>> Thank you for tuning in to help the mines part cash will leave most conversations
with people who are really good listeners and we asked them to share with us and
Lucy Caldwell and I work for Fairfax County public schools during the pandemic
we've all spent more time than ever online.
We're schooling online we're working on mine.
We're visiting family and friends online or watching movies.
Youtube clips just cheer us up a little bit
we're going to church online going to the doctor
and with so much for to engagement many of us are trying to navigate these
unchartered waters for ourselves and our families are all trying to figure it out.
As far as virtual school there have been a few incidents of
sort of wild West behaviors, people using language and images
that they would never have done most likely in person.
But people are frustrated, they're board there.
Anxious and so it really is a new reality that people in education
and all of us in different walks of life are trying to
deal with in contend with.
And today
here on the podcast it's a perfect time to talk about this issue because it's
digital citizenship week.
Being a digital citizen is all about taking ownership of your actions using
technology responsibly and respectfully during this week.
The goal is to teach kids and to talk
families and parents
how to learn create and participate responsibly in the digital worked.
Thank you for joining us Tammy Sisk
Tammy spin in ploy with that CPS for 26 years she is an instructional technology
specialist for the pre K to 12 curriculum instruction office.
She's been leading the digital citizenship work in F CPS for the past 5 years during
this time we've had 39 perfects County public schools that have earned the common
sense school recognition
and a 116 instructional employees
have earned common sense.
Educator recognition chic labrie to cross the departments with many reputable
organizations to provide high impact
digital citizenship resources and lessons to teachers students and families.
Thank you for being here Tammy thank you Alicia, I'm happy to be here
and we're talking about how long and how often were all online,
and given your many many years of experience, what are some of your observations
that you seen during this pandemic.
>> Well, you know obviously right now we're there
absolutely spending more time on screens not just for work and learning, but you
know we're not going out as much so that leads to boredom.
And it's it's easy to you know begin watching a new series on netflix or you know
spend more time than you normally would playing games because we're not
participating in as many of the activities we normally would
and and that's been hard for people.
I think that you know
in terms of digital citizenship media balance is a topic that we work with all of

our students on.
And in this week during digital citizenship week we had a focus on media balance on
Monday.
>> And what does that mean do
media balance what does that mean and when we say we focused on it how have you
worked with the schools and with students and families directly on that.
>> Sure so media balance is about
developing an awareness and the will
to pay attention to your body in your mind in relation to how much time you're
spending online and how it impacts you and
what we do with our schools is we provide
professional learning.
We provide high quality resources, we work with a reputable organizations
but common sense media and use their their materials
to provide lessons to students we work with students on actually building a daily
schedule that incorporates that about once of activities so they're mindful of what
their day looks like.
During the school day.
We provide resources to families
and also suggest that they use
various scheduling tools and the American Academy of Pediatrics has a wonderful
website where you really can think about all the things that are important to you
your life from
bathing to eating to your clarinet lesson.
Yeah, and once you begin building in time for all of those
you know self-care and you know
hobbies and things that you're you're doing you begin to see I don't really have you
know 3 hours to spend.
You know playing a game online right so that breaking away from the screen
interesting again having that awareness to pay attention to
you know women, it's hurting because I've been on line a long time or I feel really
sluggish.
My eyes hurt,
you know be able to actually notice it right and then
having the will to to do something to change it and make yourself feel a little bit
better.
I like that term having the will to do it because in my mind I always say having the
discipline to do it, yeah, you know sort of making yourself get up and walk away.
You know is it once an hour or what is it.
I think you know really depends I I think each person is a little bit different.
I definitely tried to get up and stand and stretch at least an hour.
Take a walk down to the you know right now we're working from home I take a walk
down to the kitchen and get a fresh glass water just getting up and moving a little
bit gives your mind a break gives your eyes a break get your body moving a little
bit.
And I think if you're teaching your child how to pay attention in your modeling that
behavior for them and for young children it's really important not only to model it.
But talk about what you're doing and why you're doing it
because they may not notice the why they may they may see you getting up, but they
may not know why you're getting up

