

Q Julia Bishop

A Brenda U [Rainbows Group Leader]

Q Lovely. Well thanks every so much, Brenda, for taking part, just keep that on the floor there. And we'll just start off with a few general questions about the group that you're involved in. So I just want you to tell me what group it is, and what your role is.

A Right, it's Rainbows, and I'm a Rainbow Leader, basically. Once a week we all get together, play games, do crafts, just basically entertain the kids for an hour or so.

Q That's brilliant. And what do Rainbows actually do? Give me the background about what the Rainbows is.

A Well Rainbows is a younger version of Brownies. They obviously meet up once a week, and we have just got a new... Well, what do they call it?

Q Is it like a programme?

A A new programme that is involving badges, whereas we've never really done badges before. We've done a few, but it was sort of all... And to be honest, this programme, we were a bit worried about it because it was a bit like school. But we have adapted it and it is coming out quite well. The only problem is, is that a lot of them have to do badges at home. They do one big badge with us, but most of the badges have to be done at home, which I find...

Because there's working mums and things like that, and the only people that lose out are the children, basically.

Q You're saying that there's not quite enough space in family life to support that?

A No. Because a lot of them are brought back around parents, or they come straight from after-school clubs. And that time they get home from here is 6:30/7:00, they're getting ready for bed basically. So there's some families that obviously are different to others, and they don't work or they've got more time, and it doesn't seem a bit fair in that respect.

Q Yes. And the new programme, when did that start coming in?

A We started it in September.

Q Oh, it's very recent then.

A Yes. We got it last... Just after Christmas last year. But you'd got so long to... And we left it as long as we could because we find with them only being five- to seven-year-olds, they've been at school all day and they like to come play games, make something, and that's it. But a lot of it was a bit more school, and it puts kiddies off.

We've had... They've actually through Guiding, they've lost a lot of Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides. Because they don't want to do it.

Q Really? The new programme?

A Yes. Because they just want to come to play.

Q Yes. So something a bit about play in their lives.

A Oh yes, definitely. Making new friends. Because with Rainbows they come from all different schools. So they're not all in one school, they've got different schools. So yes, you might only have one from one school, but they still make friends and that's what it's about basically.

Q Yes. And you think that's beneficial, obviously that playing together?

A Oh, definitely. A lot of them... Some have come and cried when they've come for the first few weeks, and then within no time they've made new friends and they're off, you know? So yes.

And we do obviously do a few outings. We don't do sleep overs, but we do do outings. Because we're going to Winter Wonderland on Saturday. Which they all love going to that.

Q Oh, lovely. Where is that?

A Up at the Scout place in [nearby suburb].

Q What does it entail?

A Well, there's all sorts. They do a trail in dark where you go through a little bit of a wood. It's got all lanterns and you take a torch and you have to follow it. They love that. And there's rides, and they do loads of crafts, and they love it. Absolutely love it.

Q Sounds amazing, yes. So that's another social aspect of it.

A It is. Because we try and encourage them all to come because they like it that much.

Q So just can you...who funds the activities? Can you give me a brief idea of how it works?

A Basically they pay £2 a week. We pay our rent out of that. And basically that's how we fund really. We do do occasionally fundraising, and we do a May Queen still which has been going 60 years. So we usually do get a little bit out of that. So yes, but we do do a little bit of fundraising, but we seem to manage by just subs and paying as rent.

Q Right, so you don't get anything from the main organisation?

A Well actually, no, not from Guiding, but a local trust, they send us a £100 cheque usually every year. So yes.

Q Fantastic. So just thinking about Alison, how frequently would she come to Rainbows?

A Once a week. She started in September.

Q Oh right, so she's still quite new as well?

