the school shootings, and my kids wanted to watch it because they wanted to know what was going on. And my husband and I both looked at each other and were like ... It was the older ones, and we said, "Should we let them?" And we let them, and we talked to them afterward because we wanted them to know ...

Sorry. I'm getting off on a tangent, but we let them watch the news. However, it was more of a verbal talk. It didn't show any visual. But they wanted to know what was going on, and I thought that it was right for them to know what is going on.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's part of their world.

Interviewee: That was a big ... Yeah, that was a big thing. My husband and I both were kind of like, "Should we let these guys?" And we did, and we talked through it. So I think a big thing is, yes, things have really changed, but what hasn't changed is parents' need to interact, and I think they need to interact maybe even a little bit more than maybe they did years ago when it was a little less out in the open. And it's hard. Life has changed. Parents are working. Both parents are working, so it becomes incredibly important to be as close and to have an open relationship with your kids in the sense of being able to talk to them, because media can poison, but it can also enlighten if used properly.

Interviewer: Let's see. Oh, can you describe yourself as an expert or a beginner or somewhere in the middle in your own comfort and use of technology?

Interviewee: I would say advanced. I'm not the greatest with the social aspect. It's not that I'm not the most advanced. I actually choose not to use it. I have a Facebook account. I get on there maybe once a year. I have LinkedIn, which I use more than any other social media platform for work and for business and just for research. But other than that, I'm not a big social media person. I find social media ... As a matter of fact, I just had this conversation with my kids. I said, "Guys, whatever you ... " I know they're only 11 and 12, the girls, but, "Whatever you put out there on social media can come back to haunt you and no matter when, whether it's a job interview or even a college or high-school interview. That you have to be very careful how you present yourself," because we didn't have that when we were kids.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). [crosstalk 00: 27: 28]

Interviewee: Nobody knew what you did on spring break or whatever. You know what I mean? I'm just kidding, but it can really damage you. So I'm trying to teach them that, that what you put out there is what you're going to get back, and to be careful in how you present yourself. I mean, we see it in ... I mean, I don't want to talk about the President, but we just see this whole different way of just being able

to say whatever you feel like, and it's not the case. I mean, you have to be careful how you present yourself.

Interviewer: Absolutely.

Interviewee: I know I get off ... I find this very interesting, so I apologize for ...

Interviewer: Oh, no, that's great.

Interviewee: ... constantly ... You can edit this in any fashion you need to. I'm just kidding.

Interviewer: Can you describe yourself demographically? Education?

Interviewee: I have a bachelor's degree ...

Interviewer: In graphic arts.

Interviewee: ... in graphic arts. That was as far as I went. I plan on actually continuing, not necessarily sure what capacity. It will be something along the lines of ... I enjoy marketing quite a bit.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Interviewee: But demographic, we are middle class. My husband ... I'm ... I mean, I don't like to use the word biracial, but we are ... My husband is Puerto Rican and Panamanian.

Interviewer: Really? Does he speak Spanish?

Interviewee: His mom does, but he doesn't. When she came to the States, she ... They don't speak. So my kids are ... They're definitely a mix of a number of different cultures. We live here in the city. Love the city. My kids go to a local charter school. They went for the first seven ... Actually, my daughter went up through sixth grade to a private Catholic school, but we enrolled into a city charter school via lottery.

Interviewer: Oh, wow!

Interviewee: Yeah, so we got into one of the school lotteries, and we've been incredibly happy.

Interviewer: Yay!

Interviewee: It's been a great change for the kids. Super culturally diverse and just ... I mean, we live here in the city. We wanted to be part of what's going on in the city, and it's been great. Yeah, so ...

Interviewer: Were the kids born in Philly?

Interviewee: They all three were born right here in Philly at Jefferson.

Interviewer: Oh, nice.

Interviewee: Yeah. And I moved here from New York City. So my husband and I are both from ...

Interviewer: Oh, I like Philly so much better than New York.

Interviewee: Yeah. My husband's from Brooklyn, and we moved here from New York City about 20 years ago. We didn't have kids when we first moved here obviously, but I couldn't even imagine having kids in New York City. I find Philly manageable, amazing. Love it.

Interviewer: Me too.

Interviewee: So, yeah.

Interviewer: Let's see. Oh, is there anything else you'd like to tell us on this subject or ...

Interviewee: Well, I hope I answered the questions. I know I tend to ...

Interviewer: Oh, absolutely.

Interviewee: ... because this is very fascinating to me, so thank you. I appreciate you taking the time.

Interviewer: I guess there is one more question. Can you think of any way in which the public library could help you in this area?

Interviewee: I think this library is fantastic. I really do. We get down here ... We used to come a lot more. We'll be here probably at least once a week in the summer.

Interviewer: Wow!

Interviewee: My kids love it, and I'll be back here to return the books, and they'll reload. But I think the library is fantastic. I think they have some great programs as well. And I don't know if they do have any ... I mean, it would be worthwhile, as a parent, if there are lectures on how ...

Interviewer: I don't think they have any.

Interviewee: And that, to me, would be very interesting because I think it's going to be an ongoing mystery how do you raise your kids into this social ... Literally, the world is a social platform now. And how do you protect yourself? I know that sounds ... I don't mean it in a negative. How do you protect yourself, but also utilize it to your advantage in that sense, because there are two extremes there, but ...