

**File: NavScreensProfessional3Transcript2018**

**Interviewee: children's librarian**

Interviewer: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

Interviewee: You're welcome.

Interviewer: If you have any questions or any concerns, you can always contact me or you can contact the OUIRB Office.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: What we're going to do today is I will ask you a series of six questions, but I may have additional questions in between depending upon your responses.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Okay. The first question is in what ways do you help parents and caregivers with decisions about their child screen media practices. Screen media can be anything that has a screen. It could be a phone. It could be a tablet. It could be a computer. It could be television. It can be a video game.

Interviewee: Oh, I'm trying to think. Well, certainly the library offers tablets that can be checked out and taken home. Most of those are educational in nature. They're the Playaway Launch Tablets. Launch Pads I think they're called. I regularly suggest those to parents as an option, a resource for them that might be a better alternative to anything else they might use.

Interviewee: I'm trying to think of other ways that I get an opportunity to do that. Metro Library also offers something called Hoopla Digital. Are you familiar with that?

Interviewer: I am.

Interviewee: Okay. They've really expanded the children's area on that. Marketing has sent us, or Hoopla has sent us, lots of little pamphlets that we can hand out. I actually did a story time. A digital story time featuring Hoopla at Christmas, where I demonstrated to a couple of parents who were there and the children the picture books and how it could highlight the different words as the kids read, and then also an animated version of an easy book, a picture book.

Interviewee: Other than that, I can't think of specific examples where I get an opportunity to interact with parents about their kids' media use.

Interviewer: Okay. You might think of something as we work through this. It might come up later. What are some common questions that parents ask if you do have parents asking questions? How do you respond to those?

Interviewee: Well, I don't have a lot of common questions because, again, I do have a fairly limited number of parents asking about their kids. They might ask, well at least on the library, we have several children's computers. They'll often approach me and ask me how do I log onto these children's computers. That will give me an opportunity to say well, these are not connected to the Internet. They already have available several different possibilities. Everything from art programs to math programs to PBS videos and educational games and to kind of go through those with the parents. Those are not really things that they can access from home or duplicate from home though. I am really showing them something that they can use in the library as an alternative, particularly for the younger children whom they may not want to allow full access of the Internet.

Interviewee: The library, I'm going to say about two years ago, decided that children, based on our ALA Bill of Rights, children should have access to anything in the library that they want. They removed the ability of the catalog to restrict children from computer use. Parents used to be able to choose to say that I don't want my children to use the computers. That was removed. Parents still can choose to restrict R-rated video checkout. Some of them do. Anytime a child comes up to our desk, and it doesn't matter what age that child is, he or she can ask to use the computers. If they're an OC Public School student, they can already get on with their school number. If not, we issue them an Internet access only card. The four computers that we have in the children's area allow parents to make that choice not to set their child in front of the entire Internet highway.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. What do you think are the needs of parents in making decisions about their child's screen media practices? What do you think they might struggle with the most? Have you had an opportunity to talk with parents about their concerns about going online? As you mentioned, you used to restrict access.

Interviewee: I would say that there doesn't seem to be much of a concern about the use of access. It's more on my part as a children's librarian than it does seem to be on the parents' part. I see even very, very young children being given their parent's phone to play with. I'm not having the opportunity nor are they asking what's a good educational app that you would recommend. We have an iPad kiosk in our building that's currently closed down because they started to go missing, but we normally have 18 iPads. The system has chosen to put some educational apps on there so that made it easy for me. A lot of times, I would just take the initiative as a young child was checking out an iPad and was requesting help to do so. You know, like hey, yeah. Here. Look at this cool app here that will be a puppet show for you. This one is really fun. You know, and try to get them interesting in that. Although, many times the children already come to us with what they want to do in mind. It's often having observed an older sibling or somebody at school is talking about it, or whatever. A few times, interestingly enough, I have had kids come to me requesting something that their teacher has told them about and kind of recommended.