- A Yes. And her sister's dying to come.
- Q That's great, yes. And the types of things, you say they play games and do crafts, so is that the sort of thing that Alison would typically do every week?
- A Oh yes, every week. That's the sort of thing that we try and do.
- Q Lovely, and the badges?
- A As I said, we're doing the badges. We do things towards a main badge, but they have to do their own... So our animal badge and family badge, they have to do them at home. So yes, and then they have to come every week with their badge book and show us what they've done so they can get them ticked off.
- Q Yes, I see. And then when they've ticked all the categories they get a badge, is that it?
- A Yes, they get the badge. Which we've had a few quite... They tend to be ones that the mums don't work, basically. They've got more time, haven't they?
- Q Absolutely. Yes, really interesting. So these might be the less relevant questions, but tell me if so. So these are questions about technology and media in your activity here. In what you do. So do technologies and media feature in any way in any of the activities that you do, would you say?
- A Not particularly. I suppose if they're doing a princess party... Because when they used to do a badge or when it was a birthday they could choose what they did, so they would probably pick like superhero or a super princess and things like that. So it's things that they've obviously watched, or apps, or that they've done it on, I suppose. But really, we don't tend to use anything.
- Q They're bringing things in.
- A Well, ideas. Because we don't have anything like that really.
- Q No, certainly no digital devices, but they might bring things in their heads that they've seen on films or...
- A Only thing we do tend to, obviously when May Queen is, we have music. Really, that's it.
- Q You do that off a phone or...?
- A Usually off a little speaker, you know?
- Q Yes, linked up to an iPod or something like that, would it be?
- A Onto one of the girls' phones. Not our little girls, big girls' phones.
- Q And would you use your phones in any way to take photographs of any activities?
- A Occasionally. We have to be careful obviously because we can't take photos of all of them. Some don't like it. So yes, we do tend to. If we'd... Like if we go to Winter Wonderland or we go anywhere, where they're doing something, we do tend to take photos. Obviously we have to have permission, but yes, we do take photos. Usually on the phones.

- Q And is there a formal process to get the permission?
- A Well no, obviously when they come we have to fill it in and they have to, part of data, they have to say they don't want photos taken of them. There's one in particular who doesn't want them... She doesn't go on any Facebook, she doesn't want us putting any sort of... Nothing. Basically.
- Q Okay, so you're obviously then respecting the family's wishes.
- A Yes.
- Q Supposing they're okay with it, what sort of things might you do with those photos?
- A Well, we tend to... We've done badges. Obviously May Queen we've had big posters up. Basically just showing mums on Facebook, because we have a Facebook group, and so when we went to watch Little Mix Tribute Band at Cannon Hall, so we were taking photos and putting them on Facebook so the mums could see them while we were there. So yes, they loved that.
- Q Oh right, gosh. So you did that in real time almost?
- A Yes. So they could see where... And we actually videoed it and showed them while they were there basically.
- Q That's very interesting.
- A Because it shows you what they're doing. They all had their faces painted, all had their hair braided. We just sent photos. And it was nice, that. Because they can see that they actually are doing something for their money.
- Q Yes, proof of concept. So in a way you are really making use of technology, social media.
- A Yes. We do, really.
- Q How long have you been doing that type of thing? Obviously Facebook's been going a few years.
- A No, I'd say we've only done it in the last couple of years. We got a Facebook group about two years ago.
- Q Okay, so the Facebook group, is that just parents and the leaders of the activity?
- A Yes, it's just our local Rainbows Facebook group. So it's just the parents and us basically.
- Q A closed group obviously.
- A Yes.
- Q And you post pictures. Would you do that on a weekly basis, or just...?
- A Not weekly, but we do send... We do message them on Facebook if we need them to do something, or we're asking them to do. So yes, we speak to them through Facebook as well. Or text. We have a text group, so we do text them through it as well. Because some mums don't always come, because it's nans and grandads,

and they'll say, I didn't get that letter. So we tend to put it on Facebook group or on a text.

Q Via text message. Yes, that's interesting because I suppose there might be... I was wondering how many people were in the Facebook group, whether it covered everybody, or whether...

A It's if they want to be on, basically. As I say, we've got one that doesn't.

Q That's really interesting. Can you give me an idea about how the parents might behave on the Facebook group? Would they be liking each other's photos, or would there be comments after the photos?

A Oh yes, definitely. They comment. When we did May Queen, because a lot of them it was the first time they'd done it, and trying to explain to them what they're doing, they did. They loved it. And they were all... And talking to each other about it, and about the costumes, have you got this. And they were telling each other where you can get it. Yes, they do really.

