

Q = Lydia Hall (researcher)

A = Man with daughter (aged 9)

Q OK. So I'm going to ask you the first question, so this is relating to your daughter's play and her technology. So question one is how does technology feature in your daughter's play?

A She uses her mobile phone and she interacts with some apps and games. She uses a sort of maths thing from school on the lap top which, I mean it's in a play style but obviously it is you know for learning.

Q Yes.

A And obviously yeah, you know, watching TV I guess and then looking at things in relation to what she's seen on TV on the phone, I guess.

Q Right. OK, so do you think that she likes to play with particular sorts of devices?

A Yeah, it's mainly her phone.

Q Right, OK and do you know how she plays with her phone?

A How what, sorry?

Q How does she play with the phone? Like what sorts of things would she do while she's on the phone?

A She'll use apps, she watches YouTube, so she might actually see something on TV and then interact with it on YouTube. She plays apps, some educational ones but mostly not. She watches Bloggers and things like that.

Q Right, OK and how often does she do that?

A Oh every day.

Q And is she generally on her own or would she be with somebody else?

A Oh well, she'd be, well no, both really. Sometimes she goes into her bedroom and so she'll do that. She's got more toys that she plays with or sometimes she'll be in the living room with everyone else and we might be watching something on TV and if she's not interested in it she'll have her headphones on on her phone.

Q OK. So then like when would she play with the phone then generally?

A What, sort of times of day?

Q Yeah.

A On a school night, well on and off it really. We try and limit it, it's very difficult but obviously, yeah, if you're looking at times, probably between four and five thirty and then sort of from six-thirty to seven-thirty.

Q Right, OK.

A And then at weekends it could vary, perhaps when she gets up in the morning. Normally we do something with the family in the daytime, she also has dance lessons and then on certain times, but then probably later in the afternoon and early evening and again at the weekends.

Q OK. How do you think she feels while she is playing on the phone with the apps?

A I think she feels, she feels engaged really because it's hard to get a word out of her when she's doing it so she's zoned out really. Sometimes she will randomly laugh or giggle or something or sometimes she'll get a bit grumpy if she can't do something on the app, you know, or in the game and she will ask us to help or there might be an advert that gets in the way and she'll need help to sort of navigate around that.

Q Oh right, OK then. So the next part of this question is does your daughter play whilst she's watching television and if she does play then how and in what sort of ways does she play?

A I'd say she does sometimes but not, more occasionally than generally because she does get quite engaged in the one thing that she is doing but she does. She can be doing both, so if, it's mostly me that doesn't like the noise of the phone but sometime she'll have it on quietly and she might be...she might be playing an app or watching something on YouTube perhaps with subtitles.

Q OK, OK.

A Whilst watching the TV.

Q OK, so does she have the phone's volume turned on at the same time as the television?

A She would do in that situation but we'd always be saying 'Turn it down' or 'Wear your headphones' so she'd rather to that, she'd rather have it on speaker, it's us that would rather her use headphones.

Q Yep, OK. So does your daughter engage with apps and online sites such as YouTube, we've got Netflix, CBeebies, CBBC and ITV and do you think that her interaction with those websites impacts on her play?

Time: 5:00

A Yes I do. She doesn't really do any of the others apart from YouTube and she does follow certain like bloggers I think they're called on there. I don't really understand it, but ??? and yeah, I do think it impacts on her play because while she's doing that she's not doing

like a traditional game, yeah like building something or you know, I would have played a board game or played, she could play, she does go upstairs and play with dolls sometimes, but now she's getting older she does tend to use technology and mainly her phone more.

Q OK. You've mentioned You Tube do you know the people she actually watches on YouTube?

A I don't know to be honest, but she does, she does follow some. It's mostly because she does dance, I think like dancing ones and girls of her age that you sort of 'This is what I've been doing today' that sort of thing.

Q OK, so does your daughter ever play video games, either on her mobile or on a tablet if she owns one?

A Yeah, yeah she does play them on the mobile, yeah, definitely.

Q OK. Do you know what games she plays mostly?

