Parent 1:

(silence) Hi.

Parent 2:

Hi.

Parent 1:

How are you.

Parent 2:

I'm okay, how are you doing?

Parent 1:

Good, thank you.

Parent 2:

We waiting for other people?

Parent 1:

I guess so.

Parent 2:

Yeah.

Moderator 1:

Hi, good afternoon everyone.

Parent 4:

Hi everyone.

Moderator 1:

Hi, welcome. We're just going to wait a few minutes for everyone to join, and hopefully [inaudible 00:02:01]. Administrator, how many parents are we expecting for this group?

Administrator:

We should have a full house.

Moderator 1:

Okay, great. So six? Or five?

Administrator:

Yep. [inaudible 00:02:21]

Moderator 1:

Welcome [Parent 3 00:02:27], we're just waiting for everyone to join, and we'll get started in a couple minutes.

Parent 3:

Thank you.

Moderator 1:

Hi [inaudible 00:02:46], welcome. We're just waiting for everyone to arrive, so I hope we will get started soon.

Parent 4:

Okay, that's fine. Thank you. [crosstalk 00:02:54]

Parent 1:

Parent 1? Would you open the far left window [inaudible 00:03:09]

Parent 1:

[inaudible 00:03:09]?

Parent 4:

Probably.

Parent 1:

[inaudible 00:03:26].

Moderator 1:

Okay, so I think we're all here. Good afternoon, thank you everyone for joining and taking some time out to talk with us. I know everyone filled out the crisis survey already. And the purpose of this group is to really go a little bit more in depth, and hear everyone's experiences, especially as it pertains to technology, and really just say your insight. So, before we get started, maybe we can just go around, introduce ourselves, and maybe just say the ages of your kids. So my name is Moderator 1, and I'm a neuropsychologist with [inaudible 00:04:19] Network. So I'll just go around the screen, because we're a big group today. So Parent 1, you want to introduce yourself?

Parent 1:

Sure, my name is Parent 1. I'm a parent of a seven year old and a nine year old.

Moderator 1:

Seven year old and nine year old. Okay. Welcome, thanks for joining.

Parent 2:

Is it for me?

Moderator 1:

Yeah, I was trying to read your name. Hi.

Parent 2:

I know, I get that... I've had that my whole life. My name is [Parent 2 00:04:47] [inaudible 00:04:47]

Moderator 1:

Parent 2, hi. Nice to meet you.

Parent 2:

Nice to meet you. And I am the parent of a 21 year old, and a 16 year old.

Moderator 1:

Okay, so you'll be able to give us a little bit of an older perspective. Welcome.

Parent 2:

Yeah.

Moderator 1:

Parent 3.

Parent 3:

Hi, I'm Parent 3. I have an eight year old daughter and a six year old son. And my daughter is the one who's been involved with the Healthy Brain Network.

Moderator 1:

Okay, great. Thanks Parent 3. Parent 5?

Parent 5:

Hi, I have three girls. They're 12, 10 and five.

Moderator 1:

Okay, great. Okay. And then Parent 6, is that your name? I think you're on mute.

Parent 6:

Yep, sorry. Sorry.

Moderator 1:

I [inaudible 00:05:40] hi, we're just going around and introducing ourselves. If you could just say your name, and maybe the ages of your kids.

Parent 6:

Sure, sorry. It's Parent 6, and my kids are... Let me try to think a second. 16 and 22.

Moderator 1:

16 and 22. Okay, great. Welcome. And then-

Parent 6:

16, 19...

Moderator 1:

Oh, I missed the 19. Okay. Welcome Parent 6. And then last but not least, we have Parent 4. Hi.

Parent 4:

Hi. So I'm Parent 4, and I have two sons, 15 and 17.

Moderator 1:

15 and 17, okay. Great. We have a nice, wide range here today. Welcome everyone. So before we start discussing, I was hoping we could do a quick exercise. So if you have paper and pen nearby, maybe just take a couple minutes and let's try to write down a couple of positive ways that you've noticed that technology has impacted your kids during the pandemic. And then, also try to identify a couple of negative ways that technology has impacted your kid during the pandemic. So let's take a couple minutes to think about that, and then we'll get into the discussion. (silence)

Moderator 1:

And then, once you've done that, try to circle whichever group you think has had the bigger overall impact. So have the positive influences of technology had a bigger overall impact, or has the negative group had a bigger overall impact.

