

Q Lydia Hall (researcher)
A Woman with son (aged 9)

Q Okay. And is it your son or your daughter?

A I've got two boys. One's nine and one is seven.

Q If you can just focus on one of them.

A Okay, yes.

Q If you can, that will be better I think. So, are you all right to start?

A Yes, I am.

Q Okay. So, I'm going to ask you the first question, which is how does technology feature in your son's play?

A He uses both the phone, and he also has an iPad. So, those are the devices that he uses. For play, he tends to use different app and goes onto different games. But he does use them as well for schoolwork and things as well. So, he does use them for both.

Q Okay. Can you tell me what app and games he likes to go on?

A There's quite a few, actually. He likes to go on Roblox. There's one called Stickman Hook, which is a game. Candy Crush, Fortnite, and another one called Chasecraft. They're all games aimed at his age. He's probably a bit young, to be honest, for a couple of them. But those are what he plays.

Q And with regard to toys then, what does he choose to play with?

A Did you say toys, sorry?

Q Yes.

A He likes LEGO. That's about it, really. He likes to go and play outside a lot. He likes to play football. So, regarding toys, it is mainly LEGO, and he likes to draw as well and things like that. But otherwise, he will go on the PlayStation. He likes that as well.

Q And for example, then, with the PlayStation, how often would you allow him to go on that?

A I'm quite strict, to be honest, with him. If he's done all his homework. So, say, in the week, like today, he's finished all his homework. That always has to come first, and then he's allowed to go on it. And I'll allow him to go on for about an hour in the week. At the weekend, it does vary, to be honest. I've not been very well lately with cough and colds. So, sometimes when they're arguing I will just say, just go on it. And they can go on there for three to four hours sometimes at a weekend. But in the week, I'm pretty strict. And they do have to do homework first.

Q So, how often would he go on then? Would it be pretty much every day?

A It's not every day. I'd say every other day.

Q And then, does he ever play with anybody else at the same time?

A He'll play with his brother. But regarding online, with anybody else, we don't allow that. But he will play against his brother.

Q And do you think that playing with online digital toys is significant for him?

A It is, yes. I think so. Definitely.

Q And can you tell me why you feel like that?

A I just think at his age, with his age group at the moment, there's a lot of peer pressure and things as well at the moment. They're all talking about different games, and they've done this, and achieved that in different games as well. So, more for him because he's at middle school.

If he's not allowed on that or taking part, being able to do that, he can't join in with his peers at school so much. And then, you've got the bullying side of things as well, the taking the mickey out of children if they're not up to date with everybody else.

Q Okay, that's interesting. And how do you think he's feeling while he's playing on his digital games or apps, for example?

A To be honest, he's quite happy, but he does get quite angry sometimes if he's losing. Especially against his brother. If he's on his own, if he's playing something like Fifa, he's quite happy to play that. And then, when he does play other games like Fortnite, when he gets to certain levels and things as well, he gets quite excited. And he'll come and tell you that he's done that.

And then, he'll want to go and tell his friends as well, what he's got, or coins, or whatever they've found.

Q And does your son ever play whilst he's watching television?

A Not the PlayStation. Sometimes, he has got his phone. And he will be on his phone, playing the game while the telly's on, and he's sat in the lounge with us. So, that does happen from time to time. He did the other night actually, and we said to him, you need to put your phone down, or you're going to bed now, because you're not watching the telly. And he did put his phone down.

Q And what things does he do then while he's on his phone? If he is on his phone and watching telly?

A Again, he's playing these games. He's playing Roblox, or Chasecraft, or Stickman Hook. It is the games that he's playing. But saying that, he will sit in front of the telly and he'll play not just those type of games. He will play... It's just got out of my head what it's called now. It's a maths game that they're playing at the moment. The name will come back to me. I've just gone blank with it. But he will play that as well in front on the telly.

Q And how often would he do that?

