Interviewer: Okay. So I'd like to chat with you today about advice that you may provide to families about using various electronic devices. And that can be anything that we call screen media; television, smartphones, laptops, iPads, e-readers, desktop computers, game consoles. Anything that has a screen. And again, feel free to give me as much detail as you want in your answers, and if there's something you don't think you can answer, you can tell me that also.

So, tell me what devices you have in the library, and what devices you see parents and kids bring into the library.

Interviewee: So, we offer tablets, Kobo [inaudible 00:00:46] pads , and we offer little TVs called Play Aways. We offer DVDs and CDs which may not be screen time-

Interviewer: CDs for computers or music CDs?

Interviewee: Yeah, which doesn't exactly count, but. And then we offer digital content as well such as Hoopla and OverDrive, Kanopy. And I didn't know if you knew what that was, so I actually have ...

Interviewer: I don't know what Kanopy is. I do know what Hoopla is.

Oh, very interesting. Is that something I can keep?

Interviewee: Yes, I brought that for you.

Interviewer: Perfect.

Interviewee: And I have a Kanopy Kids sticker. Kanopy is a streaming media kind of like Netflix, with educational programs on it. Documentaries.

Interviewer: And that's available to anybody in the library system?

Interviewee: Log on with your library card kind of like you would with Hoopla.

Interviewer: Okay, and do you see parents or kids bring devices into the library?

Interviewee: All the time.

Interviewer: What do you see them bring in?

Interviewee: Mostly cellphones or e-readers. I see some laptops, but mostly cellphones.

Interviewer: Okay, and an e-reader, would that be like a Kindle or?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Alright, so how does your library system decide what to purchase?

Interviewee: So we have a collection group that goes through and orders those. Mostly if a patron wants something specifically, we can request to purchase it, but ultimately it goes through our collection group. So we don't get a lot of say in what we purchase.

Interviewer: And then, how does your system decide what resource or apps to recommend to parents and kids?

Interviewee: I'm not sure how they do it, but I always hit Overdrive, Hoopla and Kanopy. I think all three of those are very important.

Interviewer: And why would you say they're important?

Interviewee: Because kids are going to get screen time regardless, but if we can offer educational solutions to it, I would prefer that they be watching something that helps them learn, versus something that might just be wasting their brain matter.

Interviewer: In what ways do you help parents or caregivers with decisions about their child's screen media practices?

Interviewee: So, I learned pretty early on that this was a pretty hot topic and if I suggested things like a launchpad, some parents would be like, "Oh no, absolutely not. We don't let our children have access to any of that." So I don't normally push it unless I notice that they allow their kids media time. Otherwise you jump into that scary range of, "No, don't even suggest that for my kid."

Interviewer: Okay, so you don't make suggestions on what to buy or what they can download for free or things like that?

Interviewee: No. Because I have it on my personal device, I walk around and I show the parents things like Speakaboos, which I didn't mention earlier, Hoopla, so that way they can see if it's educational. And then I let them make up their mind from there.

Interviewer: So you model screen media use for the parents-

Interviewee: I do.

Interviewer: With your own device. So you have an iPad or something?

Interviewee: And my cellphone.

Interviewer: Oh, your cellphone. Great. What a great use. So do you intentionally address the topic, or just discuss with parents and caregivers if asked?