Parent 1:

Moderator 1, not to be staffed, but when you say technology, are you talking about internet technology, or just like cars?

Moderator 1:

That's a very question. So I am speaking more about like internet technology, as it applies to education, social media use, and gaming [inaudible 00:09:33].

Parent 1:

Thank you.

Moderator 1:

[inaudible 00:09:34] Yeah,, thanks for clarifying. Okay, so by a show of hands, how many people here circled the positive group as having the bigger overall impact. Parent 1, Parent 3, Parent 2, Parent 6. Okay. All right. And then who circles the negative group as having the bigger overall impact? Parent 5. I can't see your response Parent 4, oh, but... Okay, so you're saying the negative, the overall negative group. Thumbs up. Okay. So it seems like we definitely have some different perspectives here, and that's something I really want to emphasis, is that from the groups that we've been doing, we've definitely noticed that a lot of parents have a lot of overlapping[inaudible 00:10:27], but then we really encourage you to also bring your own unique experience in, because I think some parents express how their children are doing, and if you are having a different experience, that's something that's very important to voice.

Moderator 1:

So I'm going to throw the first question out there. So I'd like to focus a little bit on how technology has impacted your children's education. And so, if you could speak a little bit about how did they use technology for their education prior to the pandemic. Did you find it to be beneficial, did you have concerns about using technology before the pandemic? And then, since the pandemic, how have they used technology and what parts [inaudible 00:11:24] be beneficial, and what concerns have you had? So I know there's a lot of parts to that question, but feel free to answer whatever you like. So does someone want to start us off?

Parent 4:

Yeah, I can start. I'm Parent 4.

Moderator 1:

Oh, okay.

Parent 4:

I'm sorry.

Moderator 1:

Parent 4 and then Parent 5. Yeah, Parent 4.

Parent 4:

Okay. So you had a couple of questions, but I will just the negative aspects of the [inaudible 00:11:57] this pandemic and using all the technology and schooling from home has just thrown out all time constraints, in terms of bed time, meal time. And I think it upsets me more than it upsets my children. So they have a hybrid schedule at school, so the technology is a very big part of their school day, even more so than it was before, because they didn't have Zoom class before. And yeah. So that's how it has affected, that's a negative aspect of it. And they work around it. They make it work for them. I think it's me, it bothers me because it's so much more than I would have liked it to be, in terms of being big on the screen and using the computers all the time. But the positive is, they're communicating more verbally. So that's a good thing. And so I think that is helping them develop their...

Moderator 1:

How do you notice their communicating more verbally [crosstalk 00:13:15]

Parent 4:

Yeah, they have to... I'm in presence of them when they're in school remotely, and there's just a lot of conversation. Especially my son, who participated in this program. He even reached out to his teachers to say, "Call on my more." Because otherwise he won't. I think I may have... Can you still hear me, because something just happened on my screen.

Moderator 1:

Yeah, we can hear you. Yeah yeah, we can hear you.

Parent 4:

Okay. So yeah, so he asked to be called on more, because I think he realized that he was getting lost in the process, being remote. And it's a big adjustment from when it first started. But yeah. [crosstalk 00:13:58]

Moderator 1:

Okay, so what I'm hearing from you is on the negative side, you notice it definitely messed with their routines and their sleep, and that's something that has impacted you a lot. Then on the positive side, it seems like you're having good verbal communication with him, and he's actually advocating a little bit with his teacher, which is really nice.

Parent 4:

Yeah.

Moderator 1:

Okay. Okay. Anyone else? How has technology been used in the pandemic? Yes, Parent 6. Oh, sorry. We were going to do Parent 5 first, and then we'll get to Parent 6. Yeah.

Parent 5:

Okay, I remember the first part of the question was how much technology they used before the pandemic, and my kids really didn't use technology. They might have had computers once a week at school, but it was kind of like a fun class. So it was kind of a jump from nothing to full time technology. And then, what was the second part of your question? I'm sorry.