- A That's probably twice a week for the maths game.
- Because he has to do that as part of his homework. It's an app they have to go onto. I can go and ask him. It's gone out of my head, what it's called, if you need to know the name of it.
- Q No, I probably won't, I don't think.
- A I can't remember it. We have it at school as well, where I work, and it's just gone out of my head, what it's called.
- Q It might come back to you.
- A It might do. But I would probably say a couple of times a week he will do that. And he will sit in front of the telly with that. But then, probably at the weekend it's more he'll go on his phone and play a game while we're trying to watch telly as a family. And then, like we said to him this weekend, to turn it off because we were watching something. And he does. He's pretty good.
- Q So, do you feel like your son's engagement with apps and online sites, like YouTube, Netflix, CBeebies, or ITV, impacts on how he plays?
- A Possibly, yes. At the moment, YouTube is a massive thing. Like I said, when he goes online, he might not be playing other games, but he will watch YouTube as well. And there's a few people on there that he follows and watches. So, yes, I think they can have a big impact on them. And just things like their language, what they say as well. Because he watches this YouTube, I don't know if you've heard of him, it's someone called Unspeakable.
- And he's from America. And even in my son's language now, he will sometimes pick up, instead of saying rubbish, he's said trash a couple of times. So, it does impact a lot on what the kids are looking at and what they're watching in their everyday life.
- Q And does your son ever play videogames on a mobile or tablet?
- A Yes, he does.
- Q Can you tell me which ones?
- A Yes. He plays Roblox, Candy Crush, Chasecraft, Stickman, and that maths game which I just can't remember. TT Rockstars. There you go. That's it. TT Rockstars.
- Q And then, how often would he do that?
- A TT Rockstars, that's a couple of times a week. But the others, I would say probably every other day. But he may have it more at the weekend.
- Q And does your son have any physical toys that relate to his online digital interests? So, Minecraft blocks or figures of any sorts.
- A He did have some of the Minecraft figures, but he doesn't really play with them. He's passed them down to my younger son now. And they do the soft toys as well in Minecraft.

He's got a couple of those. But those are the only things really that I've seen, that he's had.

Q When he did have them, do you think that he played with them at the same time as while he was playing with the digital version?

A No.

Q Do you think that your son plays with toys that are digital? So, for example, on a laptop. Or, does he have anything robotic type of thing?

A Yes, he uses my husband's laptop. But to be fair, he'll go on to play his maths game usually on there. Or, to do homework on there. He won't really engage in apps and things on there. So, he will go on the laptop. He does have this thing, a drone. But it's not the big drones that you see. It's one that you fly indoors. It's not a very big one. Other than that, those are the only things I can think of that he's got really.

Q How does he play with the drone then?

A Not that often. Maybe a couple of times a month. It was a novelty when he first had it, and then that's worn off now.

Q What things did he like to do with that?

A He would just play with it in the lounge.

Drive it up and down. To be honest, it's hard to get it up in the air. So, he was just trying to do that. And, like I said, once he did it a few times, the novelty has worn off. So, it's lucky if it comes out once or twice a month, really.

Q And does your son ever play with Internet enabled toys? For example, Furbies are mentioned here.

A No.

Q Okay, that's fine. Does your son ever play with augmented reality or virtual reality?

A No.

Q And does your son ever play with artificial intelligence assistants, like Siri, Google, Alexa, for example?

A Yes, he has. He's used Siri before. He uses that quite a bit to spell words, or to find something for him.

Q So, how often would he like to do that?

A Probably a couple of times a week. Again, it's more when he's doing homework. If he wants to know how to spell something or to find something. My youngest plays with that more. I've heard him asking it to say a silly word and stuff. Whereas my oldest uses it properly.

Q Is that the only thing that he would use it for then?

A Yes, that's the only thing I've seen. Unless he's doing anything behind my back.

But that's the only thing I've witnessed him do.

Q So, when your son is playing outdoors, does his play feature technology in any way?

A No. When he's outside, he'll just play football or play on his bike.

Q Do you think that he shows the influence of technology in any way? In pretend play or the language that he would use?

A I suppose sometimes. When he's played the football game, he will bring that, the names and some of the things he's see on his games, into his play. He's pretending to be a footballer outside. And then, occasionally, yes, I suppose when I think about the Fortnite game, when they've played that. He'll go and reenact a scenario outside. Because we've got woodlands behind us, so he'll go down there with my other son, and they'll play with their nerf guns and pretend they're a character sometimes. So, yes, it does a little bit.

Q And next question is who decides what devices or digital toys, or digital games, or apps that your son can use?

