INSIGHTS R US:
HOW TO GAIN BIG INSIGHTS FROM LITTLE INFLUENCERS

Brett W: Hello, everybody and welcome everyone out there to our first webinar of the year. We are very excited to have today a panel of us with experts on children's research, which will be the subject matter of our discussion. And those of you who are unfamiliar, my name is Brett Watkins, I'm the CEO of L&E Research and proud to have these folks here today with us. A couple of housekeeping items before we get started, beyond saying thank you to everybody here to join us, I want to just mention that we are recording today's webinar, so for you, and if you want to go back and review it later on, or if you have colleagues that you would like to send this off to, this will be posted to our website at L&E Research.com. If you're registered with us, we will also send this to you in an email along with a summary and as well as transcriptions, which are appreciatively done for us by Focus Forward, which is one of our tech partners and our transcription partners, so thank you to Focus Forward for doing that. A couple of other small housekeeping items. You will see at the bottom of your screen, you'll see a Q&A and a chat Q&A, we will be doing questions with all these folks here, kind enough to visit with us today at the end of the webinar so feel free to post your questions. Josh Bradley, who is our technical support person, who was also regularly working with our virtual facility clients and doing this online work is back there in the scenes cumulating all this together and will be teeing those up for us at a later date so Kelli and I can address those with the rest of our panel here today. And finally, if you want to have conversations with yourself, you will see that there is a chat function, you can feel free to say hello to your colleagues out there, little Q&A, little bit of information about yourself, your LinkedIn files and all things that are out there, feel free to share that amongst yourselves. And again, we see information specifically relates to a conversation that the panel thinks would be super interesting to adjust, we will certainly do that so without further ado, let's get into this. I want to introduce our speakers today who come to us from Sesame Workshop, which is the marketing team arm of Sesame Street and Nickelodeon, so start with Julie and Becca, why don't we start with you and just say hello to the audience out there and share what you'd like to share.

Becca N: I can go first. My name is Becca, I work as a research manager at Sesame Workshop. That means that we test content with little kids to see if they are learning the things that the workshop hopes they are learning from our content, often Sesame Street, but sometimes there are other shows too.

Brett W: Thanks, Becca.

Julie B: Hi, I'm Julie. I'm also a manager at Sesame Workshop, Becca and I are partners in crime - Talk to kids and bring them -

Brett W: Awesome. Pleasure to have you both here with us. Interesting today for those of you have noticed we have two Becca's on the screen, so we move on to Becca with Nickelodeon, Becca.

Becca N: Hi, I'm the second Becca so I'm a senior research manager and I've been with Nickelodeon for about two and a half years. I mostly do preschool content testing, so fairly similar to what Becca and Julie are working on but I also do work on product research and manage a lot of tracking studies.

Brett W: Awesome. Thanks for joining us today, Becca. And last but not least, our senior client solutions manager who's often working with clients just like these folks. Kelli Hammock, Kelli.

Kelli H: Hello, everybody. I have been with L&E Research for almost three years now. And really excited to be here today, really excited to be presenting with this wonderful panel we have.

Brett W: Awesome. Well, we're going to start with the Sesame team so interesting factoid that you all and Kelli shared 52 seasons of the Sesame Workshop and does the marketing arm for Sesame Street. 52 seasons of children's entertainment as I believe Kelli is kind enough to post if you're not familiar with Sesame Street you literally, like Oscar the Grouch have lived in a trash can for I guess apparently the last 50, over half a century. Really interesting stuff. Obviously, you all know a great deal on terms of working with children and understand its space and so want to dive into of course research design, and obviously the qualitative side of things. Becca, Julie, take it from here and Josh will help you out with your slides.

Julie B: Can everyone see it? I will dive in. The first part of our research process is always coming up with - At Sesame and I think, educational or not, I love to

prepare research at every stage - I just think it - At Sesame we function more like a client service, but any department can reach out to us and ask for research, whether it's digital or production or just - managing COVID. And so we're not necessarily the ones creating - Work with people to create - Questions we love to ask you, what do you want to know about this content or - Curriculum built in. Or are we trying to teach them a word or concept or what are we trying to look at and what is - In addition to learning, you want to look at engagement or appeal, as well as parent views or knowledge. Are their marketing questions related to the research and then what are the biggest things - Sorry, it seems my audio -?

Kelli H: We're having some audio trouble - You're cutting in and out.

Julie B: I'll try to keep going and see if it gets better. And if not, I'll take my headphones out and see if that works.

Kelli H: Sounds good.

Julie B: So understanding what - An example of this is, understanding what media families are using at home, and how we can produce content that would appeal to families - Habits, so once we align on this overarching goal [INAUDIBLE] we can then form a research objective and start to move ahead to designing this. In terms of study design, we like to think about who the audience of our content, who's the population? Are we looking for - cores? Is it older kids, younger kids, parents, really who is the population that we're interested in? And so once we figure out who we want to talk to, it then goes to the budget and the timeline [INAUDIBLE]. In terms of budgets, everything we do has a cost. And so how many kids we see, what we ask of parents, what we ask of kids, and all that sort of thing goes on. And so it's really important to know how much money is [INAUDIBLE] so we can design research of that budget. Additionally, timeline is really important. With timeline especially at Sesame Workshop production, they have puppeteers and actors and people ready on a certain day, we'd have to get that research done by that timeline. And that's what can we do within that timeline, what's realistic, that sort of thing. Once you have population, budget, timeline, now we can start thinking about the fun stuff so can we just talk to kids, we want to add parents, what's the best way to get this thing? A focus group? Or is it better just to do IDI's, surveys, more innovative ideas? And then lastly, can we get it all in real time or do we need to get a homework, something beforehand to get more - In terms of preschool, that is kind of our niche. And so I'm going to talk a little bit more about them. We find that - My audio still - Out my - So sorry. That makes it - Hope that makes it any better at all. Thank you. In terms of

