Interviewer: If you could just tell us a little bit about your job and particularly the kind of work you do with either kids ages 8-11 or even more importantly parents and other guardians or teachers and other intermediaries who work with kids in this age.

Interviewee: Sure. My name is Interviewee I am a children's librarian for the [name removed]. I work at a location called the [removed] branch which is a co-location with the Children's Hospital of [name removed] as well as two other government agencies, a rec center and a health center so we're all here in the same building. I am the only children's librarian at this location so I am responsible for all children's programming from ages 0-12.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: We don't have a teen librarian so I would say probably through high school is what I do.

Interviewer: Wow. That's too bad there's nobody here who works with the teens.

Interviewee: There's no separate job class for teen librarian.

Interviewer: I thought it was adult/teen.

Interviewee: Yes. That's technically what it is. I think it should be specialty position because it's a separate job, but-

Interviewer: Absolutely.

Interviewee: -that involves money that I guess nobody has and I don't make the rules.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: In terms of children's programming, for ages 8-11 is what you're looking at, a lot of the programming I do during the day is for kids who are not in elementary school yet so I do a lot of toddler and pre-school and infant programs.

Interviewer: Ah, toddlers.

Interviewee: You should come tomorrow, it's wild with toddlers here.

Interviewer: They're my favorites.

Interviewee: That's a lot of what I do during the day. 8-11 year olds I also do school visits, a lot of outreach, so I see them at their schools and also at outside locations. We have an after school program here that is the same after school program that runs in all the libraries, called Leap, so I oversee that. We have some extra staff that comes in for that so they provide homework help five days a week and extra programming depending on who's here and what's going on.

What was the other part of your question?

Interviewer: I don't remember.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: How long have you been on the staff at the [name removed]?

Interviewee: For two and a half years.

Interviewer: Okay, so before we get to the official questions I want to ask you two things first. In your opinion how is it working with the Library here and the multiple other city agencies and what are some of the advantages, disadvantages?

Interviewee: Yeah. It's like a city experiment in co-location so this is a pilot idea with the hopes of expanding it through the city as far as I know. There are designated point people at all of the agencies who meet monthly and brainstorm ways that we can have collaborative programming and support each other's missions.

Interviewer: That's good, yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah. Some of it works and some of it doesn't work so in terms of children's programming, we actually have partnerships with the rec center and with Chop. It's sort of a less natural fit with the health center so yeah, sometimes the ideas work and sometimes they don't.

Interviewer: Has any of the shared program dealt with kids in technology in any way?

Interviewee: Kids in technology…

Interviewer: I'm never sure what to call it, what we mean really is screen media in the broadest sense but that is such a negative connotation. We're trying to think of a better way, how about media? Kids in media.

Interviewee: Sure, okay.

                So, the rec center which is attached to us, they also have an after school program and when they built this building there was supposed to be a computer lab there and there's a room for it and all the set up for it but then once they built the computer lab here, someone, I don't know who, was like "well, there's computers at the library so forget it."

Interviewer: Interesting.

Interviewee: One of the things that when the after school program from the rec center, they come here once a week and one of the things that they're really excited to do is just use a computer. A lot of them don't have computer access at home because I don't know if they ran out of money or what happened but there's no computers there either. They're generally not working on anything like homework or research or they're playing games which I also think is important. That's definitely part of it.

We also have a non profit that comes in called Tech Girls. They do programming for girls 8-12, don't quote me on that part but their mission is to encourage girls to enter tech fields. They have things like learning how to build a website or use a 3-D printer, I don't know, a lot of it's above my head too. Maybe I should sit in on them.

Interviewer: [inaudible 00:06:44] tech girl.

Interviewee: Yeah, I could be, right? That's going on. Most of the computer classes that we offer here are geared towards adults. We're a lucky location in that we have a separate computer lab.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Most of the libraries are going to have somewhere from 4-20 computers that there's not a designated person to necessarily help them and so we have a separate room, a door that closes with 16 computers in there so it makes it easier to have classes. We also have a designated staff member, who is not here today, who teaches all the classes and is there to provide one on one assistance.

That is generally for adults, we have things like Intro to Excel or very basic stuff like How to use a mouse and How to set up an email account, things like that. For that age range, there's probably less going on here than there is for adults.

Interviewer: Could you talk a little bit about your population? You said many of them don't have access to computers. Can you typify the population a bit?