Interviewee:	Usually I tell them about those options, especially if they're looking for a specific book, I suggest OverDrive. And if they seem interested in digital content, I also mention things like Hoopla. I just tell them about it. And if they express interest in it, I'll show it to them. I think that's just the safest route.
Interviewer:	Is the topic ever integrated into a program or service that you offer?
Interviewee:	It's been suggested from my managers that we actually showcase Overdrive through doing a story time based on it. So we download the books and put up a projector and show it. So that way, we can introduce the parents and the kids to it. I don't particularly like that idea, especially for parents that say, "No screen time whatsoever." I haven't pushed for that. I don't know if that answers your question or not.
Interviewer:	It does. Absolutely. Do you disseminate information about this topic, and if so, how?
Interviewee:	Yeah, we have those pamphlets like what I just handed you. And I talk about it, but otherwise I don't hand people those things, I just have it accessible to them.
Interviewer:	And you don't disseminate information on, say, advice about screen time? That there's a lot out there?
Interviewee:	I haven't. And it really wasn't until you approached me about this that I started thinking about how kids do screen time. Parents don't usually ask. Either they hand their phone to their kid and the kids play games and they ask me for help and stuff, or it goes the other way where they're not allowed anything. I haven't really seen a whole lot of moderation. It's one or the other.
Interviewer:	In what ways do you help children with decisions about their screen media practices? Do you ever work directly with the children?
Interviewee:	I have helped them download things like Speakaboos onto their personal devices, also Hoopla, 'cause the kids like streaming media, like Netflix. If it looks like Netflix, they think they're so cool. And I've talked to them about it when they express interest, but otherwise I don't push for it.
Interviewer:	And you don't model it on your own device for them?
Interviewee:	Not for the kids, usually for the parents. The kids seem a little more hesitant to agree to things like that, especially if they're not sure if it costs, or that they need their library card which they don't usually have on their person. So usually no, not for kids, I don't model it.
Interviewer:	What devices are most frequently mentioned by parents?
Interviewee:	Tablets. What is the number one thing I hear is they say either their kid has their own tablet, or they're not allowed tablet time. There's also cellphones, but tablets is the number one. I don't ever hear computers or laptops. Don't ever hear any of that.

Interviewer: Do you have a sense that your households in this area have a lot computers or internet access?

Interviewee: We've talked about this a lot in our area because most people don't. And some of the reception's really shoddy for lack of a better word. It doesn't work very well. So, a lot of people don't have access to the internet and they don't have access to laptops, and that might be the reason.

Interviewer: Well and your kind of rural, but not rural. I mean, you're like, extra urban. Meaning on the outer, outer ring of urban city.

Interviewee: Yeah, some providers won't even access out here.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's interesting about Oklahoma in general. I had issues at my own house in Norman Oklahoma.

Interviewee: At Choctaw, we just started a pilot project where we're offering hotspots to locations so they have access to WiFi. And what I've heard is either it works really well, or it doesn't work in their area.

Interviewer: So, by offering hotspots you mean the little devices that create a hotspot?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Okay, how interesting. Yeah, for me it's interesting to learn about all the different challenges you have as a librarian because of the demographics of the area or the digital divide issues that you encounter every day.

So in terms of tablets and cellphones, what activities do parents ask about in relation to these devices?

Interviewee: Could you repeat that question one more time?

Interviewer: Absolutely. In terms of the tablets or the cellphones that you mentioned, what activities do parents ask about in relation to these devices.

Interviewee: Usually they ask for tech help. They don't understand some of the features and they ask for a lot of help. But they don't usually ask for help with what the library offers. I don't know if that answers your question or not.

Interviewer: It does, I mean, they ask for more technical support than they do on programs to use with their kids. Would that be correct?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Which is the only time ... Like, if I see a kid on a device, I might mention to the parents things like Speakaboos or Hoopla. But no, they don't go out of their way to ask about what kind of products to use.

Interviewer: What do you think are the needs of parents in making decisions about their child's use of electronic devices.

Interviewee: One more time, could you repeat that?

Interviewer: That's okay. What do you think are the needs of parents in making decisions about their child's use of electronic devices?

Interviewee: I think they need to know that there's options out there that aren't strictly game related. That there's educational content out there. I think they need it very unbiased so that way they don't feel like they're being pressured to make decisions in regard to their child that they don't typically agree with.

Interviewer: And what do you think parents most struggle with?

Interviewee: I think they struggle with not knowing. What I've seen a lot of is parents coming up with each other and asking, "Well, how do you do this?" And that's kind of how they get some of their information, is with other parents. They don't-

Interviewer: But they don't ask you as the librarian?