preschoolers, like I was saying, individual interviews are really best because we find that they limit distractions, they allow each child to really be heard equally. We find that especially at this young age, we really tailor conversations with them so whether we have to probe differently, or show different images on screen, or change your language in the moment, we're really able to focus in and change our talking to them - Really gets us - Additionally, it's really great to have any caregiver perspective that includes any type of parent who cares for the child. And we see a lot of moms, but we really love dads, and they have really important views - Preschool does really well with like small videos in real time in the session, questions after, pictures, clips, and binders are really helpful to help guide that interview - More easily. And it's hard too, because they want to talk about anything, or they want to show us toys from a different brand or they - So to keep them on track it's really helpful to have visuals and clips and fun things to - Parents often need to be prompted and Becca will talk a little bit more about parents in a minute. But it's not about getting it right, if they're getting it wrong it's on us, our content isn't doing well, our content isn't teaching it right so let them answer the way they answer so we can make the best content possible so we have to remind parents of that a lot because it's just like instinctual to jump in and be you know that answer, come on, and that sort of thing. And when teaching learning goals, we really find it helpful to pre post test, so for teaching the word recycle, at the beginning, we'll say what is recycling, show them a video or a game about it, and then ask again, to see if that changes at all after they - That. At Sesame you can see these are kind of our top methods that we do, interviews with parents at the end, surveys just to parents, the digital testing and usability testing, virtual viewing diaries at home, and then having kids answer with all sorts of - I think it's important to acknowledge COVID has really had us innovate on how we do research and - Do research and we found benefits and tradeoffs. Benefits being you can reach families and children across the country without the cost of travel. And so we used to go to schools, or we used to be stuck to like a facility in Dallas, and only getting a certain type of people who live there. And so now we're talking to families in rural neighborhoods, suburban, east, west, we really have so many more people at our fingertips. We're getting a lot more diverse. And we also find that this viewing experience is just more natural for kids, they're lying on the couch with the iPad, watching the videos, and have the normal distractions, the dog barking, the siblings climbing up over the couch, and they're not sitting with their hands crossed at the table staring at a screen, we're really getting really good - And how they would watch this in their home every day, and how we can keep their attention in their home. We also, for us, anyway, get to talk to parents at the end, we just go to schools, talk to kids, and now we have this nice opportunity again, and we talk to mom for 10 minutes, and they tell us no, we talk to mom anyway. And that's just really

great. It also allows us to be more adaptable in what we show and especially for parents - Questions, we can quickly grab more pictures if they're struggling, pull something up and show them and we can really adapt in the moment to get the best data - It also cuts down on workload of traveling and going to schools and all of that. We can also, like was saying, we could reach poor families, we can also create screeners that target really specific incomes, political affiliations. Make sure we're getting really great people, all different types, to see these things that we're seeing all families affected. And lastly, with these one on one interviews, we found that it's really great because we can just get such depth from - We get to see, even when they're shy, you can do some tips and tricks where in a group it may not be possible. We often do the trick of pretending where you don't know something, they were on the moon or no, they were at the beach, they get so annoyed with you, no, they were at school. And I'm like, what were they doing at school? And now we're talking, we're at a group, that can just sit silently while two other kids dominated. But of course, there's tradeoffs. Technology bumps, not all parents have Wi-Fi so we're not getting them. We have a slightly larger time pivot assessment, individual interviews, a bit of a higher cost, like paying - Selection bias, which always exists - A trade off now. You do lose a little bit of the children being inspired by others in a group setting, but we're finding that the data - Now quickly talk about discussion guide [INAUDIBLE] so in bringing the discussion guide to life, like I was saying before, those questions we're asking in that objective stage, what are the learning goals? What do you want kids to get? That looks like in the discussion guide creating a pre post test, like I said with the recycling or which one of these photos shows recycling? And then asking them. Asking questions that link to the goals of [INAUDIBLE] maybe we're trying to teach a wedge so we'd ask what did they use to stop that rock from rolling down the hill and then say the word when used something to describe it, things like that. And then linking it to their own lives is one of our favorites because you're really seeing are they taking that message, [INAUDIBLE] applying it to themselves. You're teaching all about how your eyes and hair makes you special. Now, at the end, we said what makes you special? And they say their eyes and hair? And that's really exciting. For digital, it's often like, are we trying to teach them or do we just want to see if this works? And so some of it is just observation. Just watching, limit intervention, don't help them, see where they're struggling to be better. And then sometimes there's a comprehension question to what did you play in that game? Or what was that game about? And sometimes they know and sometimes they make it up and tell me something that did not do like, it was aliens. And I'm like great, obviously we're not doing our job so that's really helpful. And then appeal is always like what do you like and then I like to ask what character was your favorite, then also what characters most like you? Often a very different answer and it's very

interesting to see [INAUDIBLE]. And then using friendly scales like this one. How does that make you feel? We actually had a kid, just correct us the other day, I'm not going to use that scale, I'm going to use one to 10. And I'm giving it a seven. That's great, too, however you want to tell us, we want to know. And then lastly, parents always getting [INAUDIBLE] family behaviors, are you talking about this home, how do you want to be seen in content? That's also [INAUDIBLE]. I will pass it to Becca.