Q So I don't really know what you do for the May Queen. Can you give me a quick...?

A Well, May Queen is... What happens is out of Guiding group a girl is chosen through the year, she's usually been a Rainbow, Brownie, and Guide, she's chosen to be the May Queen. And then she picks six attendants, and there's usually two older ones and then four Rainbows. And then they have a procession at church. And we do walk, where they walk through village, and it's like that.

But they do a concert three nights, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, in May, and all the girls are involved, and it's great, they love it.

Q That's lovely. So the Facebook group's mainly about photos, with a bit of film as well, I'm getting the idea?

A Yes, a little bit of video, things like that.

Q Do the kids interact on Facebook at all or is it mainly the parents?

A No, just the parents.

Q Okay, thank you. So going back to that question, about how much technologies are used, is it the way that you do it with the technologies, or you don't have technology so much, is that a reflection of the parent organisation? Is it their wish?

A No, not really, it just never comes into it at Rainbows. Because to be honest, numbers have dropped at Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides, and we do tend to think it's just not in fashion. Because it's not... Everything... To be honest, I don't like the fact that little kiddies are on phones and things like that, at that age. They just don't know how to play.

Q I was going to come to definitely some questions of your own points of view on this. So that's great. So we've covered a bit about technologies that you do use, and media and apps, and we've talked about Facebook. Is there anything else? Do you go to the cinema or anything like that?

- A No. Not usually. We have taken them to pantomimes and things like that, but when they're so young a lot of them don't like it. It goes dark and things like that. And when you've got 20 of them, and they start wanting to go home, it's not good. So yes. We do try, but you always get one.
- Q Of course. And are there any technologies or media that you'd like to use if you could, here?
- A No, not really. If I'm totally honest. No. I'm not...
- Q That's fine. Interesting to know in itself, that's great. So this is about barriers. I think the main barrier you've identified is just that not everybody's on Facebook, and you've overcome that using mobile phone...And is there any other barrier? Presumably now most people are using a mobile phone, is that right?
- A Yes, usually.
- Q And are there other uses of technology or media in other aspects of the organisation like your own record keeping or anything like that?
- A Yes, actually, now it's all done online. Whereas we used to have a little book with everybody's name in and when their date of birth and stuff. Everything has to go online now.
- Q Okay, so you yourself have had to...?
- A Well, Diana's obviously the one who does all... Yes. But I find it awkward really because you get them saying, well... I don't like it. To be honest, now we go, they have to just register, and we can have kids from miles away because the names come to the top of the list. Whereas you used to just have... And your own kids in this area don't get in.
- Q So that's problematic, you feel.
- A I'm not keen on it, to be honest.
- Q Almost it's too connected.
- A It is really.
- Q Thank you. So now just looking at Alison, do you find at all with her that she's got any...? I know she's very new to the group so perhaps it hasn't arisen yet, whether you'd have taken photographs of her or whether you can recollect any interaction with her?
- A We won't have yet because as I say, she didn't start until September. So she's going into Winter Wonderland trip, that will come into it. We've not really had, since September we haven't really had days out. We've not had a day out. So like next week is party week, so probably we will take photos of them next week.
- Q And use a bit of technology for any music or anything like that?
- A Yes, probably. We usually have an iPad or something. Phone or something.
- Q Right. And what sort of music will you...?

A Well, we usually try and have Christmas and princess music and things like that, they like all that.

Q Yes. Whose job is it to select that?

A Actually, we used to have CDs, but now younger ones, they're all up in... The young girls, they know what's what, so they get it all up on phone, and I usually just bring a little speaker.

Q That's great. So games that you might play that might use music, would that be things like musical chairs or...?

A Yes, things like that. Yes, we do. Musical bums and things like that.

Q Do you ever get the sense that, in the craft activities, that Alison, or indeed any of the other children, are drawing on knowledge that they have that might have come through technologies and media, experiences outside of the Rainbows? I know it's a pretty open-ended question. I just wondered if you have any sense of that.