A It's probably myself and my husband, and a little bit of the kids. They will ask, but we have the overall decision with that. Yes, myself and my husband.

Q And what would guide your decisions on that?

A We'll have a little look at it first and see if it's suitable. I have felt under the peer pressure of it as well though, with the Fortnite one, because they've all got it. And I wouldn't allow him to have that for quite a while, for a couple of years. I was like, you're not having that.

And he's at middle school now, and all his friends had seem to have got it. And he was just getting upset all the time. So, in the end, I gave in and let him have it. Just so he wouldn't have all this getting upset and just with his friends as well. But normally, we will check them out and see what they're about.

To be honest, I didn't really know that much about Fortnite until I had a look into it. And his school have actually sent something home, that they can use it for maths as well, or something. So, it's being used in his school as well.

Q So, in your opinion, what sorts of devices or digital toys, or games, or apps, do you think promote play?

A There's a few. I don't know if you've heard of the TT Rockstars. That's a really good app at the moment. That is helping him with times tables. There's another one. I can't think of the name. There's an app that they use as well, that's helped with French, but I can't remember the name of it. Which is really good as well.

But there's a few. When my children were younger... I can't think of the names. But there were a few you could use that would help them with their sounds and their phonics. So, we'd use things like that. Not so much now, because they're okay. But when they were younger, things like colours and things. Which was great, because that helped them to interact with it as well.

Q So, then why do you think they're really good then in terms of play?

A They get the children engaged and help young children to interact with the technology at an early age. And because it's an ongoing thing. You've got smartphones and tablets everywhere now. It's almost become an everyday life...

As long as you're being a bit of a mentor and helping them with what they're looking at. But it does engage children to use technology and to help bring out their creative side. And there's interesting ways of using it beyond games as well. So, it does help, as long as it's used in the right way I think.

Q So, then in your opinion, are there any types of devices or digital toys, games, or apps, limiting his play?

A I think, again, it depends on how... What's the word I'm looking for? How addicted they may get to game. And I think that's why you need to limit their time. I've been quite lucky because my lad, he likes to play FIFA. That is one of his most favourite thing to do. But if I left him to it, he'd be on it all day.

And he will get upset when you tell him to come off. But I think that it's down really to the parents. Whether it's restricting play or not.

Q So, then why do you feel like FIFA is not particularly beneficial for him?

A Because if you left him to his own devices, he's addicted to it. He loves football. He loves everything about it. And he would just play it nonstop, all day. I suppose he's like a child with a favourite toy. They don't want to put it down. That's how he is with FIFA.

Q And are there any devices or digital toys, or games, or apps, that you think are particularly good for promoting creativity?

A I can't think of any off the top of my head. Apart from the French app. That's good for them having to learn the language. YouTube's been pretty good, to be honest, for looking at the creativity side.

When he's had art projects and things to do, he's gone on there. I use that a lot as well. It's showed me how to make things. And in a creative way. The art side of things. So, it is good in a way. If you need to learn something. Or, Pinterest is good as well. Sometimes, he'll go on there to help get ideas for his projects.

Q And how often does he interact on Pinterest?

A It's not that often, to be honest.

That's probably more myself. But we will it together. So, if he's had a project and wants to look at some ideas, then I've said, when don't we have a look? And then, we've sat together and looked at different things.

Q And then, are there any devices or digital toys, games, or apps, that you feel that would limit his creativity?

A No, not really. I can't think of any. Not unless they go onto a game and then they're not going to come off it. Possibly Roblox. Something like that, because I know they can be quite addicted to that.

Q And what toys or products do you think LEGO should be developing for children

in the digital age?

A So, what do I think LEGO should be developing?

Q Yes.

A I'm not sure. I don't know if they have got an app or anything. I know they've got a lot of PlayStation games at the moment. But I'm not sure what they could do really with that. I think LEGO is a more physical thing for him to play with. I don't know how they could interact with children through that way.

Q So, when your son is playing with his technology, do you feel like he is actively engaged in what he's doing?

A Yes, to a certain level. It depends on, like I said, what he's on.

Q Can you explain a bit more?