Becca N: Awesome. Thanks, Julie. I'm going to talk a little bit about how we moderate with preschoolers. And I find that when we do this, when I tell people about my job, people are often very surprised that I do this with three and four year old's, and that we get useful information from three and four year old's, so I always say children are brilliant, and way more capable than we often give them credit for, so I want to talk a little bit about how we get that useful information. And the very first thing, the most important thing is that first we get written consent from their caregiver so we create a consent form that tells the caregiver what the session will be like, so that they can give us consent to talk to their child. And sometimes we also send a prep video before the session so that the child can watch it with their parent, before we have our session, so that they can kind of know what they're getting into. It's really just us sitting and talking to the camera, so that the child can be introduced to us and learn a little bit about what it's going to be like to talk to us. And we can show an example of us sharing our screen and showing a picture. We have gotten feedback that it's really helpful because the parent can say when the session starts, like, hey, look, that's Becca, remember, we saw them in that video. Or at the end a parent will say, she's been asking if it's time to talk to Becca yet all week, so it just gives them a little bit of familiarity and helps us to build rapport. But it's also really important to get verbal consent from the child. And we do that by telling them in child friendly language, what the research will be like. And often for a three and four year old, what I'll say is, hey, my friends just made a couple of brand new videos and they asked me if I could show them to you to see what you like and what you remember about them, do you think that you can help me watch a couple of videos and then answer some questions? And then the child can say no or yes to that. And what's really important is that these sessions are always led by the child, they can end at any time because child comfort is always more important than the data, we want to know that the child is participating because they want to. Here's an example of what it could look like to run a session so sometimes we'll ask a pretest, like Julie was saying, to see if there are differences in child answers before and after watching a video so like what is recycling? And then we show them a video about recycling. And then if afterwards, they can tell us what recycling is, then they learn something from our content. We also just ask

some comprehension questions about the video. And sometimes we'll ask appeal questions like Julie was saying. When we're talking with preschoolers, a few things to keep in mind. The very first question we always ask as soon as the video is over is what happened in that video we just watched. Before we show any images, before we ask any more detailed probing questions, this question lets us know what is top of mind, what popped for the child, what their main takeaway was? So is the first thing they want to talk about some random jokes that had nothing to do with the educational content or do they want to talk about the story problem that had all of the emotions and all of the educational messaging in it? Then from there, we can ask some more specific questions about the plot and the messaging. And to do that we build our questions by first thinking about what we want to hear in child language about the video we showed. And then we build questions that we hope will elicit those answers. But it's really important when you're actually doing the interview, to follow the child's lead and anticipate their logic. We can prep as many different wordings of the same question as we want but kids are always surprising us and talking about things in ways we did not expect. And we kind of just have to be able to go with the flow because forcing an ordered conversation and forcing them to talk in a linear way that an adult might do can be really challenging for them and might get confusing, they might get embarrassed because they can't talk about it the way you want them to talk about it, so we find that the best thing to do is to just follow their logic and let them talk about what they want to talk about. We also prep as many images as possible. We kind of plan for the worst-case scenario. What happens if no one knows what's going on. And then when we actually do the interview, we try to use as few images as possible, to try to see how much kids can recall on their own. And then we're asking appeal questions. Very young children can struggle with this, we find that with three and fours, it's not always totally reliable. And that can be because sometimes they want to give us the right answer. They don't want to hurt our feelings and tell us that they didn't like something. But also, they're still forming their identities so when they tell us that they like or don't like something that could change if we ask them tomorrow or in an hour, so they might not even know what they're saying when they tell us that they like something. But we do find that ways we can talk about or think about appeal is if a child is able to talk about the plot, if they can tell us the beginning, the middle and the end, then they were engaged enough in the story to retain and talk about it. And then their behaviors while they're watching a video, if they're laughing, if they're talking about what they see then we know that they are liking it and being engaged, so sometimes we, so, do digital research, kind of like UX research with little kids. Where a parent will be our like camera person and they'll film the child with a small device in the Zoom call while the child plays on a laptop or a touch device with a game. We always tell

parents; we want to see how much the child can do independently so that we can try to learn what the child needs to be able to navigate this experience when it's out in the world without us watching them. So, the researcher might ask, give them little hints, like, so what do you think we should do next? Or repeat the instructions in the game, like click the arrow to continue. Then at the end we can also ask some questions like what did you just do in that game to see if they were able to follow the structure and if they were able to follow the curriculum? So, like Julie was saying, one of the amazing benefits of the way we do research with L&E online is that the parent is there with the child and there can be some challenges to this that are really important to mitigate because the benefits of having the parent there are enormous. So, there can be this parent impulse and Julie was talking about this a little bit to correct the child, to speak for the child, to want to get a totally perfect score, to have really high expectations of what their child should know or remember. So, we want to make sure that the parent is on our side and that they know why we're doing this research, that the child responses tell us if we did a good job telling our story, it's not a test of the child. We can also want to be careful of the parent rephrasing our question. So, a parent might rephrase the question if the child is not understanding our question to try to be helpful but might accidentally make it a leading question. So, I might say, "So, what were they doing" and the parent might rephrase that to say, "So, what was Elmo doing when he went into the store" and not realize that their rephrasing actually kind of gave the answer away to the child. Then of course, you know, sometimes the child just wants to use their parent to distract from having to do the interview, to defy their parent because they think it's funny. So, we do want to try to mitigate that as well because the benefits of having the parent there are awesome. The parent knows how to keep the child comfortable. They know what the child needs to focus, a snack, a comfort toy, and they can set the expectations of behavior like, "Hey, remember we talked about this, we're going to sit nicely and answer the questions". A parent can also translate a child's accent or their vernacular. A child could be talking to me for five minutes about Bobo and then the parent says, "oh, Bobo is what she calls her grandma". All of a sudden, I have a totally different understanding of what this child is talking about. Then parent feedback can also really give us a lot of contexts about the child's response. An example could be, if we show a video about someone speaking in Spanish, and then afterwards, we're talking to the parent after the child interview and the parent says, "I don't think she's ever heard someone speak in Spanish before". That gives us a really specific context for the child's answers, as opposed to if the parent says, "Yes, we speak Spanish at home. So, I'm not sure why she didn't understand what was going on in that story". Those are two totally different contexts for what those child's responses were. My favorite personally is to see parents be amused by or surprised by or sometimes