Moderator 1:

So then, did you have any concerns before? And then, how did that change during the pandemic, benefits or concerns?

Parent 5:

I did have concerns before, because I've noticed especially my 10 year old has a really hard time transitioning away from technology, and kind of obsesses over wanting to check her email all the time, or see if somebody texted her back. And she doesn't even have a real phone. It's like an old Ipod that she can use as a phone. So for her, it's been more negative, because she kind of gets stuck and wants to always be on a screen. The one day, she has a DOE Ipad, but the one day she somehow played Lego Friends for seven hours. Like I don't know how it happened. I was working at home with her, but it just happened. So things like that were happening, that were concerning. That she was able to kind of circumvent whatever protection was supposed to be in place to keep kids focused on what they're supposed to be doing during the school day.

Parent 5:

It's actually back, we're in a better place now, because they're back in school full time, or in the hybrid for one, but the others are in school. So they are using technology at school, but it's more limited and there's more kind of person to person contact, so it's better now than when it was totally remote, like from last March until October.

Moderator 1:

Right. How has it been trying to manage their screen time, and kind of scale back, now that they are back in school?

Parent 5:

We just have to be really strict, because even though it's easy to say like, "Okay fine, just do this one thing." Five minutes becomes, "Oh, two more minutes." And it becomes an argument. So they really don't have screen time during the week, unless it's like a class they're taking and they have to use it. And on the weekends, there's more flexibility. But they're doing different things now, and I've noticed she's more into drawing now, or she'll sit and make bracelets. I feel like her personality is just one that gets kind of sucked into screen, so once we took it away, it was helpful for her.

Moderator 1:

Okay, thanks Parent 5. Parent 6, do you want to share?

Parent 6:

Sure. My main comment has less to do with amount of technology time, because my kids are a little bit older, not that that's an excuse. But they're going to be on social media for hours anyway. So, for me, being in school and using technology that way, sure it has increased the amount of screen time, but for me, what I've noticed, relatively anyway in our situation, is that school has, at least in my daughter's case, she takes it a little bit less seriously. Or had been, when there is no teacher there. I mean, there is a teacher there, but it is just, as we all know, one more removed from responsibility, from accountability. You can so easily instant message your friend and ask what the answer is. Not that she does that, but I'm saying, it's just wide open. There's a lot more kind of on an honor system.

Parent 6:

And as a result, what I have seen is just less interest in school, and less commitment. And less accountability in general. So that's a big negative. I however was one of the ones who raised my hand and said it's overall positive, because I guess that's a different question, but-

Moderator 1:

No, no. I'm interested to hear the positives also now. Just really how technology has... How you've noticed it impact their education. But yeah, so...

Parent 6:

Right. But I would say that this is what we had to do during this year, and my daughter would not have... I'm mainly talking about her right now. She would not have been able to get through the year without being able to communicate with friends that way. So any problems that I have seen over the past year, in terms of education, they just take such a second... They take a way back seat to me, to her mental health, and her... I don't want her to fail, but at the same time, this is not normal times. Technology has made it possible for her to continue to go to school, but more important, to be with her friends. [crosstalk 00:19:38]

Moderator 1:

Yeah, so how does she engage with her friends through technology?

Parent 6:

I mean, she Facetimes them all day long. She makes Tik Toks with them. She makes music with them. She draws with them. She watched Netflix with them. She has started a club completely using online, or remotely. So yeah. Also, I think dealing with your teachers only through email and tech has maybe even encouraged those relationships. I would say, in the past year. So those are all big positives to me, that outweigh some real negatives [inaudible 00:20:24] say. But yeah.

Moderator 1:

Thanks for sharing that, Parent 6. Who wants to go next? Parent 1?

Parent 1:

So, my seven year old has been overloaded by Ipad usage. She's been on hybrid learning, and that means that it's been Ipads even when they're in school. She has gone from a really happy, enthusiastic kid, to hating school and being kind of depressed. And I think a lot of that is the overuse of technology. I also raised my hand that there's more pros, and that might be because I'm an optimistic person. But technology has made school possible, so I think that overall, it's a positive thing.

