

Since the dawn of video games there have been questions asked about their potential link to violent or disruptive behaviour in people, and in particular, young people. These questions certainly haven't been without merit; violent content and graphics seemingly get more and more common as technology progresses. But what's the truth when it comes to the science? Thankfully, in today's age we actually have a much more solid idea of what the link between the two looks like, and whether or not we should be concerned. In this guide, we'll look at the arguments both for and against the idea that video games cause violent behaviour.

Do Video Games Actually Cause VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR?

FOR

AGAINST

VIOLENT AND MATURE THEMES

There's no getting around the fact that yes, some video games do carry violent or more mature themes and to the casual observer, they can be quite startling. Use of weapons, bad language, mature content or scary images are worrying things to introduce to a young mind at the best of times, and even more so when they can be interacted with.

Realistically this comes down to the judgement of carers as to whether they think it's appropriate for their young ones, but a great place to start is the ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board) rating of a game. Not only do these ratings carry a recommended age, but also give an idea of what kinds of things will be in the game.

ANGER EXHIBITED DURING OR AFTER PLAYING GAMES

Many parents notice an increase in their young one's anger or agitation after playing a video game. This is very common. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that video games are an interactive medium and, unlike a film or TV show, you have direct control over what is happening on the screen, making it much more personal.

In 2011, a study into The General Aggression Model (GAM) suggested that video games can stimulate and encourage feelings of violence and aggression in players, and gives players an opportunity to learn and practice aggressive tendencies, which translate over into the real world. While this study was debunked due to its flawed process, parents should still be vigilant if they see a child exhibiting signs of aggression while playing, and encourage frequent breaks from screen time.

RELATIVELY UNKNOWN LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Because gaming is such a new form of media, not many studies can confidently predict what the long-term effects of gaming on young minds will be. While it's widely assumed by scientists and researchers that there will be very few negative side-effects, it's still one of the great unknowns. Despite this, gaming should be treated the same as any other new media, and enjoyed in regulated amounts.

HISTORICAL HYSTERIA

Modern video games are a cultural phenomena, and we're still getting to grips with gaming as an entertainment medium. If we look back through history however, there's an emergent pattern of media blaming new technologies for a whole host of things.

For instance, when radio first became popular, people would blame it for earthquakes and droughts. It's good to keep an open mind when something new and popular appears on the scene like gaming. Just because it isn't understood, it doesn't necessarily mean it's dangerous.

ALMOST EVERY MODERN SCIENTIFIC STUDY

As studies into whether video games make people violent become more common, we've come to understand a great many things about how the processes and measuring the outcomes should be carried out. As such, almost every modern study on the subject has turned up an inconclusive outcome finding a link.

In a thorough joint 2019 study between the Universities of Oxford and Cardiff in Royal Society Open Science, scientists concluded that "there was no evidence for a critical tipping point relating violent game engagement to aggressive behaviour." The study asked both teenagers and their parents to monitor and feed back on their aggressive thoughts after playing video games in an attempt to give a well-rounded result.

MISUNDERSTOOD OUTSIDE FACTORS

It's easy to see why people link violent video games with real world aggressive behaviour, and there is certainly some truth in the fact they can make young people upset in the short-term. After all, nobody likes the feeling of losing whether it's in the real world or a virtual one. But we shouldn't mistake causation for correlation when assessing what this means.

Sometimes outside factors can contribute to shifts in behaviour that could be exacerbated by gaming, but not caused by it. If you're concerned over recent mood swings or aggressive tendencies in loved ones, there's no substitute for talking it out and trying to get to the route of the problem. A lot of people use video games as an escape from everyday life, and taking this away without proper thought could make things worse.



SHOULD WE STOP BLAMING VIDEO GAMES FOR VIOLENT AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR?

Weighing up the pros and cons before letting our young ones play a video game should always be at the forefront of our minds, but the evidence of the negative impressions they leave has been debunked time and again in recent years.

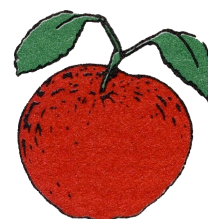
It's likely that the argument around violence and video games will continue for some years, and there's certainly work to be done on both sides when it comes to researching the actual repercussions. While modern scientific studies have started to lean heavily towards there being zero or minimal connections, it's still vitally important to listen and do your own research with an open mind. If there's concern about growing behavioural issues in your kids, talk to them and encourage breaks, or play with them and try to experience the games yourself. You might just find something you like in the process!

Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201902/its-aggression-actually-linked-violent-video-games>, <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-50640983>, <https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2003/10/anderson>, <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/violent-video-games>, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/olliebarber/2019/02/15/new-study-shows-that-there-is-no-link-between-violent-video-games-and-aggression-in-teenagers/#680409d328e>, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170812083034/http://public.psych.toronto.edu/cas/abstracts/2010-2014/11DAB.pdf>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game_controversies, <https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/article/teens-who-play-violent-video-games-not-more-violent-behavior>, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ulterior-motives/201908/the-evidence-video-games-lead-violence-is-weak>



The Apple

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Dear Parents/Carer

We haven't let the recent wet weather dampen our spirits here at Isaac Newton. The children have all been hard at work and there have been some very exciting things happening.

Class 11 have had a particularly exciting week as they have been dissecting 'Tudor Poo' to find out about what the Tudor's would have eaten. Masks and gloves were of course essential...even though it wasn't real!



Also this week, a group of Year 3&4 children attended the first Gifted and Talented session with Inspire+. Along with other chosen children from primary schools around Grantham, the programme will see them working on a variety of activities including team work, diet and nutrition, confidence and communication. They all had a fantastic time and we look forward to seeing how they progress through the programme!

