

Violent Video Game Effects on Children and Adolescents

Theory, Research, and Public Policy

Violent video games are successfully marketed to and easily obtained by children and adolescents. Even the U.S. government distributes one such game, America's Army, through both the internet and its recruiting offices. Is there any scientific evidence to support the claims that violent games contribute to aggressive and violent behaviour? Anderson, Gentile, and Buckley first present an overview of empirical research on the effects of violent video games, and then add to this literature three new studies that fill the most important gaps. They update the traditional General Aggression Model to focus on both developmental processes and how media-violence exposure can increase the likelihood of aggressive and violent behaviour in both short and long-term contexts. Violent Video Game Effects on Children and Adolescents also reviews the history of these games' explosive growth, and explores the public policy options for controlling their distribution. Anderson et al. describe the reaction of the games industry to scientific findings that exposure to violent video games and other forms of media violence constitutes a significant risk factor for later aggressive and violent behavior. They argue that society should begin a more productive debate about whether to reduce the high rates of exposure to media violence, and delineate the public policy options that are likely be most effective. As the first book to unite empirical research on and public policy options for violent video games, Violent Video Game Effects on Children and Adolescents will be an invaluable resource for student and professional researchers in social and developmental psychology and media studies.

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