Interviewee: There's a Peppa Pig website that is quite popular. As I understood from at least one student, you know, the teacher had recommended that they access this. Which kind of makes you wonder, or made me wonder, like okay, so the school can have an influence on this as well, on the viewing habits. For the most part, the parents don't. I've three

and four year olds who are on the regular computers playing the same games as their siblings and there is no parent around. The parents surely are aware.

I mean, there's even parents who come into the library with their own agenda. Maybe they're applying for a job or they're going to type a resume or they're going to check Facebook, whatever. They come up and want to get that Internet access card for their child so that they can get them on the computer. That's pretty much the extent of it. They get them onto the Internet, oftentimes YouTube, and then the child goes from there.

Interviewer: They're basically either sitting next to the parent or unattended while they're on the Internet and the parent is doing something else in the library.

Interviewee: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Yes. The children even then are, rather than bother their parent, are coming up to us and asking us how to you type blood strike? I don't want to tell you this. Can we find something nicer to do?

Interviewer: I understand.

Interviewee: You know, it's interesting your questions, Interviewer, because I'm actually thinking it's the children that I'm having these conversations with as opposed to their parents.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: They're either the ones asking or I'm having the opportunity to discuss it with them and try to lure them away from ...

Interviewer: Well, unfortunately we're not talking with the children in this grant. I wish we were.

Interviewee: Right.

Interviewer: Because I think we'd have a different perspective entirely.

Interviewee: Right.

Interviewer: This question, you may or may not have a response to. Are there any resources that you refer parents to if given the opportunity? Say, if in programming or if they come and ask you about something their child is interested in?

Interviewee: Well, I mean, regularly I try to make parents aware of all of the resources of the library. I'm letting them know that there ... We don't really have specific discussions where the parent is asking me what's an alternative to watching silly cat videos. Dancing videos are very popular with the kids, and for me to tell them something else. I'm often trying to

make them aware of that, nevertheless. Particularly when they are doing something with their library card. I'm just, you know, I'm saying oh and by the way, you know, so the child has this new library card. They can check out up to 100 items. I know. They get them for three weeks. Blah, blah, blah. We also have a number of digital resources where you can download free music, free movies. Here's Hoopla Digital. I'll tell them about Hoopla. I'll tell them about audiobook, and e-books, and Canopy, and all those things. Then, I'll go on to talk about the databases that we have specifically for children. If they're open to listening, I'll actually walk them through to the link on our website for children's resources.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Where it opens up several databases that are school-based. They're mostly data. The databases are mostly school-based. If it's a teenager, or young teen, I'll mention that we have Mango Languages to learn languages. When they are starting to take their Spanish in school, if they need a little extra help. The Oklahoma driving tests are on there. Study for SATs, ACTs. Again, those are mostly educational resources.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Right. I don't really feel like I have something else to recommend to them even if they did ask the question. It would be more maybe things I've personally encountered. I might say, well, you know, PBS is a great resource and there's so much on that line. Okay. We had a program last week though. This might fit. It was a Raspberry Pie Program. We were using raspberry pies. We were introducing them to Scratch, the computing.

Interviewer: Coding.

Interviewee: Coding. Yeah. The Coding. MIT Coding Program. I am trying to get the library to add Scratch Junior to the iPads. That's on pause too. I was saying to the parents, you can access Scratch. It's a free resource. You can create a simple account for your child and then they can get on any computer or any iPad or their phone and build a project and continue working on that project. I slipped in the, you know, this would be so much better of a thing for them to be doing than all of the video games and stuff that they might otherwise engage in. They'll be learning some real skills that they will be able to apply to job in the future. Those opportunities and also those resources are few.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I feel like.

Interviewer: Well, and it sounds like the majority of the resources are those you already have as part of your collection.

Interviewee: Correct.

Interviewer: Services you already provide.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: You are directing parents to existing resources in the library.