Interviewee: It's a very mixed neighborhood. There are definitely wealthy families here who come in for programs or come in to check out books but we also see a large homeless population and everyone in between. We are located directly on top of a subway stop, it's right under us.

Interviewer: That's wild.

Interviewee: We also have a lot of people from different areas of the city who don't necessarily live within a couple block radius because we're very accessible, we're also located between a lot of neighborhoods that are changing quickly. We genuinely see a little bit of everyone in terms of age, in terms of socio economic status, race, the languages we hear spoken.

Interviewer: That's nice.

Interviewee: It is nice, yeah. It does make it difficult to give good data there.

Interviewer: Yeah.

You mentioned some of the tech classes and programming. Do you know if there are programs specifically aimed toward parents or guardians but the content of which deals with children and media?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No you don't know or no there aren't any.

Interviewee: There aren't at this location.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee: If there were I would have to be doing them and I'm not doing them. The small way that happens is sometimes I'll have parents with young kids who aren't necessarily computer literate themselves and the kid wants to use the computer so they'll have the kid sign up for a computer and they're like "now what do we do?" I'll usually ask the kid "do you want to read about something? Do you want to watch a video? Do you want to play a game?" depending on the age of the kid and generally I'll show the parent how to get to wherever we're going and I try to make those, if they are totally open to any suggestion, I'll try to give them things that are a little more literacy based than what they might end up doing otherwise. Pointing them to some of the library subscriptions that we have for kids versus just putting them on whatever they want to go to.

Interviewer: YouTube for Disney.

Interviewee: Yeah, a lot of YouTube but YouTube has a lot of good stuff on it too so I'm not here to bash YouTube.

Interviewer: It just has tons of stuff.

Interviewee: Yes, yeah.

Interviewer: Everything, yeah.

Interviewee: Good, bad, everything in between.

Interviewer: Let's see. The official questions, okay, so we're specifically interested in advice you provide to families. You've already discussed this a little bit about electronic device use. Everything from TV's to smartphones, laptops, iPads, ereaders, desktops, game consoles anything with a screen.

You've said that you do some on point individual guidance particularly for parents where working with kids to use the computers in the library.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Any other ways that you provide advice for parents or guidance? It's perfectly fine if the answer's no, we're just trying to find out what's going on.

Interviewee: Not so much. I think that a lot of the parents I deal with come here as a break from their screens. Our most popular programs are story times which there's no technology. Actually, I play music, that's the technology.

Interviewer: You play music yourself with an instrument?

Interviewee: No, from a speaker. That's about the extent of it. There's no screens in the room, I mean there is a screen but it's not on. A lot of who I'm dealing with is coming here and I think that they will go home and have a TV on or use an iPad or all of those things but I don't know if that's necessarily why they're coming here. With some of the older kids I'll definitely see them come here to work on their homework on computers and to be more recreational is how I guess I'll put it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah, I don't think I'm giving much advice about that.

Interviewer: Let's see, do you, in conversations with parents, what kinds of devices do they mention that their kids are using? Or what kinds of devices do kids bring in with them?

Interviewee: Yeah, I definitely see kids on phones and tablets whether they belong to them or their parents. We circulate movies so a lot of-

Interviewer: On DVD?

Interviewee: -yeah. Conversations will be about that so I know that they have those kinds of screens and devices at home. I will say a lot of people who have computers at home, their kids will come in and want to sit down at a computer and I hear a lot of parents saying "you have a computer at home, you're at the library, go to a book." Parents directing kids away from screens when they're here even though we have them.

Interviewer: Let's see, often we hear that parents are struggling with device use management, like you said "get off the screen, go look at a book."

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you think are needs of parents in making decisions about their children's use of electronic devices or in setting rules or guidance in how they use them?

Interviewee: I know I'm sure there's research about how many hours what aged kid should spend on this and that but I think that instead of thinking of it as you can only spend two hours a day on a screen, it would be nice if all the parents had resources to make the time feel better or more productive. If you're reading a

book on a tablet, I don't know if that counts as the same type of screen time as playing a video game or watching a movie, so I think that sort of model, it's limiting. Or is over simplifying what can be on the screen.

Interviewer: Actually, that's absolutely what the research now and the recommendations say that a mere time limit is pretty meaningless.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: The content and quality of the use and interaction that are important as opposed to just setting a time limit.