and that it's intentional so talking it through with them is really supportive in developing those habits with them as well
when I think about it, you know
young people have grown up with screens since they were born.
People my age and around my age didn't
and so you know we worried a little bit about TV.
But that was in it and now there's a screen pretty much 24 7 between the phones
and the laptops and you know that the school because we have to do that right now.
But I think most likely
the student to probably teaching the parents, a thing or 2 aren't they
absolutely I mean our students are incredibly
curious when I talk with students, I'm always really impressed by how where they are.
Some of the issues that exist in the online space.
You know I do think that they value their face to face friendships and conversations and activities and and I see many of them
intentially putting a phone start to have conversations with one another and then I see some that don't do that.
But I I absolutely think that it's a partnership might an when when parents
can talk to their child in a very casual way
that
opens the door of communication and it's a normal part of their everyday relationship.
When
concerns arise like spending too much time on screens or
that you know, maybe they're posting something they shouldn't on social media.
Those conversations don't feel awkward them because you've always had these kinds of conversations.
So the more Nomar and normal and every day you can make conversations about technology.
What you're observing seeing.
The better the chance it's not they're not going to go on the defensive when something actually happens and you have to address it.
>> It's really been an evolution has an you from probably in your experience.
Years.
Here with that CPS what are some of the trends you seen with students and some of the student behavior we talk about you know modeling behavior and that sort of thing and unfortunately sometimes in this virtual environment we have had students whether they're it's a prank or whatever they might be doing.
Bill take somebodys log in and they'll go in and pretend there somebody else and do something that like I said before they probably never do in person, but they're doing something that
could be hurtful and then now that parents many of them are sitting with their children are in the same room because they're working from home and the students are in online school.
So they're seeing some of this so what
what are some of the things that you have seen and how have we address those as a system.
I think that there's.
>> In terms of schooling, one of the biggest challenges I think teachers are facing

yeah is plagiarism
and students that
you know are using their resources and he but perhaps don't yet
have the
that built in awareness that their actions can actually show disrespect to the
people whose information they're publishing as their own.
And in some cases, you know it can even you know cost the
author or the artist their their livelihood
so I think one thing that paerson
teachers can can work on is really
having students look at
plagiarism and copyright through the lens of a creator yeah,
because when they can see themselves as potential creators and many of our students
are already creators.
I'm I'm Lee when they can look
through that lens they can develop that
that empathy and respect they creators deserve
and I think that you know I look at
so many of our kids have done really creative things I read every member.
A couple of years ago.
There was a student from Mount Vernon high school and
he had the most incredible long wavy hair
and he he wanted I don't quote me on this, but I think he wanted to go into like
style and fashion or something like that
and so he started his own youtube channel
and his youtube channel he was using you know his
the whole purpose was to build a footprint
that would launch him into the world of style and fashion.
Yeah.
So
he created all kinds of videos about hair care products that were good for people
who had hair like his
different ways he styled his hair he was really funny.
And you know some of his videos were really popular.
I was as shocked one day whenever I flew out to California that was running a race
out there and I was at the airport.
And my uber driver drove up and got
I got in the car and I was like wow you your hair looks just like this student from
where I'm from
and he has this amazing youtube channel you should check out all about how to take
care of here that's just like yours, yeah, and he turned around he looked at me and
he said are you talking edgy as wave.
He knew he knew the channel out so that just kind of floored me so we definitely can
you know, but I think our kids are craving the ability to be influential in the
world, yeah, I think that they are
seeking ways to make the world a better place.
I see them using social media platforms
to you know promote causes that they care about
to make connections with others who can
can help with those causes skin, I see them using it to educate the public and these

are really positive trends absolute very gives me a lot of hope for a future
and we just have to be vigilant about you know being a supportive adult in their
life to make sure that they can navigate the dangers in the ups and downs that also
come along with that.
>> Absolutely and that's what being a digital citizen is isn't because I tend to go
to that negative side, you know probably because of my role here in the public
school system.
And so I see sort of some of the alarming things that have happened
but I really love it that you're talking about the positive things in the positive
ways that
our students are behaving on social media.
>> Yeah, you know, I know that you would also ask what other,
you know trends where we see AM and I mention plagiarism but I think
you know many of our parents are really concerned about inappropriate content
perhaps students that might use you know
inappropriate language with one another in the in the school environments.
And you know, we are teachers are very vigilant to trying to stay on top of all
that, but I will say that
supporting our kids with digital citizenship is absolutely a shared responsibility
we had on our parents and they depend on us.
And we are partners working for the best for all of our students together.
I also think it's important to remember that children are not adults.
Sometimes they know right from wrong.
But don't yet have the self-regulation skills
or the will to listen to those gut feelings that toman something isn't right.
But then they shouldn't be doing something
and if we can support their thinking.
And we can ask them questions that prompt them to think about the impact of their
actions.
And we can support them in looking at situations from many different perspectives.
We're setting them up for life so
when we have situations that are unfortunate.
We need to look at those as opportunities
for learning, yeah and I absolutely do that work when it's most meaningful which is
in that moment
and on the flip side, you know, we're always trying to make our environments more
secure and safe.
With the technologies that are available to us.
So that's an ongoing process we have
wonderful people in our Department of information technology that are
constantly you know trying to stay on top of different ways of doing things to to
make the environment more more secure.
It's interesting.
>> When you talk about that because I do think that
a lot of times parents don't know
because maybe they're not following their child's twitter feed or social media.
What responsibility or what actions do you suggest parents take.
When you say it's a shared responsibility.
I'm hoping parents are listening
so what kinds of suggestions in actions.