A I don't know specific names but she mostly plays...how do I explain it? Kind of... so there's one game where she does a lot of puzzle games where she has to get a ??? figure it out with say numbers or something like that and there but then she would also play things like 'Talking Tom' where it's kind of like a Sim thing isn't it? She, she plays Minecraft but not so much now so it's more casual games I suppose not like, you know, Fortnite or anything like, well I suppose that is casual, but it's more casual apps really where she can dip in and out.

Q OK and does your daughter have like any physical toys that would relate to her online interests?

A No. Her, like I say, actually her main interest is dance and she does dancing lessons and she does watch a lot of these bloggers doing dance things. She also likes LEGO Best Friends but I don't think she particularly interacts with anything to do with LEGO really. I suppose Minecraft is building, so there's a slight link there, but I don't think she's come across any LEGO related apps and then she just plays generic dolls and things.

Q OK and does your daughter play with any toys that are digital? So like robot toys or like a LeapPad toy? I don't know if they're a little bit more pre-school rather than...

A Has she got anything like that? She used to but I think she's grown out of that to be honest. She doesn't really, but I think she can get most of that on our laptop or on the phone so I don't think she does need a separate gadget for that.

Q Right. OK. Does your daughter play with any internet enabled toys that are like digital? For example the Furby, again, robots.

A No, that reminds me she did have a Hatchimal but I don't think they're not internet linked are they? But she did have a Hatchimal.

Q I think they kind of might be because...

A Oh are they?

Q I think so. I think so because don't you have to feed them?

A She doesn't play with it that much now. Pardon?

Q Don't you have to feed them?

A I don't know. I think it's a bit like a Furby. I don't really know. You do, yeah. You do have to interact with it but not, I don't think, I suppose you do interact, yeah, I suppose you do interact with it but not on the internet I guess, so sorry yes, so a Hatchimal.

Q Yeah, OK then, so how often would she play with that?

A Not so much now, every couple of weeks maybe.

Q OK and how about augmented reality or virtual reality?

A No.

Q Right, OK and does she play with any artificial intelligent assistants, so like Siri, Google, Alexa?

A Yeah we've got an Alexa, smart speaker and, OK sorry beg your pardon. She's in the kitchen and we also subscribe to Amazon music so she will listen to it. She'll put songs on. I get an email once a week from Amazon which gives me new sort of skills so she'll often do those ??? At the moment she likes Harry Potter a bit so she does a daily quiz on the speaker and she will also ask it questions, you know just general knowledge questions and things.

Q OK. And does her play in outdoor spaces, like feature any sort of technology in any way?

A No.

Q OK. So next question, so do....so does your daughter own any LEGO?

A Yes.

Q Can you tell me what sort of LEGO that she owns?

A Yes she owns LEGO Friends.

Q OK and does she own any physical LEGO, or is that a physical LEGO or is that online?

A Yes, that's physical, physical LEGO, yeah.

Q Yeah, OK and what sort of things does she do with that?

A Well she makes the, she makes up the specific model that you buy for it with the book and once she's done all of that, she'll probably just like almost display it all in the same place

and then she'll play with it you know like the figures, again, do things with whatever she's built and she interacts with it that way, so if she's built a house then they'll go to the house and you know, ??? best friend and things like that.

Q OK and how about any other aspect of the LEGO brand, like for example the bags or any of the films or has she been to LEGO Land at all?

A No she's, I don't know, I think she saw the LEGO movie, which I think we saw at home.

Q Yes.

A She hasn't been to the cinema to see that. We have been to LEGO Land once and she really enjoyed that and we're planning to go to the Discovery Centre which is in Birmingham at some point.

Q Right, OK. And how about like the little mini LEGO figures.

A No. Only as part of the LEGO Friends set that she's had, not separately.

Q Yeah, OK, so I'm going to go onto like another part of the interview questions, so this is questions relating to your views on your daughter's play and her technology. So who would decide what sort of devices that your daughter can use and what guides your choices?

A Myself and my wife both sort of choose equally but we're fairly quite well tuned together so we kind of both feel the same. We, what was the second part of the question sorry?

Q What guides your choices?