Parent 1:

My daughter is not drawn to technology. She's at an age where, because she didn't have a lot of technology before COVID, it's not her default. So there are couple of things that she uses technology for, that she uses the internet for, but mostly she's [inaudible 00:22:01] when it's not school time.

Moderator 1:

Okay. So all of that extra Ipad use that you're referring to is really for school purposes? And you've noticed it has [inaudible 00:22:13].

Parent 1:

Yeah, there are a couple things that are not school use, like she watches maybe a movie once a month, and we are watching a television show that we watch about maybe another two hours a month. She goes through periods where she'll do Duolingo. But it's not really... She hasn't done it for the last month. Yeah.

Moderator 1:

Okay, okay. Thanks for sharing that, Parent 1. Who wants to go next? Parent 2?

Parent 2:

[crosstalk 00:23:04] So, both my kids have been part of the Healthy Brain Network study, and they're both home right now. My 16 year old is... Before COVID, the school issued them a Chromebook, everybody gets a Chromebook. So it was something that they had kind of transitioned the kids to anyways, to [inaudible 00:23:33] turn it in, and checking online through Google Classroom for their work, and Power School and all that stuff. So they've always been very technology dependent at the school. And he would use... He'd be on the computer a lot anyways, because he loves computer games, and also he talks... But he won't invite people over, but he'll talk to his friends via Discord chat, or something, or online while they play these games.

Parent 2:

I've noticed with him, that he was much more comfortable... This school is actually hybrid now if you want. He just got his first vaccine, he has really bad food allergies and asthma, so we were concerned about putting him back. Plus he has crazy anxiety, so him being at the... He went for a few days at hybrid school. His IEP manager thought it would be a good idea. But he just said it was so depressing, because the teacher, their attention was split between trying to sort of engage with the kids that were there in the classroom, and he's like, "And nobody wanted to be there." And also engage with the kids at home. So it's very... I don't envy the teachers, it's a really difficult time.

Parent 2:

So he just said, "I'd rather do school at home. Besides which, I can just do it in my pajamas. I don't have to do anything." So he, in terms of using the computer now, he still is on the computer a lot, but he doesn't... Like he actually said something really interesting the other day. He's like, "I started reading this online graphic novel, and I'm not playing as many games. Which is really crazy. I'm not playing as many games." And I was like, "No, that's great. You're actually reading, you're engaging."

Parent 2:

With my older daughter, she actually went back to school because of COVID. She had taken a leave of absence and was working in the city. And she came home and was like, "I might as well go back to school." And she's been doing really, really well. I mean, but in terms of technology usage before and after, she's 21, she's always on her phone. My son really isn't interested in social media. But she is obsessed. So when she's not in class online, she'll be making Tik Toks with her friends, or doing all that kind of, like as you were saying Parent 6, all those sort of things that I'm like, "God, I'm old. I don't understand anything." But she also sort of introduced us all to Jack Box games, so it's like over Thanksgiving, we were able to spend time with out family who we would normally see, through these games and online through Zoom, like playing these games that are electronic games, that you can just have people sign into like you would Zoom.

Parent 2:

So it's positive and negative. They're isolating more. I can tell that... My son was like, he calls it fake school. I mean, he's a sophomore this year, he hasn't really had a real high school experience. So he doesn't really know what's going on. But he asked me, he's like, "Please don't make me go back full time until next school year." And I was like, "Okay." Anyway. [crosstalk 00:26:53]

Moderator 1:

Yeah, no. No, you definitely did. It's interesting to hear the perspective of older kids who were [inaudible 00:27:01] a little bit more before, and how it has been such a crazy change. And it seems like they've been able to moderate it [inaudible 00:27:11] self monitor themselves a little bit. Interesting. I mean, they're older [inaudible 00:27:15]

Parent 2:

He also... Like I'll have to tell him... There's been times where he's, after school, gone off and I've woken up in the middle of the night, and he's on his computer playing games. I'm like, "Dude, it's 3:00 in the morning. You have school in the morning. What are you doing?" He's like, "Oh, whoops." It's hard to say no screens in your room, when that's school.

Moderator 1:

Right, yeah. The boundaries are a little blurrier.

