

Q = Lydia Hall (researcher)

A = Man with daughter (aged 8)

Q Good. How are you doing?

A Yeah not too bad. My daughter's just playing Roblox and she wants a Nintendo Switch she says so...

Q Oh right, just so you are aware I have got you on speaker and I am also recording the conversation.

A Yeah that's fine.

Q OK, so first of all thank you for participating in the project. This is voluntary so you can end it at any time, you don't have to explain to me the reason why. It's not a problem at all. You just let me know and I can just end the recording.

A No worries.

Q So I think it'll probably, well, I'm assuming it will take around about an hour, is that all right?

A Yes, I've charged my phone up.

Q Right, perfect. So the purpose of the interview is yep, to find out about your, is it a daughter or your son?

A Daughter.

Q Your daughter, yeah about the play and how she plays with technology. So we're interested in digital devices like mobiles, you know tablets, cameras, games, consoles, computers and then like apps on phones or other sorts of media, like you know, have you got an Alexa? And then other sorts of things like making robotics or coding or anything like that.

A Yep.

Q Right, OK. So I'm going to start. We have got quite a few questions as well. So the first question is how does technology feature in your daughter's play?

A She has got an iPad so she's playing Roblox at the moment.

Q Right, OK. Go on.

A But any apps, we've got the parental settings set up on the iPad. Any apps that she wants she has to come and talk to me about them and we ??? the age appropriateness of the apps that are installed on there.

Q OK. OK, so does she like to, I'm all nervous. Does she like to play with any particular apps for example?

A Roblox at the moment.

Q Yep.

A And Toy Story Drop, a game.

Q Right, OK and is that an actual app?

A Yes it is, yeah.

Q And that would be on, is that on a mobile or a tablet?

A On an iPad Mini.

Q Right, OK. And how often does she play with those?

A Roblox, after she's done her homework after school, so every day.

Q Right, OK. Do you have a limit?

A Sorry?

Q A time limit? A time limit on how long she plays with them?

A Oh sorry, probably about half an hour, 45 minutes.

Q OK, OK and do you think it's particularly significant to her?

A Yeah because she plays with her cousin, so they Facetime each other and they play the game together and they'll go looking for each other in the game.

Q Right, OK so how do you think she's feeling while she's playing it?

A Engaged.

Q Yeah.

A And having fun.

Q Right, OK and how can you tell that?

A The way she is looking at the screen and how, whenever they're, if they're talking to each other, they're both getting really excited and they're shouting 'Where are you? I'm over here' you know so.

Q Right, OK. Does your daughter play while watching television?

A No.

Q No. Not at all? OK.

A No. It's about the only time I get her to watch TV.

Q OK. So does your daughter's engagement with apps and online sites such as YouTube, Netflix, CBeebies, CBBC impact on how she plays?

A Well, what we tend to do is, her and her cousin, when they Facetime each other and they'll put a YouTube video on, say like her mum's like my wife's... iPad and then they'll talk about the things that are on there.

Q OK and does your daughter play video games?

A I'll have to make sure she's not listening, hang on. Hopefully Santa's bringing her a Switch but she hasn't got video game console at the moment.

Q Right, OK then. OK. Does your daughter have any physical toys that relates to her digital interests, like Minecraft figures or...

A No, no.

Q No, OK. Right, going onto the next page, so does your daughter like to play with toys that are digital?

A No. She hasn't really got anything like that, you mean sort of like the sort of the Switch ??? is that... I'm trying to think more of what she's been talking about today, so they can convert boxes into games and they can play them with their headsets is that what you mean?

Q Yes.

A No. No she doesn't.

Q Right, OK. So does your daughter play with any internet enabled toys that are digital, so for example, a Furby? Has she got a Furby or any robot type toys?

A No, no she hasn't.

Q Right, OK. Does she play with any augmented reality, like Pokémon Go?

A No.

Q No. how about does your, do you have Snapchat?

A No.

Q Right. OK. How about virtual reality?

A No, no we haven't got a headset or anything like that.

Q OK. How does your daughter play with any artificial intelligent assistants, so like Alexa, Siri, Google?

A She will talk to Siri and I keep telling her to say 'Please' and 'Thank you'. It's really weird isn't it but...

Q Right, OK. When does she do that?

A So if she's doing her homework and she's not sure of how to spell a word, she'll ask how to spell the word.