A The choices of the types of technology?

Q Yes.

A It's pretty much led by what she wants to do really and if we think we need to limit it, say like in the case of the phone or whatever then we will try and limit her time on it and make her do other things not on the phone but yeah, mainly she's self guided with that.

Q OK, OK and how about in terms of PEGI ratings?

A Well we do, we've yet to find a really good, you know parental control system for the phone. We did try Google Family I think it's called, there's a Google one that they do and it was good but the only problem was it restricted things like that and it restricted apps and it told us when she was going to install an app and we had to give permission but it didn't, it restricted YouTube to YouTube Kids and a lot of these bloggers, apparently they don't get PEGI rated and so it just bans them all and we've watched some and we decided they were suitable. So what we'd rather do is try and educate her and she's pretty good really in terms of recognising when something isn't appropriate, she won't want to look at it.

Q Right, OK. Next bit of the question, in your view, what types of digital toys or games or apps or devices would promote play?

A What types, can you say that question again? That's a difficult one.

Q Yeah. So in your view what sorts of devices or like digital toys, or digital games or any apps that she uses would you think that they promote play?

A I think something that's got a connection to the real world that you could perhaps replicate. So for example I said to you she likes dancing and she does watch these bloggers who do dancing as well and she'll often try and do the same routines. So I think a toy or a device that does that, that she can copy would be good. So something you could take out of the digital world and do in the physical world.

Q OK and how about the same question with limiting play?

A I think the other way round. Some of the apps, you know, you can only do on a phone, some of the games and some of the pointless things that some of these bloggers just seemingly to me talk about nothing.

Q Right, OK.

A You know, just absolute nothing and I think those are a bit pointless and certainly more regional like the American ones and it's not very related to us so I think yeah, there's probably a lot of them would limit play because there's no follow-up from it. There's nothing she can then take and do herself, so she's literally just you know consuming the digital side of it and that's it.

Q OK. So can you think of any types of devices of digital toys that would then promote creativity?

A Yeah. Well you could have, you could have digital, I know she likes doing hula hoops, you could have some digital aspect of that or, I don't know how but or, I'm thinking like Wii Fit, I don't know if you've come across that. I used to play that years ago, that kind of thing is a pretty good example isn't it? Because it's a game but obviously you have to be physically active. So something like that is good because it may be something with like motion sensors that can interact that can tell you how you're doing, that sort of thing.

Q OK, same question but limit creativity.

A I think...I think pointless toys really like Fingerlings when they came out last year or the year before and you interact with those and they're a bit digital aren't they but they don't really do anything they just make noises when you move them around or touch them, things like that. There's no educational aspect to it I suppose that's what I'm saying, or there's nothing you cannot learn anything new, there's no bonus learning to it or anything like that.

Q OK, so do you think the educational side of things is quite important then?

A Yeah I do really. Because I think play is also, it's not just having fun is it, it's also about learning and developing. That's now I see it anyway.

Q Yeah. OK. So what kind of toys or other products do you think LEGO should be developing for children in this current digital age?

A I think you could do a lot of different LEGO products that have a lot more interactivity in. You know you could have perhaps larger figures which do some, you know you could build it but there is some interactivity or it makes movements yeah, similar then to like the Hatchimal Furby idea where you do have to interact with it but you're learning. I don't know; it's difficult really isn't it? But I used to have technical LEGO where you know you have all the different cogs and gears and stuff like that and you sort of, it gives you a bit of science knowledge really, you understand it. Something like that but perhaps that's more accessible to girls because I definitely feel that that's boys and I don't think she would be interested.

Q OK and how about so, they are also interested in her active engagement with technology while she is playing, so how far do you think she is like actively engaged in what she's doing when she's playing, well just playing generally, it doesn't necessarily need to be online, it could just be outside or something else.

A Well like I say, whatever she's doing she pretty much is fully engaged in and she, you know, some people sort of they're quite easily distracted, but once she knows she's doing something she does pretty much concentrate on what she's doing.

Q OK. OK. And do you think that she finds like playing with technological sorts of toys quite meaningful?