Administrator:

I had a quick question. So for Parent 2, I think it was on Monday, I'm not sure Moderator 1 if you were in that focus group, but there was one particular focus group, where all the moms were telling us about Discord. And how it has such a negative impact on their child. They were talking about issues with cyber security, and the fact that schools have their children using Discord, but it has had a much more negative impact on their child. So Parent 2, of you, since you mentioned it, I wanted to know... And Moderator 1, I hope this is not like jumping the gun, but I just wanted to know, for you Parent 2, just your thoughts on Discord. Maybe because your son is older, compared to the other moms, if that is the reason why there's a difference in how Discord is being used. Have you had any talks? And this is for all parents as well. Have you guys had any talks about cyber security with your kids, using social media or gaming and things like that?

Parent 2:

Yeah, with my son definitely, because I think that a lot of the games that they play, they also have Discord chats. But he's also had some negative experiences on Discord, where he actually saw somebody get killed. And he was so traumatized, and I said, "Listen, I can't police you 100% of the time. I'm not so much worried about you as what's coming into your world via the screen. It's not that I don't trust you, I don't trust other people." And I think he was so freaked out by seeing that, somebody had sent it up in one of their chats. I said, "You know, you stay out of those. You stay out of unmoderated rooms. You stay out of rooms that are for over 18, because you're 16. And just chat, only accept requests from people that you actually know in real life." Which he has done. I mean, at one point, there was somebody that was trying to talk to him. I'm like, "You don't know if this is a man or a woman. You have no idea if it's actually a 14..." This is when he was 14. "A 14 year old kid, or if it's like a 40 year old man." I'm like, "So you need to just kind of be very aware."

Parent 2:

And again, with the anxiety, really that's all it took, and he was like, "Oh my God." I mean, I wasn't trying to scare him, I was more warn him I guess. And sort of open his eyes. Like, "Yeah, okay. You're chatting with people, but you have no idea who you're talking to." So yeah, there is pluses and minuses, but I think now that he's older, he's a little bit more savvy. He knows to kind of stay away from things that are really going to mess with his head. And cyber security, I mean Zoom isn't... Like we're on Zoom right now, guys. And it's not all that secure. I do tell them to be aware, and don't hand out information, and don't tell people where you live, or don't do those quizzes and all that stuff. But after a certain point, you can't put the genie back in the bottle. Once the school has everybody online.

Moderator 1:

Yeah, it sounds like it's something where you guys have definitely communicated about it. So Parent 3, I still want to hear from you, but I just want to hear if anyone else, does anyone else have comments about cyber security, or any experiences that you've had, or challenges with your children? Okay, so Parent 3, if you could share with us a little bit about [crosstalk 00:31:21]

Parent 3:

Sure. So I would say before... Parent 4, do you have a comment about cyber security? Is that why you were thumbs up?

Parent 4:

You can go ahead. I can comment on that afterwards. Yeah. However you want to do it, yeah.

Parent 3:

Okay. So my kids, I would say, were so sheltered from technology beforehand, that I like to tell that when my daughter was two or something, we were at a party where people were watching a football game, and I just remember feeling like I needed to shield the TV from her, because we just thought screen time was so bad. And she's eight now, but she had really... She had watched movies with us, but barely ever used a computer. I mean, probably never independently before she had to kind of go to online learning. And we gave her a Chromebook. We gave our son a Chromebook.

Parent 3:

And she has just... She's just thrived. She's in school five days a week now, but when she was doing remote school, she was very comfortable. Because I think navigating the physical world is a little difficult for her, it was more comfortable for her to communicate over Zoom. And she gave everyone tech help, and she's learned to make videos and make slide shows. She's gotten really into learning technology, in what I think is a very positive way.

Parent 3:

And then my son, this year picked up chess, and he was able to do a lot of cool chess exercises on chesskid.com. I mean, another thing is that my daughter has never regularly woken up even at seven. Like she's been waking up basically between 6:00 and 6:30 her whole life. And before, she would wake up me and my husband at that time, and it was very difficult for her to occupy herself until a time that we wanted to wake up on the weekends.