Interviewee: All right, good. I'm glad that's out there then.

Interviewer: You may not realize it but you're on the forefront of thinking.

Interviewee: Great.

Interviewer: Are there any particular resources that you refer parents too? Either for using the technology or about technology advice and mentorship?

Interviewee: For the parents?

Interviewer: It could be for kids too.

Interviewee: I mean there are certain resources I'll direct kids to but not resources about which resources for parents, no.

Interviewer: What kind of resources do you direct kids to or what are some of the ones? You already said the library subscriptions.

Interviewee: Yeah, a lot of those I think are pretty good. If a kid seems passive, just wants to watch something, I like directing them to Tumble Books or nursery rhymes that are videos, things like that.

For older kids, they seem to need less advice. I would say in the 8-11 range I don't have many kids asking me "what do I do here?" So I think I have less of an opportunity to send them to something. If they're doing research for homework or school that's where I come in a little bit more. Part of the changes that are happening and these new libraries that are popping up is that we have less books and it's more community space.

This location there's a ton of computers, a ton of community space, these rooms, a large meeting room and there's just less shelving and less books in here.

As a children's librarian specifically, that is challenging because a lot of kids come in and they're like "I need a book about.." or "I'm doing a project on.." and they just need a book so I guess part of the mentorship of parents in that way is if they come in and they say "my kid's doing a project on Rosa Parks, we need a book about Rosa Parks" and the one book I had about Rosa Parks isn't here, I have to somehow convince them that it's somehow okay to use the internet.

Interviewer: Interesting.

Interviewee: I think that's happening more here because we have a huge door count and not enough books. I mean, to me, not enough books.

Interviewer: How is the public responding to the fewer books, more community space, more technology model.

Interviewee: Poorly.

Interviewer: Oh really? Can you tell me why? I mean don't say anything incriminating but, that's interesting so the community's not responding well.

Interviewee: I mean, everyone wants both. We have so many programs here. There's I think

five programs that are going to happen today.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: Yeah and that's a normal day. There's definitely a demand for the space, a use of

the space, people are excited about having the space and it's new and shiny but

people who are readers are having trouble here.

Interviewer: Ah, interesting.

Interviewee: I've seen that of patrons of all ages.

Interviewer: Interesting, very interesting.

Let's see, again, the goal of the grant is really to help librarians and to empower

librarians to be technology educators more in their communities. How could we

help you? What kind of information would help you? Information, programs, out

of the box, I don't know, whatever, in your wildest dreams.

Interviewee: Yeah. [crosstalk 00:20:00] I don't do it as much as maybe, I don't know, now that

I'm sitting here thinking about it I'm like "I guess I don't do that much of what

we're talking about here."

Interviewer: You are not alone. I don't know that there's that much in the system but,

anyway. How could we help you, help parents?

Interviewee: I hate to say to have some sort of guide for parents like a one stop shop for

resources that they could be directed to, because, a lot of them would be like "I

want my five year old to do something on the computer" and I have my three or

four things that I'll direct them to but maybe giving them a little bit more agency and option rather than what I feel like telling them that day.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I've received no training in how to do this.

Interviewer: Which is probably my fault.

Interviewee: No, it's not meant to be a jab.

Interviewer: It's entirely true though.

Interviewee: I don't think the coursework exists or maybe I just skipped that chapter. Maybe in terms of professional development, a series on best practices or something. I think a lot of the librarians that I know, especially in the public library system, we're figuring it out as we go, for better or worse. I grew up using a computer so I feel like I can use a computer and I know maybe some more resources than someone who didn't grow up using a computer and doesn't feel as comfortable around them. Maybe not even necessarily for me but for other librarians who are even further from computers than I might be.

I mean, we've all used computers but think there's a different relationship if there's always been one round versus not.

Interviewer: Let's see, actually, this was our next question, you already answered this. Did you receive any training or education about anything related to families or electronic devices? I'm surprised actually the [name removed] doesn't have that, they have such good in house training. It's interesting. Huh.

Interviewee: Not one that I've ever seen but that doesn't mean it's never happened. Maybe I just didn't go, who knows.

Interviewer: Well I've done some of them and they're very, very book focused, the ones that I've done. See, again, we're getting back to my faults.

