

Q = Main interviewer (Cath)

Q2 = Second interviewer (Beth)

A = Mum (Diane)

B = Dad (Julian)

C = Child 1 (Simon, boy, 8)

D = Child 2 (Harvey, boy, 6)

Q This should be OK. So where can I put this so it's not so intrusive? I could just rest it here if that's OK and point it towards you because I don't want to make the mistake of just getting me talking. OK, so I think part of the project involves sort of their being a child in the family that is sort of the focus of the project, but both children can sort of take part which is why we've got consent forms for both of them and then we'll sort of make a decision about who is sort of the child that it's focused on. But because we've sort of still not quite decided that yet I think if we talk about both Harvey and Simon. What kind of play do they sort of typically like doing on a typical day? What type of play do they typically sort of engage in?

A So let's say Harvey, he's much more about playing with his cars, getting the train track out. He got that game out there before, it's like a little assault course. And he'll make up stories and he's quite happy to play on his own, like before school he'll get different toys out every morning and play with something different. Whereas Simon would much more read a book or listen to a CD story. They both like playing outside, they love going out on their bikes, we're quite lucky because there's a playing field opposite there, so we just....

Q Ah right, so they can just take themselves. Or do you go with them?

A Well I go with them now but I would think in another year or so I think it will be fine for them. Because it's just the university, but there's not much traffic you see, especially this time of the year when there's no schools around.

Q Yeah.

A So yeah, I mean sometimes they'll sit and colour, but not so much. Harvey will initiate that and Simon would join in, but it's definitely Harvey who initiates the sort of quieter play.

Q So do you find that sort of one of them will start doing an activity and then the other one will come and join in?

A Yeah, yeah definitely yeah – and I reckon I've got half an hour before they fight about it! I mean if it was up to them they'd be only watching telly and playing on computers all the time. But as I say I am really quite strict with it at times.

Q So do you have kind of like screen time rules about....

A Yes. So we did have a contract that we've written up and then they have to earn it, and we all signed it. But then we decided it needed re-writing because....

Q Have you got a copy of that?

A Oh I threw it away.

Q Oh no! I'd love to see that.

A There was a loophole in it, Simon pointed it out. And my husband who is obviously a lawyer did comment, and he said 'actually he's right Diane, the way you've written it up it does mean that they can have more than you're sort of aiming for'. But basically things like making sure they clean their teeth, brush their hair, they're ready for school would earn them 10 minutes. But I think we're going to go back to a marble jar at the moment. I definitely need some sort of incentive for them to earn screen time, and I get them to do jobs like pairing up socks and.... you know.

Q OK. So screen time is sort of like privileged?

A Yeah.

Q Is that because they want to do it the most?

A Unless I'm tired! But yeah, no generally it is, yeah. They'd probably bring some toys out and play – well Harvey would definitely bring some toys and play at the same time. But last night, they hadn't had a great day so last night we did watch telly but I chose what we watched. So we watch Serengeti, you know the natural history thing that's been on recently, and actually they both liked watching that so...

Q Would you say what kind of balance there is between your child's indoor – or both your children's indoor and outdoor activities?

A I think it's really weather dependent. We've got quite a big garden but it's not really child-friendly, we're going to get it landscaped. So it's a slope basically, so at the moment it's not great for them. But obviously they do play sports so.....so at the moment probably more indoor. Well it's been the summer so actually we've been away a few weeks so they've hardly watched any telly, we've been out all the time. But yeah it just depends, we do go out walking the dog a lot in Derbyshire, go down to Rivelin Valley. (Beeping sound)

Q Everything's beeping.

A Because it's been off for ages.

Q Yeah. I suppose that's quite good if you want to sort of have a morning without screen time, you can say 'oh the electricity's gone off so you can't do it'.

A But actually this morning they weren't watching the telly.

Q No.

A Harvey got up and said 'Mummy, it's 7 minutes to 6' and I said 'yeah it's too early, you're not watching telly, go back to bed'. And after a little stop he did go and play in his bedroom, he was listening to some of those really long CDs.

Q Oh yeah.

A And then they didn't ask again.

Q No.

A So they won't come and just put it on.

Q They won't repeatedly ask or anything like that?

A No. They might have a tantrum at the time but then they'll accept it.

Q So do you find it's quite a flash point, sort of computer time or TV time or things like that? Does that get argued over more than other toys would you say?

A Yeah definitely, yeah. But as I say...

Q Why is that? Is it because who is using it, or is it an argument for taking turns, or is it....

A Well yeah they argue over taking turns. I don't know is it....I don't know, is it when they're tired that they actually do need a bit of downtime and actually watch it? So if I think that's the case I'll play something with them, rather than just leave them. That's why we play a lot of cards or board games.

Q Yeah. So you do like, as well as Harvey and Simon playing together and presumably with friends as well, you do sort of family game time and things like that.

A Yeah. So like next weekend we've got 6 families coming over for a BBQ, but my plan is if the weather's nice we're going to go and have a mass game of cricket or rounders with all the kids for a few hours, and then we'll come back and have the BBQ.

Q Oh that sounds brilliant.

A So they get to play and mess about with grown-ups, which I think they all want a little bit don't they?

C Mum!

A I'm just answering some questions.

C Oh the man's coming [electrician needs to speak to Diane]

A Have you just seen him?

C Yeah.

A Sorry, I'd better just go and talk to him.

Q No, no that's fine, that's fine.