Do you suggest for them.
So is a a.
>> A couple different ways to look at this if you are the parent of a young child.
And you're just starting on this journey
really consider using a gradual release with your students or your children.
That's what it's like an edge term.
You know many of the gaming systems that children use and the accounts that they
they can sign their child up for there are parental controls built in.
And it's OK to use those parental controls to support your child, but what I do
caution parents on is
you can't depend on them to do the work for you right, it's really easy to put on a
parental control and then go about your day.
But if you're not spending time entering your child on media
and their Internet use they're never going to to be prepared for when
those parental controls are lifted.
And we also have to remember students are aren't always in our care they go to
friends houses they got on all other kinds of places.
So we always have to have that goal of
I need them to understand how to maneuver that the
the online space.
They need to know what information is okay to share or not share they need to
understand finance.
You know it now that
you buy thing so much online you don't have those tangible dollars it
exchanging through your hands and so what we're seeing is students
that don't really have that sense of finance I highly recommend from a young age
when children want to buy things online you keep a ledger so that they learn how to
see the actual money that they're spending
and then if you're on the flip side and you know your kids are already out of the
gate, they have a phone and now you're thinking about this.
What I can say is it's never too late to have a sincere conversation with your
child.
You know we as parents make mistakes all the time me and and we're constantly
learning to and so you'd you only know what you know right.
So if if your child already has a phone and things are not going.
Well, yeah,
it's not too late to sit down with your child and say you know, hey
you know, we got you a phone and G there were a lot of things I didn't think about
at the time we got our phones.
So I want to you know,
but we need to do a little bit of a reset
and I want you to be a part of that conversation I need to understand what's
important to you
and I need to share what's important to me
and then we've got to set some ground rules that that we're going to follow as a
family.
And we have so many wonderful resources to support families with those kinds of
conversations.
If you go to our CBS Web site search for digital citizenship, okay, establishing
expectations.

If you search for digital citizenship, establishing expectations, that's a wonderful page.
We have an entire page about media balance there's a whole tool kit about how to support media balancing your family.
We have you know online courses, we've got lots of tip sheets in multiple languages.
So many of our schools have their collections that they have on their websites too so
use your resources and common sense.
Media is also wonderful place
to go especially for reviews and that's something else that I think is really important for that parent child conversation.
Our information these days is so valuable and when I say or information, I'm talking about you know our names where we shop what we buy our location
and all of those things are tracked because they're very valuable they help companies
personalized content so that you're more likely to buy thing at the Suns and yes, and so
one of the things we need to work with her kids on is is data privacy as well.
So I I think this actually is cyber security awareness.
Week yes.
Months years or so Meyer is so much but the good thing is we don't have to know all this ourselves we have great organizations that walk you through things.
So the National cyber security alliance
has a fantastic Web site for adults and kids
and it really will walk you through,
you know all kinds of different tips for securing your personal information.
Everything from you know what settings you should be using to hey don't forget to delete apps that you're no longer using.
It has.
Information about 2 factor authentication
which we're encouraging our staff to use and we encourage our families use two-factor authentication on their accounts.
So definitely check out some of those resources on the national
cyber security alliance website,
they're really going to get to the station is a great suggestions.
You know because truthfully technology is evolving.
>> In this bombing fast.
Yeah, and that's not going to stop so how do we as parents and people who care about our kids where neighbors, kids are
nieces and nephews,
whoever they might be how do we keep up with this and
where should you know should we be doing like weekly check ins
on some sort of resource ourselves what do you recommend.
>> Well, I think he'll hit you know, that's a tough question because they talked a lot of parents and
8 o sometimes they're just like there's too many portals there's too many gaming systems and they'll have their own frontal controls and
I keep up with all this.
I think you know number one use some of that time.
When your child is using media in games to spend time with them