A Say, if he's on TT Rockstars, he's engaged in that because it's mental maths. It's constant. So, he's got to be alert. But if he's on something like FIFA or in one of his other games, it's quite a repetitive things, so I don't think he's that switched on. It's more sometimes like a trance that they can be in. So, I don't know if he's quite fully engaged in what he's doing.

Q So, do you think then while your son is playing with his digital toys and this technology, that he can relate that to his everyday experience?

A No.

Q Do you think that it's meaningful to him when he's playing?

A No. Not unless it's one of the apps that, like I said, that's helping with his work. Not the games and things. No.

Q And how about in terms of his interests, though? If you're saying he's interested in football.

A Apart from his game, if he goes on the Internet, he will look things up like players and what team they're from, and the news.

So, he will use the Internet to search for facts and things, which is good, because it's something he likes. It's something he's passionate about. So, it gives him a greater knowledge of that sport for him. So, in a way, yes.

Q While he playing with his technology or his digital toys, do you think that your son likes trying things out?

A Yes, he does, to be honest. He's always keen to try something new. So, he will try things out. Yes, definitely.

Q And then, when he's on Roblox, for example, or is it Fortnite I think you mentioned?

A Yes.

Q Are these games where you can make improvements on what you've done previously?

A Yes.

Q Do you think he likes to do that?

A Yes, he does like doing things like that. And things like Minecraft as well. He likes that. So, if there is something you can improve on, he does like to do that, and like to get to the next level and things as well.

Q And we're also looking at the link between play and technology, and children's emotions and wellbeing.

Have you got any thoughts on this particular topic?

A Again, I think with children's wellbeing, time needs to be limited to how much they go onto social platforms and things like that. But it can be a good thing. You've got things like ebooks as well. So, they've got the interacting on there. I think as long as it's good quality apps that are helping to promote things like word growth and engaging children, because they can go on and watch things as well, like how an author would read a book or talk about a book.

So, there's lots of benefits to all of it. But I think it really needs to be monitored by the parents. So, what are they going on. How much they're going on. Making sure that we're talking to them about E safety as well, and things to look out for on the Internet.

Q So, do you feel then that his wellbeing is mostly positive then in terms of being on technology?

A Yes, I do.

Q And what emotions do you think that your son is involved with while he's on FIFA or on any other digital toy or technology?

A I think he's engaged in what he's doing, so he's happy. I think he's happy in what he's doing. And he's being able to go back and talk to his friends about where he's got to or if he's completed something on Fornite, or on... What's the other one? Minecraft. So, he's quite happy. There's not been any negative sides to him being on there. He's not got upset or anything, or addicted to stuff. So far, it's been okay.

Q So, while he's playing with different types of technology then, do you think that he's more likely to get bored more quickly while he's on a technological toy, rather than being outside?

A I don't think so, because when he does go outside, he can be quite happily outside all day, for as much as he would be on the technology. So, I think he's happy either way, to be honest.

Q I don't know how to word this question. Do you feel then that he is much... I don't know how to word the question.

A Happier on technology?

Q In a way, yes.

A It's difficult because he loves being outside probably just as much as being on

technology. Which I know a lot of children are just totally addicted to being on technology, and that would be their happy place consistently. But if you said to him we're going down the park to play football, he'd quite happily go and do that. Even if he'd got his phone in his hand, he's put it down and we'd go out and do that.

Or, if the weather is nice, he'll go and play in the garden. He's equally to do either, if that makes sense. I wouldn't say he favours one over the other. Not at the moment, anyway.

Q And do you feel that while he's playing with technology or digital toys, that it allows for social interaction?

A Yes and no. Because when he's playing with his brother, he will interact a lot with his brother. But, like I said, we don't allow him to interact with anybody else online. And then, the social side of it as well. He'll go to school and talk with his friends about what they did and where they are on a certain game.

Q And do you feel like there's any types of technology that would support social play in your opinion?

A I'm not sure, to be honest.

Q I think what they're looking for here is whether you feel that when your son is on football, for instance, do you feel that him being on that game has an impact on his social behaviour in the real world, for example?

A It may do. I don't think him playing the football would. I think it would be more things like going onto YouTube and watching some of these videos.