embarrassed by their children. Children are amazing and wondrous, and I love when parents get to see their kids that way too. So, a couple tips to keep kids focus during a session, I find these are really helpful. One is to frame the child as a helper you know, to say like, "Hey, can you help me with this?" because young children love to help. The other is before we even start watching anything is to get all your wiggles out. So, ask a child to mirror you. "Hey, can we stretch our arms up to the ceiling? Can we shake out our bodies and get out all our shakes and wiggles? Can we take a nice calming breath?". So, not only does that help to come and focus the child, but it can also give you a baseline of understanding of what engagement looks like for that child. So, if you say, "Can you reach your arms up to the sky" and they kind of do it halfway that shows you their baseline engagement. Then keeping a child on track, we want to redirect and we want to praise, I don't know. So, if they want to talk about something else, if they want to show you their video, it's totally OK to be like, "Hey, I have a couple more questions to ask you and then maybe we can talk about that". When you get to the end of the session, maybe they'll forget, they even wanted to talk about that or maybe they'll want to tell you and it's totally OK to just take a minute to be like, "Wow, thank you so much for showing me. That that was so cool". To just build that little rapport with a child, they love it. Then to praise, I don't know. Children can get embarrassed and discouraged when they don't know how to answer our questions. So, neutrality to their responses, right or wrong, we just say, "Oh, OK, great", and just move on to the next question and praising their honesty when they say, "I don't know", we say, "That's a great answer. Thank you for telling me that" and you move on to the next one. So, then the last thing I want to talk about is just data analysis. It's very similar to analyzing data from grownups, except that sometimes you have to decipher speech patterns or child's logic and that can take a little bit more time than the linear way adults can talk about things. But their patterns of understanding and misunderstanding can really help us to understand how to make our content better. So, when we write reports, we talk about comprehension. We show videos from our clips, nothing paints a clearer picture of what did or did not work, than hearing it from kids themselves and when we use our analysis of the data to provide some actionable recommendations to support comprehension and appeal in future content.

Brett W: Awesome. Well, Becca, I appreciate that, thanks. It was super helpful. Thinking through just all the different iterations and variance of how children and adults. Becca, you're going to talk, I think a little bit more about the quant side of things and working with children as well and how those influences. So, take it away.

Becca L: Yes. First, we're going to jump into focus groups. Let me go ahead and share. So, I'm going to talk about the sort of ins and outs of focus groups with kids. Before I really jump in, I do want to clarify that if I'm talking about anything in person that would be with kids, virtually, that would be six and up. In the virtual space, we would do five and under is going to be sort of that one on one that Becca and Julie just spoke so thoroughly about. So, at this point, you've set up your objectives. You've decided that doing groups with kids, that's the best way to get at the insights you need. So, the first thing to know is there's a lot in just the setup of how you're setting it up, how you set that stage that can really make a big difference and how those sessions are going to go starting right with your kid introductions. So, this is your chance to make those kids start feeling comfortable with the moderator, feeling comfortable with the other kids in the group. So, you want to make sure that they feel prepared. You start with an easy question. It's OK if you start out with something that's slightly unrelated to the topic that you're going to cover. It's just about getting to know them, letting them know, "Hey, this is a safe space to speak freely". If you're in person, this is something that you can help prep them for when you're doing that rescreening and virtual, it's something you can help them with or let them know about during their tech setup. So, it's really just a quick, "Hey, I'm going to ask you about movies you really like, just start thinking about the ones that are your favorite". It's simple, it's quick, and it helps alleviate some of their anxiety because they go in already knowing that they have an answer prepared to the first thing you're going to ask them. You can also make introductions kind of like a game and so give them a squishy ball. They can pass it around and whichever kid has the ball gets to do their introduction or a strategy you could use in virtual is just have them do a show and tell. It gives them something that they can hold onto. It's something they like, it's theirs, they can talk about it. They get excited seeing what other kids have, they like talking about what they've brought. One recommendation for that is if you do have kids bringing a show and tell and then, I would tell them, you know, as long as it's not something that's alive, don't bring a pet or your baby brother, because that can get kind of chaotic very quickly. The moderator introductions are also very important, just as important as those kid introductions. You want to make kids feel special just as Becca was talking about, they want to help you. They want to know that they have an important job. So, explain to them what their job is, what they're doing, how they're going to help you, how they're going to help themselves, and other kids just like them. Kids at this age or any, any kids really, just kind of get used to being brushed aside or sometimes ignored. So, this is an opportunity for them to understand that the things that they say, the things that they think and what they share with you for the hour, hour-and-15 minutes, they're there with you, can really make a difference to whatever it is that you're talking about for this