A Yes she does. I think it's definitely strengthened the ??? but yeah she does, she's fully engaged and quite interested in it. So we've got a two-year-old as well and you know she quite likes learning how some of her toys work and she's interested to see the younger one learning from it.

Q OK, so how do you think she relates those, playing with her toys, how does she relate that to her everyday experience?

A Well she can understand that she's learning things and we'll point it out as well if you know, we think that you know it helps her learn and I think she can understand the fact that they're just toys but also it can pull through into real life if it's relevant to her. So you know I think like a maths type toy and, or there's counting involved or something like that she can understand that that's part of the real world, not just a toy.

Q OK and how might she try things out and then try to make like an improvement as she's playing? Does she ever set herself challenges when she's playing with particular toys?

A Yes. Well she likes to finish whatever she's doing so whether it be a level or you've got to get to a certain score. She does like to keep challenging herself so I've just thought of another one which is Bop It which she's got and you know you have to keep going up the levels and she's always trying to beat the best score and then she gets annoyed when she doesn't but then she does keep going back and challenging herself and like when she's building the LEGO she won't like to stop until she's finished the whole set book that you get with it to build it.

Q OK and then when she's playing with her LEGO for example then, or any other sorts of toys, do you think that she enjoys trying to switch things round and make improvements?

A I'd actually say 'No'. Her main focus, for example with the LEGO, well LEGO she sees it as a set where there's a picture on the front and there's a book where you create that and that's what she wants to do and then she'll play with it like that. It is annoying because ultimately you end up with the set with bits that can't go together as they used to and, you know, when I was younger I just used to have a big box and make my own things but I think she more focuses on building it as you know it was designed and then that's how she wants to keep it and she will probably keep it like that and play with it that way.

Q OK. And you know like you've mentioned apps as well, does she ever like when she plays on apps, does she ever try and set herself challenges there?

A Yeah she will, well, I don't know whether she sets herself challenges but she'll go with the challenge that's on the game or the apps and she'll just keep going until she either gets fed up and gives up or we kind of stop her.

Q OK, so...

A So I think yeah, if there's a stated challenge, that's her challenge, you know.

Q Right, OK, so we're also exploring the link between technology and children's emotions and wellbeing. Have you got any thoughts on this topic that you would like to share?

A Well yeah I think obviously by their nature apps and games on the phone can be very addictive and, but as I said part of that parental thing we used to have gave her limits and it did sort of work but I think it's very difficult to control screen time because you know you want children to be able to learn and make their own correct decisions, but also sometimes they need a bit more guidance and they need to be told and you have to be cruel to be kind in that sense.

I think it's difficult for children of her age, like she's 9, to self regulate that, because there it is and they want to do it and that's all they think about. So that would be my concern. I don't know how you limit, apart from having a parental control, no I don't know how an app would self limit that or why they would want to. That's the problem isn't it?

Q OK. So how far do you think your daughter enjoys playing with technological toys?

A Yeah very much so, definitely.

Q And do you think that she like, can you explain some of the emotions that she ??? while she's playing?

A Like I said, sometimes she'll randomly laugh when she's got the headphones on. It gives enjoyment, fun, she really feels satisfied when she passes a level or you know fulfills a challenge. She does get angry and will sort of growl a bit when she can't do what she wants to do or needs to do or we both get frustrated as well when that happens or if adverts come on and she can't get rid of them. But as she's got older she's been a bit more savvy about the

types of apps that she downloads and she will actually look at the reviews on the Play Store before she downloads it and if it says there's loads of ads and they're really annoying that will actually stop her doing it, so that's quite good.

Q Oh right, OK.

A Yeah but generally she enjoys it and we don't see her getting too stressed. If we saw her getting too stressed or worried or you know we thought it was really affecting her then we would take it off her and ??? and tell her not to do it, you know, explain.

Q OK, so what types of technology then does your daughter most likely to get bored with or quickly?

A I don't know really. She's quite good at deciding what she wants to do and you know she knows what she likes. We don't really end up in a situation where she gets fed up with doing things because she's quite thoughtful and will decide what she wants to do.