A I wouldn't say I've got any sense of that. Because you usually find we usually give an example and you can bet your life they copy what we do. They do tend to do that. And if one does one thing then they all copy that. No, I won't honestly say they would really. No.

Q Not in the sort of princess-y stuff or anything?

A No. We plant the seed and they sort of go from there, I think.

Q So now this is your own perceptions about technology and media in general. And what's behind those, really, what's influencing your views. And you've already indicated that you don't feel totally 100% positive about technology. Do you feel positive and negative? Do you have some sort of balance or what do you feel?

A If I'm totally honest I don't like... Well, within reason. So there's a lot of things that are really good like learning to use the internet, learning to use a computer. Fine. But I don't like the fact that I find a lot of parents just give them their phone with whatever on. YouTube, you name it. Just to keep them quiet. And I honestly don't... I mean, for example, we've got a friend who she's really doesn't like anything like that.

And the son is only allowed to watch telly once a week, which is on a Sunday, well I was laughing. There's only Antiques Roadshow and so the poor little devil, what can he watch? But we went out for a meal with him, and the difference in him. His imagination. And she said at school teachers have commented. Because his imagination was brilliant.

He had a backpack, as soon as we got there he got his cowboys and indians out, and he was playing. And it was just lovely to see that he wasn't sitting with a phone or an iPad in front of him. I loved it. I thought...

Q So he's playing with models or something like that?

A Little cowboys and indians, then he put them away. Then he was making something else and he got a little tin with Sellotape, and everything in it. Just



making things and using his own imagination to do it. And then another table was this little boy about the same age, with a phone, snapping and snarling at his mum and dad. Not eating his meal. And I just thought...

Q Sorry, did you say the ages of those lads, roughly?

A Five. Well, I would say he might have been a year older, probably, this little boy. But the son is five. And she just... I know it's a bit, once a week, poor little devil, he'll not know what's happening in the world, but he does. He does. And he's different. He lives on a farm so he's used to getting home from school and just doing something basically. Instead of getting stuck in front of the telly, in front of a computer, in front of a phone. I don't... No, not all right.

Q And do you think that technologies are important for children in any way, in general terms?

A Yes, I definitely do think it is important. It's the way of the world, isn't it? But within reason I just think some parents just give it to them to keep them quiet. And same in front of... Letting them play games that are just too old for them, and these computer games. But then in other ways, like they do, they learn other things by having them that... Yes, I just think within reason.

Q So do you feel that it might be...? So you talk about parents not perhaps taking responsibility.

A That's it, basically.

Q Do you feel it's maybe something that should be learnt in school, or is there a kind of leisure application for it, but done perhaps when they're a bit older? Do you have a feeling of when it might be appropriate?

A I do think it should be older. You actually see kids as young as three with their mum's phone, going around the shops. And I just think, you know? It's just to keep them quiet. And then they don't... I was talking to some, well, this lady, and she was saying even with books, they didn't know how to turn a page. They were trying to swipe to turn a page of a book. That is ridiculous. Do you know what I mean? It's just not normal, is it? Well it isn't for us, but will it be in years to come?

Q And you sound as though you're a bit shocked by that.

A Oh, I think it's awful. As I say, I'm not a big...

Q No. So is technology big in your life, or...?

A No. Not really. Obviously I've got two grown up kids, and they're never off the phone. It drives me insane.

Q Right. So it's already affecting you in that way.

A Yes. You're sat at a meal, a phone, and I just... You know, I don't like that. And I don't think they talk to each other like they used to. They don't communicate like they used to.

Q Out loud, do you mean?