Parent 3:

And now, she just... I mean, I don't know if this is terrible. She watches videos for like an hour, or makes videos, or researches whatever she's interested in. She's learned to Google stuff, she's learned to Google how to rotate her monitor. She's just really into it, and we get to sleep in. And I mean, I guess sometimes there's technology usage and we prefer that there wouldn't be, but overall, I think the whole thing has been really positive. And now they're back in school all the time, and I don't know. I'm pretty happy that they've learned these skills, and honestly it's a huge win for me and my husband to be able to sleep in on the weekends, and not be up at 6:30 every day.

Moderator 1:

That sounds great. Thank you for sharing, Parent 3. Yeah, that's definitely something we've been hearing from a lot of parents, that it does serve that function of keeping your kids independent, for parents who need to work, or for parents who need to sleep. So yeah, that makes a lot of sense. Okay, so the next part of thinking about how technology has impacted education that I'd like to talk about is, now that people are starting to return to school, or already have returned to school, what challenges do you anticipate in kind of adapting again, and reintegrating into a more normal schooling experience? Parent 6, yeah.

Parent 6:

I would say I would have thought that my daughter... Again, I'll talk about her, she's 16... Would have been delighted to go back, would have been overjoyed to see her friends everyday, and have the normal high school experience again. But it's really been mixed. For one thing, it's exhausting sitting in class all day now. Getting dressed, going to school, having to navigate all the social stuff that she could block out before. So we've been talking a lot about it, about what is this... She's not in school full time yet, just two days a week, but we've been talking a lot about what it'll be like in the fall, when she has to go every day. She agrees that it hasn't been 100% great. She's even come home a couple times and said, "I think I'll go back to staying home." And she's an extremely extroverted kid, so this is not like... That was a big surprise to me.

Moderator 1:

What aspects of it do you think have been challenging for her?

Parent 6:

I think it's the social, I think the having to be on all the time. I think she didn't even realize it pre-pandemic, how exhausting that is. And I think as a high school kid, maybe even particularly a high school girl, where it really matters how people look at you and what they think about you. I have two boys, I know they would agree it's the same for them. But yeah. I think just the sheer exhaustion of navigating the social stuff.

Moderator 1:

Yeah, it seems like she had a little break from that, and now going back, it's hard.

Parent 6:

Right. Right.

Moderator 1:

And sorry, now before we go on to challenges, I do just want to... Parent 4, I remember you had a comment about the cyber security.

Parent 4:

Oh, yes. Okay, thank you. So what I was just going to say is that I notice with my older son, who was in the Healthy Brain study, that he would get a lot texts about, "Oh, this is a great job opportunity, click here." He was getting a lot more information that looked like it had cyber security concerns, than he ever got before. So I don't know how that tied in with all of the Zoom school, and what's going on with the pandemic, but it just seems like that was increasing. I mean, it increased for me, but it also increased for him, where he had never said he had that kind of problem before.

Moderator 1:

Yeah, that's interesting. It's possible that people are taking advantage, knowing that people are online more than they ever were, and that also increases [inaudible 00:39:01] and stuff like that. Okay, so does anyone else want to comment on challenges? Going back to school. Parent 5, yes?

Parent 5:

Yes, this is sort of similar to what Parent 6 was saying. I thought my kids would be thrilled to be back in school. And my 12 year old is really not. She still is giving us a lot of pushback about how she got more work done at home. I think she liked the independence, so she could finish her work, and then sit and read. Like it was just... Her day was less stressful, in the sense that she had a lot more free time built into it.

Parent 5:

My younger two, the 10 year old and five year old, I think they thought it would be like it was in the past at school, but there's so many rules now, and at recess they're supposed to stick with their pods, so they can't see other friends. So stuff like that has been a challenge. And I think socially, it's hard especially for my 10 year old, because she is kind of in this one group of kids, and it's not a chance to mix with different kids, there's not different personalities. So that's really been a challenge. I mean, I think it'll get better as more people are coming back, but yeah. I thought it would be rainbows and so exciting, but it has been pretty stressful for everyone still.

Moderator 1:

Thanks Parent 5. Anyone else?