Q Right, OK. Does she have any preference for any sorts of technological sorts of toy then over another?

A Well I mean the main thing is using her phone because you can do apps, YouTube etc and all that. Like I said she likes her LEGO, she'll play with dolls and when it's warm outside she'll do more physical stuff, like on the trampoline and things like that.

Q OK.

A But I'd say she's got a wide range really of toys and things she likes to do.

Q OK. So do you feel like when she does get bored doing what she's doing for example on her phone does she get the same way when she's playing outside for example in another form of play?

A Yeah, she'll, yes she'll do it that she literally can't do it anymore, she's so tired that she's getting all grumpy and frustrated with herself or when we tell her to stop now because maybe she's got to come in because it's dark or we're having tea now so get off the phone, that sort of thing. But sometimes she will just, she'll just stop herself and start doing something else and play with a different thing. So more often she'll stop herself actually, but sometimes you do have to say 'Right, that's it, that's enough now'. You know.

Q OK and how about her social interactions like when she's playing with technology?

A Like I say when she is using her mobile, she is you know, she's got her headphones on and she is just out of it and we can call her and she doesn't pay attention, you know, she's just zoned out completely.

Q OK.

A She's fully engaged with the screen. Different with things like Bop It or the Hatchimals and things like that because you don't have to have 100% attention all of the time with those like something on a screen, you kind of generally have to look at it constantly

don't you? Whereas with a physical toy you can put it down, pick it up, people can talk to you, you can be distracted etc.

Q OK. So you mentioned Fortnite earlier. Does she play on that a lot?

A No she doesn't. She looked at it and she wasn't interested to be honest.

Q Right, OK then, so you think then, yeah go on sorry. I don't want to interrupt you.

A No, no I just going to say I don't think many of her friends do either. I don't know, I've never played it, I don't know whether it's sort of more male orientated or not. Like I say she does sometimes do Minecraft but that's it really.

Q Right, OK, so then you think that she is tends to engage more when she is playing with her toys like physically? Like a non-technological toy.

A With other people, yeah, well she engages with other people more, yeah.

Q Right, OK.

A Is that what you mean?

Q Yes, yeah and what sorts of technological toy do you think supports social play in your view?

A Like I say those that are, those that you can put down, pick up, that perhaps other people can perhaps join in, that sort of thing.

Q OK. And OK then, so when your daughter is playing with her technological toys do you ever play with her and if so then how would you play with her?

A Yes because with Bop It for example you have to do the challenge where you have to touch different things at the right time and you know she'll ask if we want a go and so we'll have a go as well. So it's definitely more, I'd say it's more interactive because more people are getting involved.

Q Right, OK and are there any devices or digital toys that you think are better than others for playing with your daughter?

A I mean we used to use our Wii but I've not got the latest one, but when we had that she was obviously a few years younger but yeah definitely that I thought was the most engaging technological device we'd ever had really in terms of getting everyone joining in, you know. I'm thinking of the bowling and the tennis, that sort of thing. I don't think anyone's ever ???

Q OK and if you're using your own device, does your daughter ever ask to play on it?

A No because she's got her own, like ???

Q OK. So do you ever play anything and like any like apps or anything together?

A No.

Q No, OK.

A No I don't even know anyone that does that really. No she doesn't, no, they simply don't.

Q OK, that's fine. And are there any other like sorts of apps or devices that your child, that your daughter can only access with you or another family member around?

A No, no. She's got her phone so she can do that.

Q OK and do you ever initiate any play using technology with your daughter?

A Not normally, no.

Q Right, OK and do you know why that might be?

A Because if she wants to play with it, if she wants us to get involved she'll come and say, otherwise, she just sorts herself out really.

Q Right, OK and do you think that any certain technologies offer any more positive experiences for your daughter?

A Sorry, can you say that again?

Q Yeah, sorry do you think that there are certain technologies that offer more positive experiences for your daughter?

A Anything that's not based on a phone basically so you know, anything that's like I said pick up, put down, like the Bop It, like the animals, that sort of thing.

Q OK.