Interviewee: Exactly.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: All right. Are there resources that parents tell you they've consulted?

Interviewee: I cannot recall a single conversation like that.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I'm sorry.

Interviewer: No, that's fine.

Interviewee: No. I mean I think in a different socioeconomic area, you would definitely find parents. There may be some parents here, but I have not had any conversations where we've discussed viewing options, how they are finding out about viewing, research they've read, anything like that.

Interviewer: Okay. That's very important to know. What would you like more information about in order to best advise parents? If we can help you in providing a program or a continuing education program for librarians, would that be something useful, or just anything that comes to mind?

Interviewee: Well, when we're talking about this particular subject, I feel like, and I think this is an ever changing climate, but if a parent were to ask me for alternatives, I do not have enough awareness of what ... You know, I feel like in order to ... It's kind of like I was talking about the programs earlier. Our conversation earlier, where I'm having to compete with what the Internet can offer to get kids to come into something that they really would enjoy if they would just give it half a chance. I feel like viewing screen time is that same thing. If a particular thing is very, very popular in the culture, like Minecraft or like Blood Strike, you know, or even Peppa Pig, to get kids to try something different you really need to know what the best, most exciting things out there are. Does that make sense?

Interviewer: It does. Absolutely.

Interviewee: I mean, I need to know what can compete with Blood Strike.

Interviewer: Absolutely. It absolutely makes sense. Do you have programs for parents at this library?

Interviewee: We do not.

Interviewer: You do not. Okay. That's good to know.

Interviewee: Even that they are young children, that has been a source of great frustration to me. Although, I'm not sure how many parents and their young children would come to our library. We have a few stragglers every once in a while. Mostly, the children are I believe in daycare situations. The daycare groups would very much like to come in. I actually had a two-year old story time for one of the daycares in December. They were very open to taking information back and relaying it to parents, but there really is nothing that can replace the parent actually being there for story time. For example, where you're talking about literacy and you're modeling good behaviors and you have this open time where parents feel like they can ask questions and get answers. I feel like the screen viewing fits in that same category. That's something you might be addressing in a story time, of some research that you're citing. Even that, I would need to look that up, but I think that's very important to have at hand so that when a conversation comes up or a deliberate meeting with parents, you can say well, right now the American Pediatrics Association ... I know they changed their recommendations like a year ago and I couldn't say exactly what they were, but it was like no screen time for kids under two I think it was.

Interviewer: That's what it used to be.

Interviewee: Then, it was an hour. Blah, blah, blah. You know. Here's why they say this. I don't really feel like I have any opportunities for that. Right now, we're not even allowed to offer new programs.

Interviewer: Okay. For you as an information professional, what kind of resources would you use to find more information about screen media practices for children ages five to 11?

Interviewee: Well, I would definitely go to the American Pediatrics. What is? I mean, I can't even think of the name.

Interviewer: Association.

Interviewee: The Association of Pediatrics, because I am aware of that study and because that seems like a reliable source of information. Then, you know, I would probably do some research to find professional journals that were addressing. ALA may have some information on their website. I would like to see us as a system, though, have something in place.

Interviewee: I attended a meeting at OLA last year that was hosted by Pioneer and it was on story times. They had information. They were continually trying to educate their parents. I can't remember specifically if they had anything about screen time. They made a very focused effort on different literacy skills that they were trying to teach parents and a

different focus each story time that they had. I think screen time is one of those things that could be incorporated into that. You know, just kind of weaving in different pieces of information about screen time and what the research is showing and what an alternative is to screen time. We have to have parents at story times, or we have to have this in paper form. You know what? No. We have to have parents at story time, because I think even if a daycare sent home something with your toddler, that it's just another piece of paper. In today's world, with busy parents who are ... I mean, my parents were working two jobs, you know, or more, trying to support large numbers of people and they don't have time to look at a piece of paper or read it.