Q OK, so she's normally at home when she does that then?

A Yes.

Q Right, OK. Does your daughter play in outdoor spaces which feature any sort of technology?

A No.

Q OK. Not a problem.

A So does your daughter own any LEGO products or anything similar?

A A lot of LEGO yeah.

Q OK. What sort of LEGO does she have?

A Most of the Star Wars sets and then she had a roller coaster and then she had add-on bits. She had loads of LEGO Friends stuff before she moved on to LEGO Star Wars and it's Harry Potter LEGO at the moment.

Q Right, OK. And how does she play with that?

A She makes the sets and then she'll, she tends to make them and then she'll play with them for a bit and then we tend to find the mini figures all over the house. She'll play with the mini figures.

Q OK. I know all about that, standing on the LEGO. Any other aspects of LEGO that she likes, like the films or like online...

A She has the LEGO Life, she has the magazine come through. She did used to buy the magazines but with the Star Wars when she's got most of the sets and it was the same with the Friends ones. She enjoyed the movies and she's got the LEGO Life app on her iPad.

Q Right, OK. Has she ever been to Legoland?

A Yes, yeah we've been to the Discovery Centre in Birmingham a couple of times and we've been to Legoland in Windsor a couple of times.

Q OK. Excellent. So who decides what devices or toys and games that she can use and what guides your choices?

A Again, any of the apps we look at the age appropriateness of any of the apps so she's coming up to nine so nine plus she's allowed, but before she wasn't allowed anything and anything twelve plus she's not allowed.

Q Right, OK.

A Any, and we talk through why so she understands why she can't have those, but it's quite difficult because her cousin they kind of let her have anything and we're like 'Well that's what they have, this is what you can have' sort of thing so, so it's a conversation. We're more of a democracy than a dictatorship and we will talk through anything with her.

Q OK and do you ever change your mind then based on, after you've been speaking with her would you ever change her mind...

A Test of power, test of power.

Q Right, OK.

A No.

Q OK. What types of devices or digital toys do you think promote play?

A I do think the iPads are important and I work in a special needs in Birmingham and iPads are really good for communication, my choice, also would be the headsets, you get students, so I do think they do and technology is moving on and we need to embrace it not be against it. So I do think it is a good thing, but also setting those time limits and making those things age appropriate. All of the settings on the iPad, she can't download anything without me putting in my iTunes password and she's got a smart ??? upstairs but the settings are on there as well and she hasn't got YouTube on her iPad, it's YouTube Kids.

Q OK so what, so again then, same question, like in your view what types of like toys or devices would limit play?

A I don't know because I think all toys are really good for imagination and expanding, so I don't think, even all of these, she did collect Shopkins for a while and all of these different things but they don't inhibit play because what they do is they collect them and look after them and different things so I don't think there's any toys really that inhibit play because they are good for cognitive function and yeah, I think toys are good.

Q OK and again, same question, in your view, what types of devices or toys would promote creativity?

A Definitely LEGO. She loves LEGO and building her own things and we love playing with the LEGO as well because my mum and dad they're currently moving house and so they

brought down some of my LEGO from the 70's and it had the original mini figures and then the next set of mini figures and Isabelle was quite intrigued. ??? the original sort of LEGO toys sort of looked compared to nowadays so it was really good and we all play together, the family and sort of like 40 year old LEGO that we played with.

Q Wow. You've had that a long time.

A Yeah, yeah.

Q So in what way do you think that LEGO promotes her creativity?

A Because it kind of, it plays to the OCD side in that you'll be having the same sort of colours, but she can do whatever she wants with it. So she can build a house, she can build a wall, she can build a car. It doesn't matter what it looks like, it doesn't have to look like how anything looks now. It's just whatever's in her mind, in her imagination and she'll just build it.

Q Right, OK and the same question, in your view what types of devices or toys would limit creativity?

A I'm not too sure about these online games, you know like Fortnite and things like that where they are very much locked in, where it's headphones so there's no, the only interaction is with other people online and you don't know who or what they're talking to or what they're doing. Yeah, I'm not too sure.

Q OK. So what kinds of toys or products do you think that LEGO should be developing for children in this digital age?