Interviewee: Not usually, no.

Interviewer: Are there any resources that you refer parents to other than the handouts that you've provided.

Interviewee: No, not usually.

Interviewer: So no websites, or advice documents, or things like that?

Interviewee: No, usually they don't want that kind of information from me. When I've tried it in the past, it's just not gone over. So I usually leave that until they approach me, and then we talk about things that they might be interested in.

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

Interviewee: Not specifically. Sometimes they say, "Well, I've researched this," and I don't broach it past that. But they don't give me specific websites, or apps, or information that they've looked at.

Interviewer: So you probably can't answer this, but I'll ask it anyways. Do you have an impression of how parents feel about those resources? Are they useful and relevant?

Interviewee: So, I can tell you that a large demographic out here is home schoolers, and a lot of the parents that I've see are actually ... Like, they've got degrees in education. Which may be why they don't reach out to me personally. They've already kind of gone through the educational curricula. But, no I don't know that I could answer that question that well.

Interviewer: Okay, that's alright. What would you like more information about in order to best advise parents?

Interviewee: It would be good to know things that relate in my area. And I know that would be really hard to capture because the demographic here responds differently than some other places. Like, as I said, home schoolers are a big base. So for me, it would be good to know what information they're looking for so I can provide it and have it ready for them, instead of me having to broach it when I feel like it's kind of safe.

Interviewer: Can you explain that a little bit more?

Interviewee: Which part?

Interviewer: Where you said you'd like to know more about what information they're looking for.

Interviewee: If they're wanting information about screen time, what kind of information are they looking for? Are they looking for like, how much is a healthy amount of time to have screen time? Or what kind of apps that they could download that would be safe. How do they want to use this? Do they want it in an educational capacity or do they want the kids to have game time? Things like that. That way I could address specific issues, versus just having a vague idea. Something a little bit more tailored.

Interviewer: So, the reason I asked for further clarification is because this study, hopefully, will have that information for you as a librarian at the end of our study because we'll be talking to parents. And I'll show you later an example of the questions. So hopefully the training that we develop for librarians will provide you with that kind of information on the different questions parents have. But then also, what are the resources we can provide. So, hopefully. We just started, so.

Interviewee: But it'll be nice to have a tailored approach to it, so that way-

Interviewer: Tailored in what way? You mean for like this community we need these kinds of advice? So for home schoolers versus those in the public school system? Or, can you explain that.

Interviewee: Well, not necessarily just home schoolers. That was just an example. But, if you were to look at, say, what kids are doing in public classrooms, how much screen time are they getting? We don't know. And providing extras on the outside, we don't know how much they're getting there either. Is that something parents are concerned about? It'd be nice to know what parents what versus me just kind of taking a stab in the dark and hoping for the best.

Interviewer: I understand. Did you receive any training about anything related to families and electronic devices?

Interviewee: I didn't receive any training. And that includes in SLIS, I actually didn't focus on children librarian, or even public library. So I kind of walked in not knowing what to expect. So

when I would approach children or adults and I would get a little bit of whiplash from the, "No, don't touch my kid with that technology" stance, I had to kind of learn on the job.

Interviewer: So you didn't take children's and youth service type course?

Interviewee: I didn't. Nope.

Interviewer: I kind of remember you took more Info Org. You were focusing more on that-

Interviewee: Academic libraries.

Interviewer: Yeah, you were. So, you said that you've kind of learned on the job. How have you learned on the job?

Interviewee: Just from interacting with parents and kids. I've only been working with the younger grade schooler age, like five to eight-ish, relatively, like, last eight, nine months. That's when I first started as a librarian. That's when I started interacting with that age range. So, I've only got nine months worth of interaction with kids and screen time usually doesn't come up, 'cause either they allow it or they don't. And broaching it sometimes causes issues, and you have to kind of smooth that over: "Sorry, I didn't mean to push that so much." And other times they're really susceptible and they're like, "Thank you for these resources." You have to kind of take your pick.