that's built in time for fun in connection.
And through that time you can you can work in some some education and learning you
can ask them good questions that prompt their thinking.
Second I think it's really important to not get caught up in.
Well.
All the other students have this so now my child has to have this.
Every child is different what they need is different and what they're ready for is
different and nobody knows that better than the parent.
So parents really encourage you to think about what is your child ready for
and what is
what is a way to get them as close to what they want and and are saying they need
without overwhelming yourself because you can't keep up with what they're doing
you're going to end up with with
you know some challenges down the road.
So you do want to make it manageable not just for your child, but also for you.
Yeah, it's a really good suggestions.
And I love the thought of sort of
making sure that you build in that time for those conversations, yeah.
Cash it's tough isn't it.
Yeah.
It is a challenge these days, but
you know I think when we take a goal based approach instead of a fear based
approach.
I love it changes the conversations to a much more positive when when we lens and
when we look for those opportunities,
not only for children to learn and grow through our digital resources.
And when we look for those opportunities to use media to teach things like character
traits
you know as you're watching a movie together enjoying family time Mrs.
Pas that movie a key points in and ask my gosh, you know, did you notice what that
character just did.
And you know what do you think how do you think that made the other character feel
those are really powerful ways to share what you're thinking.
So kind of get inside your child's head where they had to really cause lower look
for the opportunities and take a goal based approach
rather than a fear-based approach I really love that suggestion.
>> And even thinking about you know after you read a book maybe read that book
together if your child's reading a book for class
pace to do that wasn't my son's, yeah, I read that book and have a conversation with
you think about it when that happened
or if you're bending on a TV series.
You know, maybe do it together
and sometimes as a parent, you know bending towards what your child wants even if
you might not have such an interest in a tree in and I do think you know during this
pandemic the winter is coming.
We're going to have to look for creative ways to stay connected and to stay
positive and sort of charged up an office IQ test and she was given to me really
outstanding
were you ever a teacher or view always been sort of on the design side.
>> I was a teacher at the beginning of my career I worked in a private school and

then late
I went on to teach alternative education here in Fairfax County
for 5 years when and then I transition to become a school based technology
specialist and then later went and moved into or instructional services Department
structural technology specialist
well Fairfax County public schools is lucky to have.
>> Have you been a wonderful ride and I love this community will stay don't go
anywhere.
I do think I'd love to think about different opportunities and ways to highlight
some of the information you're talking about
in in different ways
because I think you know even if students are receiving this information school.
Maybe we can work with parents and PT A's
to figure out better ways to get information parents too because yeah as you said it
is a shared responsibility
and as in as a parent who cares about my children, I know that everybody out there
listening they to care about theirs.
But may be feeling overwhelmed, sometimes and with the news and with everything
going on
sometimes it's easier to sort of focus on that
negativity and I really appreciate you being here today,
sharing a few minutes of your time to talk about the positivity the opportunities.
So before I let you go we like to ask a couple of quick question.
This is.
>> What you can be for Halloween.
Well actually I don't have a costume pick that for myself but I
have an English bulldog named Wally all and he always dresses up for the kids in the
neighborhood and he's going to be a punk rocker this year.
Oh I love it, he's got a little no ha oh my gosh fun.
>> Close to have to that's great with oldest thing you have in your freezer
>> probably don't remember right.
Let me think
well, you know
be very transparent.
The beginning of covid you know probably 8 more than I should have
and so over the past House pop and chocolate right, you know,
and then all of a struggle with that but yeah over the past to
2 to 3 months, I've been really working on getting back to a more healthy way of
eating and so I probably have ice cream in my refrigerator, my freezer that's
got to be a 4 month-old all right and probably has ice.
>> Just feel a little bit of the ice off.
You to go throw it out than that.
>> And the final question what you're most unusual talent.
I most unusual talent.
>> Oh my goodness.
I don't know that I have
anything I would classify as a specific talent, I ate.
>> Singing my car really well when I was listening favorite songs.
>> Oh gosh, I have so many songs.
Big music lover really.

So you might catch me listening to you know coffee House music one day, yeah, rock and roll the next day bluegrass the next day.
So
you just never know,
yeah, see me at a stoplight my windows down you'll probably hear East.
Honestly, I think the singing his helped
get through this period, 02:00AM sick and
I think it's really help sort of get through all this just.
>> Cheney and like you just change the different channels and
go on to the satellite and
yes, try new things that I like to see what sticks left the old
music's good for the soul, yeah, absolutely
well thank you again team Isis Kerr being here and for sharing your tips in your information and your experiences
with digital citizenship
and I hope that everyone out there is thinking about this and how they can talk with their own students or young people in their lives or their friends about digital citizenship.
Thank you have the top pick out your welcome, I'm really happy to be here.
Well, it's great to have you and I'd love to have you back as she explores some more topics.
Do you have a topic you'd like to healthy minds podcast to explore.
>> Please let us know send your suggestions to him.