Interviewee: A lot of the trainings that I go to in house are not technology based. I'm trying to think of the last couple I went to. I had a training about how to use blocks in the library.

Interviewer: Aww.

Interviewee: Who knew you needed a training...but.

Interviewer: Was it helpful?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you get to play with blocks?

Interviewee: Of course I did, yeah, it was great. Before that I think I went to the NARCAN training.

Interviewer: Was that helpful?

Interviewee: You go from 0-100 here, blocks to NARCAN.

Interviewer: Wow. That's wild.

Interviewee: Yeah, but technology, not so much. Some of the tech based workshops that we have are for internal systems. I could go to a catalog thing which is useful but then that's not really helping mentor patrons.

Interviewer: So we just [inaudible 00:24:43]

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your role or potential role in working with parents or other guardians and kids in media?

Interviewee: I guess in my fantasy world, there's someone who's not me, doing this. I know you're speaking to people from all different backgrounds and in different jobs but at least my experience at this location is, there's a lot of programming already happening and if I'm helping one family or one kid or one parent at a computer, there's a 100 other. I think a lot of the programming is geared towards large groups. If there was an extra person who had the time and energy to do this better than I am, that would be awesome.

Interviewer: I wanted to ask, you said you have story time. What other programs do you do in house for this age group? The 8-11's if there are any? That would be too old for the story time guise, is it?

Interviewee: We do have some story times after school that are geared towards older kids. We have a racial justice story time every month.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: More mature themes we'll say and it's also a little bit more discussion based. In terms of weekly programs, we have, oh, video games, I didn't even mention that. We have a gaming group every Wednesday, we do crafts every Thursday after school. Over the weekend we have different building challenges "come in and make a bridge out of Legos" or whatever it might be. That's stuff that's regularly occurring. This summer we're going to have as part of the summer reading

program, Yoga story time incorporating more movement. That's a little bit older than some of the normal, pre-school event story times we have. Yeah.

Interviewer: Are the gaming programs well attended?

Interviewee: They are yeah, there's a loyal following. That one in particular is a passive program for us. We set it up and the kids are happy to go do their thing.

Interviewer: What kinds of games do they use?

Interviewee: So, because we're in a health facility, some of our funding for things like that, needs to be health specific.

Interviewer: Oh, interesting.

Interviewee: We have a Wii and things that are more movement based like the DDR and Just Dance and things like that but also a lot of the car racing games and what is that battle game called that they all play?

Interviewer: Got me.

Interviewee: I'll remember it.

Interviewer: Are they with consoles or what are the technologies they're using?

Interviewee: It's a Wii is the console.

Interviewer: Okay, that's all.

Interviewee: It's hooked up to a projector.

Interviewer: It's more of a group as opposed to individual, they're not on individual desk tops?

Interviewee: Right. There's four kids playing at a time but they'll switch off. We did attempt to have a time in the lab that was kids only because sometimes we'll get complaints from adult patrons if kids are being-

Interviewer: Kids.

Interviewee: -too loud. If they're in their trying to work on their resume and then there's a kid screaming about Minecraft two feet away it's a little hard. That wasn't really attended so we stopped. I think they preferred to bother everyone around them.

Interviewer: That's funny.

Interviewee: We were like "no, come on Tuesdays from 4-6 then you can be as loud as you want in there" and there was no one in there.

Interviewer: Sounds like a good idea.

Interviewee: Yeah, it was the right fat but it didn't work out.

Interviewer: Since you guys are in a combined facility with the children's hospital, literacy and rec and I forget is there a fourth one?

Interviewee: The health center.

Interviewer: The health center.

Interviewee: It's a city health center, yeah.

Interviewer: You had said that ideally somebody else would be able to do this education or programming or work with parents. Can you think of maybe would it be one of those agencies that would be appropriate or do you think it's more appropriate for the library? I just don't know much about, I don't know.

Interviewee: I mean there's a position within the library called a Digital Resource Specialist

and the agencies that have a lab, they get one, so we have one. That is the

closest to that position that I've seen but again I don't see much work with

children happening there. Maybe that's a fault of ours, but I think that when

you're in a community where a lot of people need very basic instruction, the

things that we offer are resume and job help, basic computer skills, how to use

basic Microsoft programs and that takes up all of our time. If there was a kid

specific person in that position, that would be awesome.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: [inaudible 00:31:23]