Interviewer: Sounds like your parents ... I wouldn't say they're overprotective, but they see the role of the librarian as very different from today's modern librarian. Would that be a fair assessment?

Interviewee: That is such a fair assessment. A lot of people still come into this library and they talk like this because libraries have to be very quiet. And they also think we sit there and check in items and out items, and they don't recognize that we're actually an educational resource for them until you start talking to them and kind of gain some of their trust.

Interviewer: So if you were to provide a parent session on screen media, do you think you'd have any parents that would attend?

Interviewee: I think I would, I think that would be interesting for the parents. I just don't think they know how to handle it which is why they look for other parents to see what they're doing, and how they're modeling the behaviors. 'Cause I've seen that time and time again where parents form a little group and start talking about some of their problems, and that's how they get a lot of their information. So if we bring parents together, I think not only would they have an educational resource, but they'd also get to talk with other moms and dads and grown ups that are having the same issues.

Interviewer: And you do programs with younger children as well, right? You do story time, so you have the parents there at that point. Do you have parents from your older ... Like your five year olds? No, they're more the younger? Okay.

Interviewee: Usually parents seem okay with just letting their kids come into this room, but we have these windows so they can kind of peek in and make sure everything is okay. So it's a little bit different here. Like at Choctaw, sometimes the parents mingle around and then backtrack out, just to make sure they're okay. Jones, I don't do a lot of programing there, so I'm not sure what that looks like.

Interviewer: Is Jones a very big library? I've not been there.

Interviewee: It's about this size. It's comparable.

Interviewer: And Jones isn't very big as a town, is it?

Interviewee: No, they recently got their new library.

Interviewer: Yes, I heard that. That'll be exciting.

                 Okay, fly go away.

                 I have one more question. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell us about your role or potential role as a media mentor or advisor to parents about children and electronic devices?

Interviewee: Well, since your study started, it'd be interesting to learn your findings, specifically so I can translate that back and be a better resource. 'Cause I've obviously been dodging this particular issue. It'd be nice to have some more guidance and ability to know how to approach it, and how I can tailor it to my community.

Interviewer: Anything else?

Interviewee: I think I'm good.

Interviewer: One thing I wanted to ask, just quickly, is how would you describe the demographics of your community?

Interviewee: We get a pretty decent mix. I would say it's probably ... In terms of age, I don't have a lot of really young ones. Grade schoolers are pretty popular, but tweens is dominant. I get teens too, we got lots of teens, and of course tons and tons of older adults. Not usually parent age, usually it's much older. People like grandparents. If you're interested, they're probably about 70% white population here, and a fair amount of home schoolers in all of my libraries, not just Harrah, but in all of them. We host three or four home school programs across our five libraries and we also are a resource for Epic to Come. Epic is a home school group where they have an advisor come and teach, and they're dominant at Jones, but also you see a lot of them at Choctaw and Harrah.

Interviewer: So Epic teaches the parents to be home school teachers?

Interviewee: No, Epic actually acts as the educator in that.

Interviewer: Okay, I wasn't aware of that. That's interesting. But in a library setting.

Interviewee: Yes, they come to the library and use it as their school. Part of their schooling.

Interviewer: Very interesting. And you said 70% would be Caucasian or white, what would be the other 30?

Interviewee: Probably the next in line would be Hispanic. And then African American followed by a small Oriental population.

Interviewer: And would you say the socioeconomic status is?

Interviewee: Lower income.

Now, we do have some affluent areas, like little pockets.

Interviewer: Anything else before we close?

Interviewee: I will say that Lib C is actually more affluent than the other four locations. So, Lib H, Lib J, Lib L and Lib NP are all much poorer, Harrah being probably a little bit higher on that than Lib J and Lib L and Lib NP.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you very much for participating today.

Interviewee: You're welcome.