particular research. I think Becca also spoke to this, but kids, really, they want to please, they want to make you happy. So, you have to be careful that they understand what an opinion is, that it's OK to think things that are different from others, it's OK to like something, something that somebody else doesn't like. It's OK if they don't like what you show them or what you're talking about. It can really help when you tell them, "Hey, I didn't make this. I don't get in trouble if you don't like it. It doesn't hurt my feelings if you don't like it". It's really about learning how we can make this the best that it could be. So, moving on to just being specific, being clear, let them know what they're going to expect. How long is the group going to last? What are you going to talk about? What kinds of things are they going to do throughout? So, with virtual, one tip, we also find it is really helpful to ask them, you don't have to mute your microphone, stay on mute, so it can kind of mimic a more natural conversation because otherwise, you're going to be losing a lot of time, just repeating over and over and all, "Hey, we can't hear you please unmute". That said, this is where group size becomes pretty important. So, online we typically wouldn't take more than four or five kids just because you do lose a lot of time with some of those technical things. The environment itself does make that spontaneous conversation a little bit more difficult. So, there's a lot of just sort of more calling on respondents, one by one, and kids always want to share, and they might get upset if they don't get to answer every question. So, having fewer kids really helps you get more out of those situations, and you can set it up as an expectation like, "Hey, I might not get to hear your answer on everything. But if you agree with what somebody else is saying, you can show me a thumbs up, you can nod your head or giving other visual cues" that make them feel heard. Then in person, you can take a few more, it's going to vary by age, but usually about six or seven kids is probably your sweet spot. When working on your discussion guide, so it's important to think through different ways that you can help keep the kids engaged and interested in the conversation. So, talking to an adult for over an hour, just with a group of kids who don't know each other, who don't know you, you can get a lot of squirminess and antsiness, and we'll talk about ideas, more in depth for discussion guides on the coming slides. But the last point here is really a big one and it's just, you need to have an open mind in terms of what to expect or to kind of have your expectations be blown away because a lot of things are going to happen, inevitably, that just wouldn't happen in a group with adults or even teens. So, some of them were typical things, you're going to see kids getting wiggly or someone's going to ask to go to the bathroom and then as soon as one child asks, at least three others are going to ask and everybody has to go at the same time. So, you just have to expect it to happen. But there are other things they've had a kid pulled out a tooth or took off their shoes and put them on their hands. Online, we've seen some funny things, anything from sharing their own

screen when we don't need to see what's on their screen or we had a kid just last week turn to their camera so we could see that their parent was asleep behind them when all we really wanted to see was the kids. So, you see a lot of different things, it can be entertaining and funny and it just really brings life, "Hey, these are the kids that we're making stuff for" and it helps you understand who they are. So, here we go. We're going to go in a little more in depth into creating discussion guides for kids, because those are going to look a little different from what you would typically do for adults. So, in terms of variety, what we're talking about here is just having lots of different things for them to do. So, plan activities that can help address your project objectives, let them work with a buddy or draw something that they can share, or they can rank things, they can sort things, just having lots of sort of shorter bits can help them engage. Because sitting at a table for an hour, it's a lot, they've had a long day at school. That said, it's important to have your group length be shorter than it would be for adults. It's hard for anyone to sit and focus for that long. So, prioritize your most important learning objectives to be earlier in your guide. Those sort of nice to have questions should be at the end because chances are you may not make it through everything in every group. Then we have some general time guidelines here, but there's going to be some variance based on how old the kids are that you're talking to. Then we do recommend that virtual groups are shorter just because zoom fatigue, it's a real thing. It is real for adults and it is just as real for kids and plus just being online, it's a lot more difficult to work in some of those things that can help kids with their focus. Then just the last point here is, think about the language that you're using in your guides. How are you phrasing your questions? What are your instructions? Are you giving examples to help them? Don't talk down to them, just make sure that you're asking in a way that they can understand. Just a few more. Movement. This is a big one just as Becca was saying, have those kids get their wiggles out before you start. So, plan to have things happening around the room if you're in-person. Things that can help them get out of their seat. So, some examples, everybody get up, let's stand around the easel and we're going to make a list or have different stations or move them, just sit on the floor, just a change of location can really help. Plan for movement breaks even in virtual, whether it's getting them up, "Hey, let's stand and stretch or do 10 jumping jacks or show off your favorite dance move", just little things, little breaks, that'll really help. Just bring them back if they're getting [INAUDIBLE]. The next thing you can do to help kids is give them different jobs or roles throughout the group. It's not like you want to tell one kid, "Hey, you're the one who's going to write on the easel for the whole group. They can change, they can shift. Writing is also something just to be careful of in groups of kids when they're young, even if they can't write, it may take them a very long time. They're super worried about spelling or they're worried about perfect

handwriting, spelling doesn't count, handwriting doesn't count, but it's still going to take them a longer time. So, if writing isn't an option, you can give them stickers and say, "Hey, go put the blue sticker on your favorite idea. Go put the green sticker on the one you didn't like or go draw a star next to it", little things that just get them up and out of their seats. So, you can be pretty creative there. Then that sort of leads us into the last strategy, which is just making the whole session just into a game. So, you can make a game board that kind of, they get to move as they get through different sections of the guide, or even just writing out the list, "Hey, these are the things we're going to do. We're going to do introductions. We're going to watch something. We're going to make a poster and share it, and then we're all done". So then you can cross those off or move your piece along so that kids can really see, all right, I've done all these things and we're almost done or, OK, we've done two things, I have three more. So, it gives them a visual context of how much they've done and how much they have left and just what that goal is that they're working towards. So, the last thing I'm going to talk about really is that virtual piece. It can be more challenging to engage kids online, certainly in that group setting, but it's not completely impossible to do so. Some things you're going to do will vary based on whatever platform it is that you're using. So, you can share your screen and have sort of a blank document up that's going to emulate what you would do in a group, where you have an easel. So, you're going to type out their ideas. You're going to mark it up. Everybody gives you their favorite, so you put a star by it. So, things like that can help because they see that their ideas are being recorded and not just going in one ear out the other. You'll also find that kids at this point, some of them are very familiar with Zoom and they're automatically going to use their reaction features without you needing to tell them. It can be fun to let them do that as part of an activity or in the picture below, they may use it to raise their hand when there's something that they want to say. We also like to do some sort of like thumbs up, thumbs in the middle or thumbs down activities. It keeps them engaged. You want to tell them to, close eyes when you vote because that can kind of help mitigate group think. But if they're on the younger end, they may be peeking anyway. So, you can kind of see when they see everybody's hands flipping. It's cute, it's funny and it's just kids. Then another thing you can do is just have different things to show them. So, having different junctures throughout your group where you're showing them something on your screen, giving them something to react to, that can help bring their attention back. It's more helpful than just seeing a lot of different floating heads on the screen. Then as part of the conversation, you can have them draw and share a picture as long as you prepare them in advance to have the materials that they would need to do. Then the last two collage here is just in terms of distractions, it's not quite the same as a focus group setting. You can't just remove things or it's a quiet space.

