The Effect of Video Games on Youth

John Smith
Mr. Sahli
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Youth have many different pastimes. One of the most controversial pastimes is video games. Video games have a variety of effects on the players. Not all of the effects are negative and they don't always affect people in the same way, but there is no doubt that there are effects from playing the games. Many youth play video games, which have both positive and negative effects.

Youth play video games for many different reasons. They play games for fun, or for a social activity with their friends. Some research has shown that youth can use games as a way to relieve stress and to help with depression (George). Many of the youth just play them for something to do when they are bored, and play the games for nothing more than the satisfaction of destroying something without the consequences of the real world. Each person may have a different reason for playing video games, but sometimes those reasons are good and sometimes they are bad.

Video games can have positive effects on the players. Research done by many different professors has shown that there are multiple effects that have arose because of the games. One of those positive effects is improved hand-eye coordination. The players are forced to use a fast response to changes in the games, and in most cases, they don't have time to look down and figure out which buttons are which, forcing them to learn the controls and be able to use them on impulse. The players have shown an improvement in multitasking and other similar skills. Some youth have shown a decrease in reaction time to situations that require a fast response (Wikipedia). The fast response is caused by the increasingly faster paced gaming experiences. Certain skills that are used in the professional world can be acquired through gaming, like the keyhole surgery skills that surgeons use while performing certain surgeries (Phillips). The slight hand movements are best learned through video games because most games require some form of minor movements to achieve certain objectives, so the gamers have to acquire these skills to beat the game. One of the major effects of habitual gaming is the increase in attention span of older gamers (Wikipedia). Some of the accepted research done on the subject showed that habitual gamers have better attention to details, even details in the peripheral vision (Wikipedia). It also showed that the gamers were able to pay attention to objects that were more rapidly moving and changing (Phillips). That also made their memory of briefly displayed information sharper and more effective (Wikipedia). These gamers also have developed the skill of resistance to distraction. The gamers have adopted an attitude of high concentration and most don't realize

that while they play they are actually learning (Wikipedia). The playing of the games teaches the players to self regulate brain patterns, which allows them to improve their learning abilities (Jenks). The result of video game play on students is actually opposite from the popular belief because IQ scores have actually been going up (Phillips). A really strong benefit of parent and child game playing is that both can have a meaningful conversation without feeling like a confrontation is necessary (Zipp). The last major benefit of video games is the way it helps ADHD patients (Jenks). The games actually help them to focus and to learn.

Video games can also have negative effects on their users. Heavy gaming can result in an increase in violent behavior, if the game contains violent content. Research done by Joanne Cantor has shown that if the families of the gamers show different morals than that on the game, then the risk of violent behavior is greatly decreased (Phillips). While there is no link between the playing of M-rated (mature) games due to violence and school shootings, there is a link between those games and schoolyard bullying in children ages 12 to 14 (Zipp). The heavy playing of video games by young children has shown an effect of developing ADHD. The younger the child is the higher the risk of the development of ADHD due to video game play. Research done by Bruce Bartholow showed that children that played violent games had a lesser response to shocking imagery. That meant that the children thought the acts portrayed in the pictures as more moral or accepted (Phillips). Even though not everyone is affected in the same ways, a study done by Dr. Murray resulted in proof that everyone is still affected (Phillips). The gamers' attitudes, behaviors, and values change with video game playing. A study by researcher Douglas Gentile found that 8.5 percent of youth between ages 8 and 18 showed multiple signs of addiction (George). The use of games by youth to get "exercise" has become increasingly relied upon. Though in truth the games have youth exercise as they progress through the game, it doesn't substitute for real exercise.

The effects of video games on their players have a wide range of benefits and drawbacks. The user can have their behavior change in little and big ways, depending on what their life outside of the game is like. Their coordination can increase while they multitask through game play. IQ scores have been rising since video games were introduced. Youth have a new way to release some of the built up stress that they deal with. The games can affect their behavior in negative ways though. The players can become more violent and antisocial. In young children, the games can also cause ADHD from over gaming. The players can be desensitized to shocking

images, but in the case of surgeons that could be helpful so it depends on the case whether the effects are good or bad. The games will always affect their user but depending on the conditions of their use the effects can be more positive than negative.

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