It's going to have to happen in a conversation or if you got them into a library for some sort of a program, then they would.

Interviewer: Do you think if we had a program for parents about screen media practices, do you think that would be something your population might attend?

Interviewee: It's hard to know.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: If there were food offered.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And we caught it at the right time.

Interviewer: Well, that's part of what community assessment is. Trying to figure out what your community needs and how best you can provide it.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: That's a difficult task. Okay. Well, do you have any further comments or any questions?

Interviewee: I don't think I have any questions. No. I mean, I could talk a long time about this stuff. I mean, I just think that it's something parents aren't even really thinking of quite a bit. They just aren't. I speak for outside of this community where I work. Even highly educated parents who probably have been exposed to the research in some way shape or form are just ignoring it.

Interviewee: I mean, I go to the grocery store, you know, and I see children sitting in the shopping carts with a cellphone or a tablet. That makes the shopping trip really easy for mom or dad. They get through that store lickity split and get back to whatever else they need to be doing. I think about how much time those kids are spending. Well, I think it's the opposite thing. It's not just what they can view on the screen, but it's also what they're missing in real life and all the social skills. When I think about taking my own kids to the grocery store as a mother and all that my kids learned while they were in the grocery store. Not just because they were like hey, look at that pointy fruit, what's that? We

would find out. That's when I might pull out my cellphone and Google the fruit and see what we could find out about it. Otherwise, we were checking prices and we were checking our list. We were interacting with people. We were observing other people and then later discussing their behavior, or they were throwing a tantrum about something. That was a learning moment for them. It makes me feel sad. Everywhere I go, that seems to be the case, where they're just glued to their screens and they're missing out on so many learning opportunities.

Interviewer: I think that's one of the issues that really has to be considered when people start thinking about cellphone use and other kinds of screen media nowadays. What is the balance? Well, I think this concludes our interview.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: I appreciate all of your time today.

Interviewee: Oh, no problem. It's been great.

Interviewer: If I have any questions ...

Interviewee: Follow up questions. Absolutely.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.

Interviewee: You're welcome.

Addendum: The following is from an email this participant sent after the interview.

I realized as soon as I walked into the library yesterday that I should have showed you our giant Ralph Ellison community "living room." It would have given you a better sense of what we discussed in the interview. The kids occupied almost every one of the 28 (internet connected) computer stations, playing games and watching YouTube videos. The children's section was full of little ones playing with the train and kitchen sets and using the 4 computers there to interact with PBS games and videos. Groups of teens were on the far side of the library screened from direct view by the collection, but easily identified by their loud laughter and choice of language. The adults occupied the center study tables working on their laptops, and the homeless were stationed in armchairs by the front windows overlooking 23rd Street, napping. The quilting ladies were stitching and chatting in Program Room A, and Legos were scattered across the tables in Program Room B, followed by snacks for those who hadn't eaten all day. Because of the nice weather, the kids were also chasing each other in and out of the building playing games and hanging off the bike rack out front. Although there are significant challenges, it really is an interesting and exciting place to serve. I apologize for my oversight; next time we meet, I hope you will allow me to give you a tour!

Something I realized, Interviewer, regarding our interview— the reason I was focused on library (screen) resources for our young members is because that is where they have all of their access. I don't think a



question regarding that came up, but it is very pertinent. Who is with children at their actual points of need to advise them, and what are those people doing? Our children do not have cell phones until they can get a job, then their plan will have very limited data if any so they use our wi-fi. They do not have computers or internet anywhere else, except maybe at school. They don't have television sets with cable or Netflix, unless they are living in hotels (as some are); they don't have a DVD or CD player either. We have very low circulation rates because they don't take home materials (even books). Besides, they are with us when they aren't at school or sleeping. Yet, even though we act as parent to them in many ways, we do not have the authority to limit or filter their screen viewing. The best we can do is, as I commented, try to lure them away with a better alternative. Preaching falls on deaf ears.