So, do your best during the tech checks to set them up for success. Find a room you have your strongest internet connection, make sure it's quiet. Ideally, they're not eating a meal or something because that can be hard for them to pay attention and other kids are going to be distracted. You want to make sure that you've optimized the platform itself. So, if you're using Zoom, maybe you disable the chat function so that they're not chatting to each other because they do know how and they will do that. Then also make sure only the moderator can share their screen unless there's like an activity you have where they need to be doing that. Then finally, there's the parents. So, they don't need to be present for the entire group as long as both the parent and the child are comfortable with that. So, really we want to make sure that the parent can be available, that they around if the child needs any help with something technical, sometimes the kids are actually more tech savvy than their parents. But other than that, we really just want to make sure that the child is set up with whatever situation makes them feel the most comfortable and able to express themselves. So, for some kids that means that their parent is sitting next to them on the couch. For others, it means that the parent is in a separate room. The only thing we really don't want with parents is them sort of trying to participate in the group and give answers for their child. But that's really the gist of it. So, I'm going to go ahead and stop and I think I'm going to turn this over to L&E.

Brett W: Thanks, Becca. Appreciate it. A lot of great stuff, as far as it relates to kids and you know what I learned, some things thinking about, I hopefully moderators out there, or our qualitative analysts who are working with adults. Some interesting little twists and tricks that you could even apply in terms of ice breaking or engagement within the room. Kelly, I know we're a little strapped on time, but it was maybe see, take a few minutes. I'm sure some of the audience would like to know some things that we do as it relates to children's recruitment and the process and how that changes a little bit. So, fire away.

Kelli H: So, I want to start by extending a huge thank you to our presenters today. The presentations have been incredibly informative. They've been funny and so I really hope our audience is going to be able to apply these tips shared. So, today on behalf of L&E research, I wanted to share some best practice recommendations that when applied during the planning phase of research will ensure a successful recruit so that you're speaking with the right families. Our guests have already graciously shared their planning process when it comes to research design, but this same planning and care should be included in the screener development process. So, the first step in recruitment is a great screener. Our guests today have shared with us that children's research in order to be

insightful, must have a different approach. The research team must account for the developmental differences and plan research accordingly. The same considerations must be accounted for throughout all phases of recruitment, including both the development and administration of the screener. A well-crafted screener can make the difference between filtering in candidates who will provide valuable information that leads to insights versus wasted time and budget when the target audience simply wasn't the right fit. First, we must determine if the candidate has a qualifying child, that the child meets the necessary requisites, that the child will be available for the scheduled session times. And this is all before we've even spoken with the child to determine that they are articulate, engaged, and seem interested in talking about the subject matter at hand. It's a complex process, but a partner with the right recruiting experience can offer guidance and assure you're getting the best candidates. I'm going to start out by talking about some screening language. Obviously, communication and a strong script that explains all steps involved is key. From screening and qualifying to the session's obligation and when they can expect to receive their incentive, these are all details that must be specified in both verbal and written communications. Anticipate areas where questions could arise and define these clearly to prevent potential confusion. Think about what you'd want to know to make you more comfortable letting your own child participate and incorporate language into the screening script to mitigate concerns. Share information with your recruiting partner about what the recruit can expect, and they will assure that recruits are prepared to share their opinions either in person or virtually. Scripts within the screener should walk both the parent and the recruiter through the handover process when child screening is involved, including when to put their child on the phone or collecting a time to call back if the child is unavailable. And when the child should pass the phone back to their grown-up so the recruiter can go over the final details about what will be expected of both the parent and the child. In order to protect our littlest panelist, the screening conversation must begin with the child's parent or guardian. The parent should be asked demographic profile questions prior to handing over the call to their child if the child is being included in the screening process. If you're targeting a child's demographic, clarify that in the screener and make no assumptions about a family shared demographic composition. If there are multiple children in the household that could be eligible to participate, make sure your questions are specific and built to target which child qualifies. Supply language within the screener that leads the recruiter's conversation. Such as, for these next few questions, we would like you to answer by thinking about your seven-year-old daughter's preferences. At this point, you would administer questions to find out if the child is consuming the product or content that would qualify them for the session. This information can be verified during screening