Parent 4:

Yeah. Hi, it's Parent 4. [crosstalk 00:40:25] I chose a hybrid schedule for both of my sons, because I knew that if they were home full time, the transition would be intense once they went back to a full time schedule. So they're used to being out and about, and so to them, their schedule hasn't changed, because both of their schools have hybrid schedule. One of my sons, my youngest son's school only has a hybrid schedule. My oldest son's school, I think they do have a full time schedule, but even with the hybrid schedule, there are so few students in class, that it wouldn't make sense for him to have a full time schedule. And I didn't want to make him feel he had to do that, when his brother wasn't.

Parent 4:

I'm hoping that they will both ease into the full time schedule, when that becomes the routine, hopefully in September. But I don't see, I don't really believe it will be a difficult situation. They're very active, so they are always out. They like to move and interact with their peers, and just be social. So I'm hoping the transition back to a full time schedule will be somewhat seamless.

Moderator 1:

Okay. Thanks, Parent 4. Parent 1?

Parent 1:

My daughter's been in school, hybrid, since October. So as things are opening up, they have gone back. They went from two classrooms to one classroom per class. And so, now that she's back in one class, I thought she would be happier to be in school, because there was less Ipad usage. But I think that she is just really down on school, and I'm not sure when that's going to change.

Moderator 1:

So you're seeing some leftover effects still, from being at home. So it didn't just go back. Anyone else have anything they'd like to share, about [inaudible 00:43:03] you anticipate, about as things start to go back to normal? Okay. So I think the last topic that I was hoping to discuss is to maybe shift away from the education focus a little bit, and I know people have brought up internet usage and social media usage through some of the other discussions. But thinking about... First of all, it seems like a few people here have been able to regulate usage, and haven't seen it turn into really taking over your kids lives. So maybe if you guys could share a little bit about how you've been able to regulate your kids' usage, and how you were able to keep technology to be a pretty positive experience for some of you. And then, also if you have any other concerns or benefits related to kind of internet usage, then I'd like to hear that as well. Parent 2?

Parent 2:

I don't know how to... I mean, in terms of limiting internet usage, I mean on his phone, I'm able to block a bunch of stuff, like sites and stuff like that, and also set timers. I have a program on his phone. But on his computer, it takes him forever to do his homework, my son. So I don't know if turning off the internet at 10 for him is a viable thing, because sometimes he's still doing homework then. And so, I wish there was a way, I wish I knew of a way to be, "Don't become Ted Kazinski. Get out of your room. Go outside. You need vitamin D." It helps that we have a dog, a fairly young dog that he plays with and walks. As everybody was saying, he doesn't want to go back to school. He hates school he says. He does well, the teachers like him. It's not that. It's just he doesn't like school. I think because socially... He has friends, but he has a lot of anxiety. And so he sort of takes everything in.

Parent 2:

But I wish I knew how to be better at limits. We say, "Come downstairs. Come see us. Let's do something." I mean, even if it's watching a movie together, it's like, "Let's play a game, let's do something. Let's go for a walk. Please help me do this with the yard." And he'll do it. And so will my older one. But yeah, I don't know. And in terms of, I don't know if you saw the chat thing I sent-

Moderator 1:

Yes, I did. Yeah.

Parent 2:

In some respects, the teacher, that really made me mad. I mean, I am concerned that he's sharing basically this screen with Twitter. And he took down, but then he blocked the kid, which I get it. You don't need to be able to read a teacher's personal tweets. But he shouldn't be posting that. And so, we're going to definitely have a conversation with the school about him violating privacies. But I was encouraged that my son was really angry about that. So knowing that there was an issue with people sharing his likeness and his name online. So, that's [inaudible 00:46:58].

Moderator 1:

Yeah, no. That's definitely an issue to spotlight. Parent 4, you want to say something?

Parent 4:

Oh yes. I forgot to take that hand down from before [crosstalk 00:47:12]

Moderator 1:

No, it's okay.

Parent 4:

But I do want to say... I don't regulate it anymore. Because in the beginning last year, when we were on lockdown, it was really their only form of socializing and communicating with their friends. And it just seemed, because it went on for so long, by the time I saw the need to kind of regulate stuff, the train was out of the station. What I do, because the place they [inaudible 00:47:50] is in the living room, that I try and regulate a little bit. So I'll spend most of my time in the living room. And they don't want to play with the PlayStation if I'm there. There's not much else that I can really do to regulate it. They do a lot of talking to their friends on their phone. So I'm okay with that. I'm okay with that. And that's just how we moved forward.