- A Yes. Talking to each other. Even their friends, they can play these games with each other in bedrooms. So they don't go out and socialise. And I think that's half the problem, nobody socialises like they used to, do they?
- Q Yes. So for yourself, I think presumably you've got a phone, you do texting and stuff.
- A I have got a phone, but I'm not one who... I don't go on Facebook, I don't.
- Q Do you have anything to do with the Facebook group here?
- A No, not really. Diana does that. No, I don't really.
- Q No. Do you look at it at all? Would you just cast an eye over it? Or you literally don't open it from one week to the next?
- A I sometimes cast an eye over it if my friend does say, oh, so-and-so on Facebook, I might look at it like that. But not really. And not like I've got friends where we go away for a weekend and they're on it the whole time. Drives me insane.
- Q So a lot of what you... You're often mentioning personal experiences, personal observation here. Is anything else informing your view or is it mainly what you see and feel around you?
- A It's just what I see basically. Because sometimes I think it's a bit ignorant because I don't know this and I don't know that. But...
- Q I didn't mean to imply that at all by my question.
- A No, it just doesn't appeal to me at all. I used to be a hairdresser so I'm used to yacking. So I used to talk, do you know what I mean? But I don't think kids talk to each other like they used to. Some do. You can tell. Some kiddies do. But for instance I've got a nephew who's got twins, and one of them's got to go to speech therapy. And it's like my sister says, because they never talk to him. They're on their phones all the time. And I think that's trouble. They're too busy looking at what other people are doing in their lives.
- That's really interesting. So another concern some people have is the safety, privacy, data protection, that sort of thing. Does that concern you?
- A Oh, definitely. Yes. A lot of things have happened where they think they're talking to somebody and they're not, are they? I don't... There's that as well. But, you see, parents really should be monitoring it.
- Q And do you feel they're not sufficiently?
- A Well, saying that, they've got... When they're that age they're usually 13 and up, aren't they, that it's happening to. They've got their own phone anyway. So you can't watch them 24 hours a day, can you?
- Q No. So do you think that technologies and media are impacting positively in any way on children's lives, or is it negative mainly as well?
- A I think more negative. Definitely more negative. Because it's like they see things and it's not real, is it? And to them it is. And it's... There's things happening.

Like, because I mean, I didn't like my son having these games. He had them because everybody else had them. But like they were going around chopping everybody's head off. And then next minute they get, oh, but in real life that doesn't happen, does it?

Q And do you feel that was...? Was this when he was younger?

A Yes, he's older now, but this was when he was a teenager type of thing.

Q Okay, yes. And did you feel that had a bad effect on him, or...?

A Not so much on him because I did monitor him. I didn't allow him to go on it all the time. I used to just go and switch it off.

Q What, the internet off or the...?

A Well I would either pull the internet out, and he'd think he'd lost his thing. But yes, I didn't like it. But you see, Evan, it's only been more recent that they have it with earphones where they're talking to each other and things. So it wasn't like that when Evan was that age.

Q Do you see that as a slightly better thing, that they might communicate, or is that also dangerous, or of concern to you?

A It is a concern, I think. I think it is a concern. I think it's just getting out of hand totally.

Q So do you feel that there's any link between technologies and media on the one hand, and children's emotions and wellbeing on the other? You mentioned when you were talking about your nephew and then the one on the other table was upset or something.

A I do think, I used to notice when Evan, when they were on it, it made him aggressive. When he'd been on it.

Q Afterwards?

A Yes. And you see, with other kids, I've got two ladies, and her grandson, and all of a sudden he's chucked it because he's died. You know, got killed on it. I don't know, I don't think it does them any good actually.

Q Yes. So you feel there's an unwelcome display of emotion and aggression?

A I do, yes.

Q Do you think it can have any positive effects for them, wellbeing? Just thinking perhaps not just about gaming but other things like being able to take photographs, being able to communicate with relatives?

A Oh definitely, in that respect I do think it is. Like now, if you've got relatives who live abroad, you can talk to them as if they were... And things like that. You can Facetime people, if you're a bit upset, you can Facetime, and things like that. I do think there are positives with things like that. I definitely think it's a good thing.

Q That's great. Do you think...? The question is, do you think certain types of playing with technologies like gaming or doing a CBeebies app, or something

like that, I don't know, there's different things, there's different apps, are they going to lead to different outcomes in terms of whether children are going to enjoy it or not?

A Oh definitely. When my kids were younger, they don't have it now, but we used to have a geo safari. Do you remember that?

Q No, I don't.