A Yeah because there's a bit of an educational aspect to them and obviously other people can get involved or you can show people 'Oh look how I'm doing' and stuff, whereas I don't really think you can so much on a Smart Phone, you know she wouldn't turn round and say 'Oooh look, I've got to level 20 on this app', for example, but you know she might, with the Bop It you know for example, she might, well we can hear it anyway, but she might also say 'I've got to this level, you know, you have a go etc.

Q OK, so same question, are there any technologies that you think are more negative?

A Like I say I think apps and games on a smart phone are because they're just very, it's just one person doing it, they don't even interact with anyone else. We both might not even be there in the room because they're just fully engaged on that and so I think it's very, I think it's quite anti social really.

Q Ok and do you have any concerns about your daughter's experiences with technology?

A No. But I think that like I said before I think it can make them a bit more withdrawn, maybe? Particularly when using the smart phone because like I say they're just focused on that, nothing else.

Q OK and can I ask what you think has shaped this concern?

A Say that again sorry.

Q Can I ask what you think has shaped that concern?

A Because sometimes when we tell her it's time for bed and she needs got to get off her phone she will get annoyed and she doesn't want to finish it. I think it's hard for kids that age to self limit their use of it; they just want to carry on.

Q OK and are you concerned about any safety aspects of internet enabled toys?

A Not internet enabled toys, no. I trust manufacturers normally, you know, if it's a mainstream manufacture to just sort of make sure it's suitable. I think sometimes with the American ones can be a bit...I don't know, just a bit less British, so they might, you know the language is a bit different and the accent's a bit different and, you know, she does watch some of these videos that are American and sometimes she comes out with American phrases and it's like 'No that's not what we say in Britain', you know, so that has an effect. I definitely would prefer, do prefer toys, if they speak, to be British, yeah.

Q And how about with data privacy in relation to your daughter, do you have any concerns about that?

A I don't really because most of the apps that she uses on her smart phone that she will play and we set the account up with just sort of anonymous data really so even if someone stole it it wouldn't be real anyway and because it all comes through Play Store, I like the fact that that's a bit more of a closed environment.

Q OK. OK.

A You know so at least you can sort of field them a little bit or they make sure they're suitable.

Q OK that's interesting. And do you think that your daughter's use of technology influences her family life positively?

A Probably not because I think it limits your like real world social skills. Like I said you know, you could play the Wii Fit and that'll be great and Wii Play with all the games but that wouldn't restrict it but what she does at the moment on the phone I think it does because she may be watching things that are based in America from some very attention grabbing girls or whatever, or dance mums, that sort of thing, you know and she's getting that coming into her all of the time and we always ??? to say 'Well that's not how it is' or 'That's not how we speak here' and all that sort of thing. So I don't think that's necessarily helpful, generally

especially with social skills because like I say she's focused on what she's doing on the phone and there's no other interaction from anywhere else. It's just her and whatever's on the phone.

Q OK, so do you have any concerns about your daughter's use of technology overall?

A I don't have any safety concerns, more data protection but really yeah it's just how it affects their social skills really. I think it makes them less, less social skills and you know their person to person skills where they don't learn as quick or they might get the wrong idea from whatever they're watching from other people that that's how to behave or that's normal. It isn't necessarily is it? But it's difficult to know exactly what they're watching 24/7 without watching it all yourself, which obviously you can't do. So it's difficult. So that would be my only concern but I don't think there's much you can do about that.

Q OK and do you have any advice or guidance that you would offer new parents on issues relating to data, privacy and safety?

A I think with children you do have to, every app on the Google store for example you have to sign in but if you've made a fairly anonymous account then I don't think that matters because no one will have their details and I think you definitely have to educate children about what is acceptable and what isn't and I think that's the best way to do it because obviously you won't be able to control everything that they do for very long. So, you know as they get older they're going to do their own thing even if you tell them not to, so, you know you have to, I do think the best way forward is to educate them rather than just restrict them.

Q OK.

A So I think that the more that manufacturers can help do that as well is a good thing.

Q All right. So that's the last question, so thank you very much for helping us out.

A Oh you're welcome.