A Where it's kind of along the lines of Pokémon Go where you take the toys and then you can sort of pull them into sort of augmented reality and then upload it online. So things like a garden you can animate and make your own sort of LEGO movie or something like that. We absolutely love the humour in the Batman movies and the LEGO movies you know. It's very good and being the animation's really clever and really good as well and I think that something like that could be, you know, like, ??? there was a LEGO movie animation toy set came out and Isabelle looked at that so, yeah.

Q OK. So we're interested in children's active engagement with technology during play so while your daughter is playing with technology, how far is she actively engaged? Like for example is she interested? Focused on what she's doing?

A Yeah she does get quite absorbed in like Roblox, definitely. So it's that thing where they're trying to chase around and get different bits and pieces and get a motorbike and then get a car and build the house and everything else and so it's not addictive and she'll play it for a bit and sometimes she gets a bit bored.

Q OK. How long do you think it takes before she gets bored?

A Probably three quarters of an hour or something like that.

Q OK and how can you tell when she starts to get bored?

A She'll just stop playing and turn the telly over to Cartoon Network and Teen Titans and...yeah.

Q OK. So we're also interested in the ways that children find play with technology meaningful and how they relate their experiences to their everyday lives. So when playing with her toys, how far does your daughter find the play to be meaningful to her and to her everyday interests?

A I can't think now. She will play with her dolls and sometimes like over Facetime. Facetime is really really good because her and her cousin, who's like a year younger. They will play for like hours and hours and that's something we never had as kids. You had to go round to somebody's house you know and it was the most harrowing thing in the world to have to ring the house and have to speak to their mum and dad and whereas obviously now she's got that immediate contact, Facetime and it's there and then and they can play over Facetime and it tends to be that you will walk in the room and Facetime will be on and my daughter will be somewhere else and her cousin's chatting away to nobody there. So there is sort of that...they don't need to go round to each other's houses to play, but they can have that playtime over yeah, yeah, so it's contact using technology.

Q Oh right, OK, so how might your daughter...just a minute, I'm just reading the question, sorry. So we're interested in the ways that your daughter might try things out and try to make improvements, so set herself a challenge while playing with her toys. So when playing with her toys how far does your daughter enjoy trying things out and then making improvements?

A With the toys not so much that they're planning a dog room at the minute at their Nanny's house, so that's kind of their thing and they're buying toys for that and shopping for it and things like that, buying things on the internet for that. So they are, they're playing building a house, you know it's furnishing a room for the dogs. That's about it really. If I was to bring the thing out of the box in LEGO and put it in the middle of the room, I think all three of us would sit and play with it but I don't know how far in terms of improving things she would go.

Q Does she ever set herself, sorry to interrupt you, does she ever set herself like a challenge?

A No not really.

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

A I do think having, it's kind of that...the bored thing so it shouldn't be...it's all right I'm thinking of work as well, sort of thing because we do quite a lot with DBS, so the person has behavioural support and it needs to be in order to stop a behavior there needs to be a reward there so with a lot of kids it will be the iPad, but they need to calm down and do some work to do with that. With my daughter is the same sort of thing there needs to be a reward and the reward is either the iPad or the TV sort of thing. You know we don't have to, she doesn't need telling too many times, but, sorry I've lost track of the question again now.

Q We're exploring the link between play with technology and children's emotions and wellbeing.

A Yeah, so our worry is, I mean if they start playing and one of them says the wrong thing like over Facetime then that can be quite upsetting but also you kind of worry, you don't want them to get caught in the loop of a game. I did notice where, it's the first time I've noticed it where she's playing a game and you can exchange things within Roblox on the game and she's saying 'That's stupid, they think I'm going to swap my motorbike or give it to them for a can of beans' or something and that felt a little bit weird and it's an online interaction but it's in a virtual world not a real world and I said 'Well do you think if somebody did that to you in real life you'd do it?' and she went 'Well no, of course I wouldn't' and I do think are the lines sometimes blurred between real life and virtual life. We know as adults I suppose and as children there's that innocence and that gets kind of worn off us a bit and we become more cynical I suppose, whereas children they are more innocent and susceptible to what's the word now? Persuasion. So that's maybe this worry is the emotional attachment they put on the phone or the iPad that something can happen to it or if something happened while they were playing a game, you kind of worry about their emotional wellbeing then because all it would need is somebody to put a silly remark on there. And I do think then, because you can't control the uncontrollable, which is other people, whereas if you're, you will control what is in a setting within the face to face but online you can say whatever you want. So that worries me that somebody could say something that would upset her or without me even knowing it. People say horrible things, so yeah that would be my main worry would be that it can upset.