A It was like more or less before all computers and everything. Well, computers were there, but it was like a thing and you used to put cards in it. And it was really educational. It was really good. And I know they do have things like that for kiddies, don't they, now? Younger end. Like Leapfrog.

Q I was going to say, that Leap pad thing.

A And then I saw one televised on telly the other day, and that was very much like geo safari. And it was educational and it would teach them ways of the world. My kids knew all capital cities, they knew flags, everything, because they went on that. So I do think there's a lot of positives in good things like educational basically.

Q So leaving gaming on one side, there's that sort of thing. How about TV? I suppose that is a technology, and it's come on so much. You've got access to all sorts of different content, you've got Netflix, you've got the BBC and all that sort of thing, and also you can access things on some people's TVs like YouTube and things like that. How do you feel about those sorts of things?

A I think that's fine. I think as long as they're watching what they should be watching at their age group basically. And doing... Because we have Netflix and things like that, and obviously... But I do think it's like younger children, if you're thinking Alison's age, then you've got to monitor it, haven't you?

Q Yes. And does that mean, just going into that a little bit, does that mean you're there with them, or you've just checked out what they're watching before you leave them?

A Well you can have a parent lock and things, can't you? You can have parental locks. We used to have one on ours.

Q Do you think they get bored with certain types of technology or media or websites or apps or games? Do you think some are more boring than others? Can you see some are more enjoyable for them than others?

A I wouldn't really know that actually because obviously I'm not that age group.

Q Or in your experience with your family? Your children?

A I won't say they were boring. I know they were... But it wasn't boring what they had. But I think they tended to want to go for more gamified.

Q Did they ever get to a point where they were bored of the games or did you feel that you had to bring them off, that they never got to a natural moment of taking themselves off because they were bored?

- A No, they never took themselves off it. No, I wouldn't say they would. Because they're just getting to another level and another level, and another level.
- Q Right, so you felt it was drawing them on to going deeper, rather than come away, and come to a natural conclusion for that session.
- A Yes. They would have got... Well, Lucy never went on it, but Gemma did.
- Q Right, okay.
- A She was never into that.
- Q Yes. That's interesting. Do you mean she didn't do gaming or she didn't use technology?
- A No, she didn't do gaming. She does now, obviously she's never off her phone, she's that age. But no, Lucy never did. She was always crafty. Made crafts.
- Q Hands on.
- A Into drama and everything. So no, she didn't tend to do technology much.
- Q Did she watch anything? Thinking about drama, was she watching stuff to inspire her?
- A Oh, she'd watch videos. Yes, she watched videos.
- Q Was that on YouTube or TV?
- A No, TV. DVDs, that type of thing.
- Q Yes, I don't know what ages they are but...
- A Yes, she's 25 now actually.
- Q So do you think certain types of technology lend themselves to more sociable play to kids or do you feel that almost all types of technology, as you mentioned earlier, a lot about they're not socialising as a result?
- A I don't think they are socialising at all.
- Q No. So you feel that most technologies, TV, film...?
- A Well obviously they've got... If they're watching a video or... Then they can talk about that. But I don't think, no. As I said, films and things like that, they can talk about what they've seen and things like that. But no, I'm not a big...
- Q No. And do you have any more thoughts of anything I haven't asked you that would be relevant to creativity, play, our study? Your organisation?
- A Not our organisation, no.
- Q Is there anything in the badge to do with...? I was going to ask you that, you know when they bring in stuff for the badges do they ever use photographs as evidence?
- A They do sometimes. Yes. They do bring their own photos.
- Q Do they print them out or does it just...? Are you checking photos on a parent's

camera kind of thing?

A Sometimes they do show, but usually they've printed it out.

Q Oh, have they? Okay.

A Yes, printed it out.

Q And how about they did their price [?] last week, some of them. I wondered about parents taking photographs.

A They did take photos for that, yes.

Q So again, sometimes the parents...

A Like you said, that side of it, it is...

Q Yes. But it's the parents using the technology, not the children themselves.

A Yes, I suppose. It is.

Q Yes.

A It is.

Q That is absolutely brilliant, Brenda, thank you ever so much.