Parent 4:

My younger son has sort of started to regulate things more for himself. But my oldest son has always spent a lot of time on his phone, meeting with his friends in the group chats and things like that. It's not different that he does it, it's just the amount of time. And again, although we're not on lockdown, his ability to socialize to the extent that he would like to, is still somewhat limited. So I just give him leeway with that.

Moderator 1:

Okay. Yeah. No, that makes sense Parent 4.

Parent 3:

I would say that for our kids, at some point I realized my son was like playing chess puzzles and math games, whatever games that his class had introduced him to, a lot after finishing his school work. And then I just made sure that he knew that I was totally available for him. Like if he wanted to play Legos, if he wanted to read a book with me or something. And I think just... And I've noticed that he kind of doesn't do well... Again, this week is literally their first day of being in school five days a week, but he was home three days a week this whole time. And I just notice that he stopped doing that, and he would just come seek me out. And I think also our kids are young enough, that we can just shut their laptops. We can just shut it down, and they'll just move on with the rest of their lives.

Parent 3:

Like I think, for me, it's like when the pandemic began, I really didn't want to set limits on technology time, because I thought that would create the impression that technology was this amazing thing, and it was like your parents were just trying to keep you away from it, because obviously it's the best thing, and it's such a punishment to not be able to use it. And instead, just kind of make sure that everything else was still totally available, and I found that our kids choose that most of the time, when it's available.

Moderator 1:

Yeah, that's an interesting point, and I think also what you were saying, that you still, because they're so young, you still can have complete control and just shut it down or take it away. And they don't independently control it. Okay. So anybody have any other thoughts that we didn't discuss, or any insights into how it's impacted your kids, or thoughts for how we're going to move forward? Yeah, Parent 6?

Parent 6:

With older kids, again, I have almost no control over their technology. So I'm listening to these stories wistfully, because I would love to take away laptops, and even put programs on their computers or phones. As you said Parent 4, I think that train's left the station years ago, way pre-pandemic. But I also think that what's worked somewhat, a little bit, a tiny bit for us in the past, and I'm going to try to push going forward, is just to do the most obvious, basic thing, which is keeping as busy as possible. With other things. And whether that's chores, which is not a desirable thing, but get a job, or just push activity. And if possible, it would involve us too. Like actual fun family things. But that's not really what teenagers want to do, at least in my experience.

Parent 6:

[inaudible 00:52:40] time with us, but I know people who have done that. Who have just kept their kids incredibly busy in whatever way they can. And everything else has kind of taken care of itself, including technology, and really a bunch of other things too. They kind of all fall into place if the kids are just too busy to get bored.

Moderator 1:

Yeah. No, theoretically, that sounds like a very good idea. I think [inaudible 00:53:13] a lot of activities have been limited or not available, but going forward, that makes a lot of sense. Okay, so I just want to thank you all so much for taking some time to join us. This has been a really great group, and your insights are really helpful to us. And we really appreciate you spending the time with us. So I'm going turn it over to Administrator just to close it out. But it was really nice meeting you all. Thank you.

Administrator:

Hi everyone. So just like Moderator 1 said, thank you guys so much for the information that you guys gave us today. This group was definitely different from the other groups that we've had, just because like I mentioned before, a lot of parents had been talking about their difficulties that they've faced throughout the pandemic, and their child's internet usage. So the information that you guys gave us is definitely helpful with what we're trying to do. Which is not only just do research, but to host a town hall meeting where we can provide resources to those who are having difficulties, and even to those who aren't facing difficulties. So we really appreciate all the insight that you guys gave us today.

Administrator:

In regards to compensation, you should receive it no later than Friday. It comes via email, it's an Amazon gift card. So if you don't receive it by Friday, please do not hesitate to reach out to me, and we can get that situated.

Moderator 1:

All right, thank you all. Have a great rest of your afternoon. So nice to see you.

Parent 3:

Bye.

Parent 2:

Thank you, bye-bye.

Parent 5:

Thanks.

Parent 4:

Bye-bye.

Parent 6:

Bye.