with the child, if applicable. But including this in the parental screening assures, in addition to qualifying, that the parent's involved and knowledgeable about the choices and preferences of their child. Many researchers opt to screen only the parent and bypass the child screening, even if the research will be completed with the child. While children make great research participants, gauging willingness and articulation in a three to five-minute screening call can be quite effective for older kids, but inconsistent when children are younger. Ask questions about the child's personality and demeanor, how open the child is, and the child's willingness to share their opinions with other grownups and children. Exclude children who are shy, hesitant, or slow to warm when meeting new people. And screeners that are developed to ask questions directly to the children should have a different tone. Questions should be phrased a little differently depending on the child's age group. Children may be unable to appreciate the nuance between numbers on a one to ten scale, which actually one of our previous presenters just contradicted me on. But using emojis or simplified yet direct terminology such as, I like it a lot or I don't like it at all, usually resonates better than a five-point scale. Screening questions should verify that the preferences of the child are consistent with the information provided by the guardian. While this is a critical step in qualifying the right candidates, child screening should also gauge that the child is articulate, insightful, forthcoming, and conversational. And that's why having an experienced recruiter is so important. They're actually able to gauge the quality of screening responses and they know which children to include in the research. Of course, a well-crafted screener is only as good as the operational team behind its success. So close collaboration with the project manager will ensure that everyone stays informed as parents and children are fully screened and scheduled. When it comes to successful children's recruitment, timing is everything, and that's from a few different angles. First, if recruitment involves child screening, then recruiters should be scheduled for after-school hours or even into the early evening when there's a higher probability of being able to speak with both the guardian and the child in a single call. Weekend recruitment can be effective for family screening as well. Second, consider the session schedule. Unlike adults, kids don't have the flexibility to take the afternoon off school in order to participate in synchronous research sessions. So it's best to schedule those outside of regular business hours, again, utilizing weekend availability. Try to load up research during the summer months when children are out of school and available for weekday session times. As we've already covered, the manner in which screening questions are written is important and should be carefully crafted. However, how those questions are asked is just as important. Recruiters should consider their tone of voice. It should be engaged, upbeat, cheerful, and definitely not monotonous or dismissive. The speed with which they ask the questions and read the options

should be moderately paced and cleanly articulated. Recruiters need to extend their pause when probing open-ended questions. Kids, especially younger, don't necessarily respond quickly and may need additional time to form their thoughts. Finally, recruiters must be careful in how they respond when asked for elaboration to prevent leading, which could cause response bias. Of course, well-written questions will elicit fewer requests for clarification. And then tying it all together, it really takes some expert coordination. A good project manager must oversee and coordinate session availability, parent and child availability for screening, parental and confidentiality consent, and managing homework if applicable. As well as internal considerations such as guiding and advising the recruitment team and keeping the project on track and within budget. But a good recruiting partner with a skilled project management team, however, can handle the juggling act with ease. And finally, as both Sesame and Nickelodeon have already demonstrated, a skilled moderator is necessary to keep kids on track and engaged. As almost all children's research in recent years has transitioned to a virtual environment, it's important to have an expert host to provide the moderator with technical support. The virtual facility host checks participants into the waiting room in advance of the session and troubleshoots any potential issues that may pop up either before or during the virtual session. Beyond basic support, a technical host can help manage the platform's features and capabilities should there be value in using those tools. The most common way to conduct children's research these days is via a video conferencing platform. There's no shortage of platforms to choose from, but we have found that both Zoom and Teams are user-friendly for all age groups, and even very young children can operate the basic controls. Zoom in particular has the added benefit of being familiar since many schools used the Zoom platform to host remote learning throughout much of the 2020/21 school year. Outside of supporting the moderator with the technical aspects of a virtual session, your host can set preliminary expectations by reciting a script that communicates what is expected of participants and what they can expect for the duration of the session. Communicating expectations is always important. But when conducting research with children and usually their grownups too, knowing what to expect can keep participants at ease and engaged. Staying on task and focused can be a challenge for some children in a group session. If the moderator's attention is elsewhere, let's say on another child, another child's attention may stray too. So if the virtual facility host notices distracting behaviors, they could use the platform's chat feature to privately ask the child to redirect their attention back to the discussion. Age-appropriate, of course. At the most basic level, having an experienced virtual host removes tasks from a researcher's list of responsibilities and provides them with support so they may focus on having a quality conversation. It assures you don't forget to begin the recording. And if a child drops out during a group

session, you have somebody who can work on reconnecting them while the moderator is able to carry on the discussion. And with the right partner, you need not worry. They can help you develop a screener with the natural flow between parent and child. The operational team is in place to execute the carefully drafted screener, and a virtual facility team to support your remote sessions on the day of. I hope you are able to apply some of these tips we've provided today. And Brett, I'm going to send it back your way.

Brett W: Thanks, Kelli. Unfortunately, as you know, the mute and video icons are all right there in the middle right corner of the screen, which also triggers other things that Microsoft has recently placed up. So it took me a second to get out there. Kelli, while you were presenting, I want to thank Becca and Becca and Julie, they were busy answering questions. And so a lot of folks out there in our audience who were posting Q&As. I'm going to invite everybody, if you would, just to- while we go through, I'm sure there'll be additional questions that come along here. And as well as, I know we had a few questions that we were thinking as well that the audience might be interested in, centrally around two subjects. One would be quantitative and what's the differences and some of the variations if any. And then of course, as everybody likes to talk about the thing that's always- what's always in the room here these days is COVID and the last two years and what has that affected? And also curious to my knowledge with these as well as getting your opinions, so let's start there. My first question really is, what has changed during COVID? But now that it appears that we are- crossing one set of fingers here, that we might be coming out of this pandemic and seeing that shift again, are you going to be changing back to any policies? What were you doing before? How did you change? And now that you're thinking things might shift, what's the thinking there? I tell you what, Becca N, why don't we start with you?

Becca N: Sure, I can say from our perspective. We used to do a lot of our research in schools, it just is as we have a long legacy of doing this kind of research at Sesame. So it would be on us as researchers to be reaching out and building relationships with schools. And then we would travel to the school and visit, so we were limited to who was within an hour drive from our office in Manhattan. So we were in the New York metro area a lot. And so we find that this shift that we had to make during COVID to do our research online has opened up so much for us and we want to continue to do our research this way. We think that the data has been really great and the ability to access so many different kinds of people has been amazing.

Brett W: Julie, I see your head shaking quite a bit to that, so anything you wanted to add there?