I don't know if you've ever seen it, but this Unspeakable guy, this young lad who's from America. They do silly things, like dares. I think that would have an impact on him, outside of the home. Just maybe copying some of the things, or repeating it. Or, like I said, even some of the kids speak with an accent almost, with some of the words that they use. So, yes, in a way possibly outside of the home. Possibly, it would.

Q And next question is when your son's play is involved in technology, do you ever play with him?

A I don't, to be honest. I used to. We used to sit and play a game together, but I absolutely hate playing. I don't like playing on the PlayStation at all. My husband does. They'll play FIFA together.

The only one that I will probably sit with him would be the ones he'd probably class as boring, which is the maths ones. Not the French one. I'd sit with him, and we'd do that together, or I'd watch over him doing it. But that's probably the only thing I would really interact with him on there. Unless it's looking at something on the Internet. Because we do do that, to be honest. If we're looking for some research, we'll sit together and do that.

Q Who would instigate that?

A Probably me. I'd say it's probably a bit of both. Sometimes he'll say, I can't. I'll

say to him, I'll have a go. I'll have a look. Have a look yourself, see if you can find it, what you're looking for. And then, if he can't, he'll ask me.

So, it's a bit of both in that one.

Q And do you feel that there are some devices or digital toys, or digital games, or apps, that are better than others for playing together with your son?

A There may be. I just haven't found them, to be honest. Because it's not something I tend to sit and do with him, really. So, it's a bit hard to answer that question, apart from sitting down and doing the TT Rockstar one together. I can't really say if one is better than the other.

Q How about with your husband?

A He will sit and play more the games with him. So, they'll interact together with the PlayStation side of things, and have fun doing that together. They'll sit and play FIFA for a few hours together. But I don't go on there. I don't really know what I'm doing, to be honest. They always tell me to get off if even attempt to.

Q If you're ever using your own digital device, does your son ever ask to play on it with you?

A Yes, he will.

Q What things does he like to play together on them?

A It will be more things like he'll want to go on my phone. Let's say we've gone to the dentist and we're sat there, or any waiting room really, he'll want to go on my phone. We'll go onto things like Snapchat and do silly faces together. So, things like that.

Q And how often would you do that?

A Maybe once, twice a month, maybe. We might sometimes do it at home as well, if there's a funny face on there, or where it changes your voice. So, both the kids will join in with that and just have a giggle.

Q And are there any devices or apps that your son can only access with your or another member of the family around?

A No, I don't think so. Because we will check what apps he's got. We check his devices regularly to make sure he's not got anything on there that he shouldn't have. What he's got on there, he's allowed to go onto.

Q I think you might have answered this. Do you ever initiate play using technology with your son?

A Yes. Sometimes with the TT Rockstars, we'll go on there. And Snapchat as well. The silly filters and things.

Q And do you think that there are certain technologies that would offer more positive or negative experiences for your son?

A Yes, he's not allowed onto Facebook. And I don't want him to go on there. I don't know. I've just got it in my head it wouldn't be positive if he went onto

some of the social platforms like that. Instagram and Twitter, and things. I just think you're opening a door to bullying. So, I think there's a lot that would be quite negative on there. The positive ones for me are going to be the educational ones.

Q So, do you have any concerns regarding your son's experience with technology overall?

A No. But that's only because we'll monitor it quite heavily.

Q Is there anything in particular that has shaped that thought?

A For me, I work in a school, so I've seen firsthand some of the things that can happen with social platforms. So it's just, for me, you're not going on them.

Q Are you concerned about any of the safety aspects of any Internet enabled toys?

A Yes. Not that we have, but some of the game that you can go onto, they can talk to other people and stuff. So, it's just making sure that you can switch it off. When they first had Fortnite, that was one that they could talk to people on there. But we had to make sure that's turned off. That they can't. For me, that's a worry with any of those games where they can interact with other people, because you just don't know who's over the other side.

Q What has shaped that worry?

A Just not knowing who they could be talking to. Anybody could pretend to be somebody different. They might say they're his friend. But nowadays, you just can't trust anybody. And just want to make sure they're bully protected, basically.

Q And how about with regard to data privacy? Are you concerned about that?

A Yes, massively.

Q Can you tell me about what concerns you've got about that?