Q Yep, yep. OK. And how far do you think your daughter enjoys her play with her technological devices?

A I would very much say, yeah she does. It's kind of taken over from other but then she's kind of hitting the age now where she doesn't really play with dolls or a lot of other things because she's coming up to nine now, but I do know that you know if she's like, if Santa brought her some LEGO for Christmas or for her birthday then she will play with that for a bit and then you wonder how long it would be before she goes back to Roblox again.

Q Right, OK, so while she's playing with digital toys, how do you think she is feeling?

A It's hard to say because she seems very focused but I don't see very much emotion on her face while she's doing it unless you're asking 'Are you OK?' 'Yeah, yeah'. You know.

Q OK, so what sorts of emotions do you see when your daughter's like involved with her play? You've just answered that really.

A Yeah. She just seems absorbed in a game and there's not really a lot going on around her.

Q OK and why do you think that she is not really expressing any emotions?

A Because she's so focused on what's going on on the game so...

Q Yeah, OK.

A She kind of loses herself in the game if you know what I mean.

Q OK.

A I suppose it's the same as when you're reading a book, you don't know how somebody's feeling because they're absorbed in the book and everything is going on in their mind. There's no expression of emotion, so like watching a TV show is a shared experience and you'll laugh or you'll cry and groan. When you're reading a book because it's all inside your own head and the same when you're looking at playing a game, you don't tend to give away much emotion.

Q OK and what sorts of technology do you think your daughter is most likely to get bored with?

A Well we shall find out when Santa comes with the Switch that she wants because we did have a Nintendo Wii as a family and it just lived in a cupboard for about four years before we took it to Computer Express and got twenty quid for it. Because I think, because again it's so specific whereas I suppose on the iPad you can get loads of apps and you download them for free, I mean, we don't pay for any games or any apps, it's just whatever's free and then we're going to find out obviously with the Switch you've got to play those games because you can't just suddenly get a game for free if you know what I mean because obviously another one will cost money and then hopefully she's going to learn the worth of money alongside of that, where it's not just suddenly appearing.

Q OK and do you think she feels this way when it's just normally playing like but with not technology? Does she become bored like...just playing with her...yep.

A No, no. No she seems pretty well engaged for a while and I think if there's another distraction going on say if the phone rings and it's Nanny and she wants to speak to Nanny or after a while she'll think 'Oh I need to speak to my cousin' and then they'll Facetime and then she'll leave what she's doing there and then they'll probably play something else together.

Q OK. We're interested in your daughter's social interactions in relation to her play with technology. So when she's playing with technology that allows for social interaction do you think that your daughter engages well with others?

A Yes I do, yeah.

Q And is that through the actual interactive side of the technology or is that more outside of it?

A Like I said, when it seems weird that when they're playing a game together they're still Facetimeing each other and still speak to each other inside of a game and they'll run around so outside of the game interacting and then they're trying to run around inside the game and try and find each other. And she's got a friend from school and they'll try and Facetime and play the game at the same time.

Q Right, OK. And what types of technology do you think support social play?

A Yeah I'd say the iPad because it's so versatile really.

Q OK and why do you think the iPad specifically is really good for social play?

A Because you can have so many different things running at the same time, so you can have the Facetime or the audio or the video call while playing the other games.

Q OK. So when does your daughter's play involve technology and do you ever play with her and if so how?

A No, no. She's probably ??? in the nicest possibly way, so...

Q Right, OK, so that's fine and is there any devices or digital toys, games or apps that you think are better than others for playing with your daughter? And if so which ones are they and why do you think that they are really good for playing together?

A I don't really play games with her on the iPad. We tend to do cooking and things that I'm good at.

Q Right, OK. Yeah that's fine. We're not just interested in like on the digital stuff as well, we're interested in other areas because that is also quite meaningful.

A Yeah.

Q Is there any other devices or digital toys, oh sorry I was going to ask you the same question there. So if you're using your own device, does your daughter ever ask you to play with them?

A No.

Q OK.