Julie B: I just completely agree. We talk about it all the time as like, when are you going back to schools? And it's like, I don't think we're going to go back to schools. Why would we only want to talk to kids from New York when we've now had everybody's opinion on our content? We don't want to go back from- like we're losing all [AUDIO SKIPS] perspectives we haven't heard.

Brett W: Makes sense. Becca L, how about you, Nickelodeon seeing it any differently or?

Becca L: Yeah, I can actually- I echo in a lot of what Becca and Julie just said. There's so much opportunity to speak to kids who you wouldn't normally get to speak to. We used to do focus groups with kids as young as about three and a half, which I- it's cute chaos, but it does end up like, hey, everybody watches things together, and then you end up talking to them one at a time. And as Becca and Julie spoke about, this sort of virtual style, the kids are much more comfortable when they're that little. They're at home, they have a parent there, so you get extra insights that you- or for that age, some translation and context that you may not have otherwise. And even with the bigger kids when you're doing focus groups, now you can talk to kids across the country all at once versus each- it's very expensive if you're going to do one study and try to do focus groups in even just like three different states. It makes a big difference in just being able to talk to more kids. But there is a drawback where- I think Julie maybe spoke about this, where you need kids who have access to high-speed internet. And if you're doing some kind of testing where they need an app, they need to have a device that they can play on, a device that's showing the kid, a device that's showing what they're doing, so there are some complications there. So I do think eventually for some things, in-person is actually something that will come back.

Brett W: Awesome, Becca. Just looking at a few questions, Sally Wong asked about the vaccination status, and can you ask about that? Certainly, you can ask about that. We do all the time. In fact, we're just doing it as a client specification. So just as an FYI, we pretty much- at L&E. Every recruitment firm is a little different. Their policies might be different, so I encourage you to ask them what their policy is. Ours is client direction. So if that's a question you want to ask and that's important, do it. This also has some influence as well as it relates to the facility. So if you're going to be doing your research in person and there's other people there in person, then we might have to, as they say, just like we're doing in society, they might have to cooperate a little bit on

that, dependent upon what each person's requirements are and each client. But that is something that we generally put into the client's hands to make a decision. And we ask that and certainly, the decision that is up to the client as to how that answer and what that answer means. Which could be yes, no, or I don't want to give that answer. And what does don't want to give that answer mean to them? We've got just a couple more minutes, everyone, and I know that some questions that we were talking about before, as in before we got on this was quantitative, survey length, question types. What are the things that you all are-? In general, talk a little bit about what are you doing, that is when you're doing your quantitative, that's a little different than, say, what would you do perhaps comparatively, your qualitative as well as if you were talking to adults versus kids? Let's start at the top. Becca, go ahead.

Becca L: I can jump in here for the quant piece. There, I think language again. We talked about in the discussion, guys, you need to speak to kids in a way that they can understand. That's the same thing in a survey. Your survey for a kid is going to look very different than it would for an adult. Even things like, how much time do you spend doing this? Because kids just don't- how often are kids told, five more minutes? But five minutes is 20 seconds or five minutes is 15 minutes or half an hour. Their concept of time is not quite accurate, so you have to be careful. You can say like, do you do this a lot? A little? Not at all? Because they can answer that. Because they have a reference like, I watch TV a lot and I play basketball not at all. Those are things that they have a sense of. Other thing is length is really important. I do a lot of content testing, so there's this hard line of, if I'm showing content that's 20 minutes long, how much longer can a child stay engaged? So that's already sort of a- 20 minutes is long. 15 minutes should be your maximum survey length for kids, depending on their age. And then the other thing is you do need the parent to hand over the survey to the kid. So the parent has to give consent, you need the parent to help, depending on the age of the child, how much they're helping, so there are a lot of differences. And then related to COVID, I would say that one of the biggest impacts is that there was just so much more quantitative research happening because you don't have that sort of in-person problem where we couldn't do anything in person, so panel providers were just being completely tapped. So survey fielding time is taking longer, it's more expensive to pay for your sample. And then we were also just seeing a fluctuation of bots taking surveys. And they are smart, and they are creative, and you have to really do your due diligence in looking at your data. And at a certain point, you might even be playing a game of just is this a lazy respondent, or was the survey not in their native language, or is it a robot? And you just have to make sure you're working with people who are implementing as many security measures as they can.

Brett W: Thanks, Becca. I will say that, just for the audience out there, for those who may have missed it, the Insights Association, which is the United States representation membership service for the research industry, they did a town hall on this just a week and a half ago. There was a lot of good information there as it relates to fraud and panel subjects and issues and cheaters and such, that I encourage everybody to tap into and also to reach back out to the industry. And you can get involved in that as that's the third lens, so it's a subject that impacts us all. If we can't talk to the right people, it defeats the whole purpose of it, does it not? Well, there are so many more questions that I would love to dive into. And for our audience out there, those questions who we may not have answered, feel free to post those, and Kelli and I will make sure that we get Becca and Becca and Julie out there to give us some feedback in terms of answering those questions for you. But again, I want to thank all of you here, coming out here today and representing obviously your organizations, and spending the time with us. Super knowledgeable, super helpful, hopefully to both ourselves, but also to our audience out there. Again, we want to thank Focus Forward for agreeing to transcribe, as they always do, our webinars. And so, therefore, those of you who would like to review this again, that transcription will be provided at no cost to you, as well as Kelli's summary, which as well will be also emailed out. And then finally, these sessions are being recorded and hosted at leresearch.com where you can go and access this content live and/or share it with your colleagues at your disposal, at your pleasure. So in any event, again, thank you all for joining us here today and thank you for our audience coming out. You've been super great and look forward to seeing everybody out there and hopefully in the post-COVID world, back out in person, seeing folks and engaging again. So take care, everybody, and thanks so much.