A Just, again, giving out his name, age, address. Anything like that, really. And, again, some of these apps as well, where they can buy things as well. It's just making sure. I know at school they have the E safety chat, and we talk to them about E safety quite a bit here as well. But it's just keeping everything private.

Q And then, what things have shaped that worry?

A Again, I think it's just from being in the school and hearing what can happen, and seeing it on the news, on the TV. It's horrible. You're seeing some of the horror stories that you hear on the media and in magazines and things like that. And it's just making sure that my children are fully protected, basically.

Q And do you think that your son's use of technology has a positive influence on family life?

A Yes, I think so. He uses it a healthy amount of time. It's not too much. I would say it's absolutely fine.

Q Why do you feel like it has a positive impact?

- A It sometimes brings us together, when we're being a bit silly on the Snapchat things. It's helped a lot with his homework and how to find out how to do things, as well. It's helped him take responsibility more as well for his homework, where he's got to find things out for himself, and given him that little bit more independence of finding things for himself.
- Q And then, on the opposite side of that, is there a negative impact on family life at all?
- A Only when he gets a bit upset when you're like, you're not having Internet time now, or you're not going on the PlayStation. Then, yes, that will upset him. He's not being nice when he gets upset and shouting. It has a negative point then.
- Q And do you have any concerns regarding your son's use of technology overall?
- A No, not at the moment.
- Q And do you have any advice or guidance that you would offer to new parents on issues relating to data privacy and safety in relation to their child?
- A Yes. I would say to them to make sure you fully read the E safety information. And just to make sure you know exactly what games they've got. To regularly check their history if they are allowed on the Internet as well, just to make sure they're not visiting any sites that they're not supposed to. And to have a time limit as well, because as much as they need their time, you need to have family time as well. And they need to come away from those computer screens and the digital technology as well.
- Q And then, we've got a final question, which is regarding LEGO products. So, does your son own any of the LEGO products or own anything similar?
- A He's got a ton of LEGO. Absolutely love LEGO. He's been collecting it for quite a few years. He's got quite a lot.
- Q What things does he like?
- A Oh gosh. What's it called? He likes LEGO Ninjago. The LEGO Movie. He's had lots of different vehicles and things. The police station. He'll build it, and then usually keeps it in his room until the little one sometimes gets hold of it. At the moment, there's a LEGO set he's after called Stranger Things. He's after that one. Anything, really. Star Wars. He likes the Star Wars LEGO as well. There's loads. He likes it all, to be honest.
- Q And how does he play with it, then?
- A When he'll build it, he takes his time in building it and loves doing that part of it. And then, he will sometimes play with his younger brother and give the characters voices and things. It's a whole story, scenario. But he will play on his own as well, and he'll bring other figures into it and plays with it in that way.
- Q Sorry, did I interrupt you there?
- A I was just going to say that he goes out in the garden sometimes and plays with it.
- Q Do you feel that then, when he is playing with his LEGO, is he influenced by

anything that he's potentially seeing either on a film or on a cartoon, for example?

A Yes, definitely. He will act out things he's seen on the telly. He'll give his LEGO characters names and things, of characters he's seen off the telly as well. Or, he'll act out a scene from a film. Or, he'll take little bits from films and cartoons and things, and put it all into one as well. So, yes, definitely see bits going into his play from what he's seen on telly and the Internet. Definitely.

Q And what does he think about the other LEGO brand items? Have you got bags, or the films, or the little mini figures?

A Yes. The DVDs. He's liked the LEGO movies that have been out. He's signed up to the LEGO Magazine that comes out every month as well. And he has got the LEGO PlayStation games. I think that's it.

Q Can you tell me a bit more about that?

A The PlayStation games?

Q Yes, please.

A There's a few. I think it's about three they've got. There's LEGO City, where you're a character and I think you can build things as well. I think there's a LEGO Movie one as well. I don't know how to explain it really, it's an actual piece of LEGO, and you can build that and connect it to the PlayStation. And I think it becomes part of the picture on the computer that they're playing, I think. They can turn it into things and stuff, actually using LEGO. I don't know how it works.

Q Is that on a console then, or is that on a PC?

A Yes, it's on the PlayStation. It's on a console.

Q And how about Legoland?

A Yes, they've been to Legoland. They've been there a couple of times.

Q That's it then, thank you.