A She will, if, which happens quite a lot, when she's sat on her iPad and, in fact she's sat on her mum's iPad and then 'Dad can I have your phone?', but that's about it really or she has to go on the Instagram too because her cousin's got dogs and they like to like the pictures that they put of the dogs on but that's about it really because we don't really... because I do quite a lot of cycling and I do cycling in the garage using sort of technology but then we'll do cooking stuff and then we'll, I know it sounds daft but we'll just go in the hall and throw a ball at each other for about fifteen minutes, just having a muck about. So, not really anything to do with technology.

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

A No.

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

A Well, only if sort of like we're putting music on or something and we're having a muck about and a dance and we'll put on YouTube or something like that but nothing...no, I

mean like you say it might all change when the Switch comes along and it becomes more of a family focused social platform isn't it whereas the iPad's very much a personalised, rather than a social one.

Q OK. So do you think that there are certain technologies that offer more positive or negative experiences for your daughter and if so, which ones do you think they might be and why?

A I think the Switch would be because you've got loads of interactive games, family games, exercise type games, do you get the cardiovascular going and things like that. I'm not sure if you can get Fruit Ninja for it but we play that quite a lot but it's difficult to get ??? hand eye coordination going.

Q OK.

A I mean I'm not really sure about things that aren't ??? because we just have the iPads and the iPhones in the house for that.

Q OK and do you have any concerns about your child, your daughter's experience with technology?

A No. I think it's quite because I've never been a gamer and my wife's never been a gamer so we've never really had anything in the house. I think some people are quite avid and I think then that passes down to the children, whereas we are more kind of a muck about, have a laugh, real life kind of family if you know what I mean?

Q Yep, yep. OK that's fine and then do you have any concerns about the safety aspects about internet enabled toys and if so what are your concerns?

A I'd say I'm worried about harvesting data and switching on and, you know what it's like you speak to somebody and the next thing you know on Facebook they'll have an advert popping up for bits or pieces so I think it's that harvesting of data, use of data, listening in. I mean on all my laptops that come with a camera, I turn the mic off but you just don't know. It's not a paranoid thing, well I suppose it is really, but it's that worry of things being used in a nefarious...yeah, it does worry me that something like Alexa or...I suppose, like a laptop camera or a webcam can be remotely accessed and used and you just don't want that to happen. That's probably my biggest worry.

Q OK and what has shaped those worries?

A Probably watching too much CSI and Sherlock and....yeah, it...reading news and hearing things.

Q OK.

A Yeah.

Q OK and are you concerned about data privacy in relation to your daughter and what sort of concerns do you have about this?

A Yes I am, yeah. We try to get her not to put her name to anything and also set a guiding element of it as well because you don't want, well you say you don't want children ??? but most Facebook pages have got pictures of my wife and my daughter on and she hasn't given permission for those to be out there. No doubt in about three or four years she'll start telling me to stop posting things. So yeah, I suppose it's because we're in such an infancy as well of the internet and social media, I do worry for her in the future.

Q OK and what do you think has shaped those worries?

A Again, CSI, you know, the media I suppose really.

Q OK, yeah that's totally fine and do you think that your daughter's use of technologies influences her family life positively?

A Yeah I do because the interaction with her cousins is really really good and then she can Facetime Nanny and then like I say that playing over Facetime is really really good because it's them getting that social interaction, although it's not a physical one I know it's an electronic one, but they are keeping in contact with each other much more than what I did with my cousins when I was a kid so I do think it brings them closer together.

Q OK and do you think that your daughter's use of technology has had a negative influence on family life?

A Only when someone has said the wrong thing in the background and I think that's adults, not so much the kids.

Q Right.

A And sometimes when the kids have arguments it can boil over a little bit the next time they see each other but we try to play that down a little bit and not let it get to us or it's just kids being kids.

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

A No not really.

Q OK, no problem. And what advice or guidance would you offer to parents on issues relating to data privacy and safety in relation to your daughter?

A Just to look at the age appropriateness of the apps. They're there for a reason. Read the reviews and if they seem too good to be true then they probably are. So just do, I suppose, not keep an eye on them 24/7, but just monitor, have a look over their shoulder and ask if everything's all right, you know. Just do it from a distance, not, because otherwise they'll just go, I remember when we were kids when we were told 'no' we couldn't do something the first thing you would do is go and do it, so...

Q OK, yeah, OK then that's the end of my questions.