You will also notice that we have finally had some playground markings laid down onto our Key Stage One Playground. All the children have been making the most of our 'Daily Mile' track. This has been funded by the £1,000 which we received last year from 'Moto in the Community'. We are still looking to develop our playground further and are currently part of the 'Asda Tokens Scheme' to raise money for this. Please look out for our box when you collect your tokens after shopping in Asda! This promotion ends on 31st December...I will write to you to inform you of how much we have raised and what we intend to spend it on.



Parents' Evenings will soon be upon us and I hope to see many of you there- should I not be away on paternity leave, which could happen any day now! If I am still absent then I will no doubt see you in school at some point over the Christmas period. Please look out for the dates of Christmas events taking place, further on in my newsletter.

Have a great few weeks!

Chris Heathcote

Chris Heathcote
Headteacher

Santa’s Grotto

Our school Christmas Fayre will take place on Wednesday 11th December, from 3.30pm-5.00pm in the school hall.



This year there will be a Santa’s Grotto taking place, however we only have a **limited number of tickets** due to time constraints. Tickets are now available from the school office **on a first-come-first-served-basis**.

Unfortunately your child will not be able to visit Santa’s Grotto unless they have a ticket. The tickets are available in timed slots and you will need to choose a slot when you purchase them from the school office.

Once again, we apologise that we are only able to offer a limited a number of tickets and understand that there may be some disappointment. However, we hope that Santa will still be able to visit the children on last day of term with a treat as he has done in previous years!

Donations for Christmas Fayre

We are now collecting donations for the Christmas Fayre. These include:

- Tombola items
- Toys and books for children (in good condition)
- Bottles of wine.
- Sweets
- Chocolate Bars

Please hand in any donations to the school office- they will all be gratefully received. Thank you for your support.

Sun Books

We will be collecting tokens for the Sun Newspaper’s ‘Books for Schools’ campaign. We need to collect 3,500 tokens from ‘The Sun’ and ‘The Sun on Sunday’ between Saturday, November 23, 2019, and Saturday, January 18, 2020. Please can you hand in any tokens to the school office. We will let you know how we are progressing towards our target. Thank you for your support!

PGL Photos

We are intending to put all of our PGL photos onto a ‘Google Drive’ for parents to access. In order for us to be able to do this we will need certain permissions from all parents/carers in Year 6. We have sent out a letter regarding this. Please can you send the reply slip

back as soon as possible so that we can get the ‘Google Drive’ set up. If we do not have your permission, then we will be unable to upload any photos of your child to the Google Drive. Once we have the necessary permission we will share the link with parents/carers.

The Rotary Shoe Box Collection

Once again we will be sending out shoe boxes to children across the world this Christmas. For those children it may well be the only present they get this Christmas and any donations would be gratefully received.

Each class has now been given a shoe box to fill.

Some suggestions of things that would be appropriate:

- Toy cars
- Small teddies
- Marbles
- Bubbles
- Bouncy balls
- Pens and paper
- Hat and gloves

Please ensure toys are not damaged or broken and are small enough to fit multiple items in a small sized box. All donations must be handed in no later than Tuesday 12th November to your class teacher.

School Community Survey

If you have a child here at Isaac Newton then we would really like to hear what YOU think of our school!

We have just opened our community survey which will close on Friday 22nd November.

We would really appreciate your feedback and will use this to help inform decisions which we make as a school.

You can access the survey online using the following link: bit.ly/insparentsurvey or by scanning the QR code. Alternatively, your child should have received a letter and a paper survey today, so if you would prefer to complete it this way, then please return the completed survey to either the school reception or your child’s class teacher.



Christmas Dates:

Thursday 5th December - afternoon

Foundation Stage Nativity – will begin at 2:15 (or once we have got our costumes on!)

Friday 6th December - morning

Foundation Stage Nativity – will begin at 9:30 (or once we have got our costumes on!)

Monday 9th December –afternoon

Years 3-6 Christmas Show – will begin a 2:00

Tuesday 10th December – morning

Years 3-6 Christmas Show – will begin a 9:30

Tuesday 10th December – afternoon

Years 1 and 2 Christmas Show – will begin a 2:00

Wednesday 11th December - morning

Years 1 and 2 Christmas Show – will begin at 9.30

Thursday 12th December – afternoon

Violin and Class 5 and 10 musical concert – invites will be sent to Parents/Carers of pupils who are participating

Applying for a place in Reception next year

Children born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 are due to start Reception in September 2020.

Don’t forget that the window for applying for a place in Reception will open on 14th November. Parents should receive information from Lincolnshire County council on or around this date. If your child is 4 this school year (September 20 to August 21) then you need to apply for a place soon! If you would like to come for a visit or know anybody who does then just make an appointment at the school office.

Children in Need 2019

On Friday 15th November, children are invited to come in non-uniform in return for a donation of £1. The theme is ‘Something Spotty.’ There will also be a giant picture of Pudsey Bear in the school reception (by the library) on which coins can be placed- so please send in any spare change that you have lying around at home. All money raised will go to the Children in Need charity.



Dates For Your Diary:

15 th Nov	Non-uniform day for Children in Need
20 th Nov	Parents Evening (3.45-8.00pm)
21 st Nov	Parents Evening (3.45-5.00pm)
25 th Nov	Flu Immunisation
5 th Dec	EYFS Nativity 2.15pm
6 th Dec	EYFS Nativity 9.30am
10 th Dec	Christmas Shows Years 3-6: 9.30am Years 1-2: 2.00pm
11 th Dec	Christmas Shows Years 1-2: 9.30pm
11 th Dec	Christmas Fayre (3:30pm—5:00pm in the School Hall)
12 th Dec	Violin Concert Class 5 and 10 (Invitation Only)
13 th Dec	Christmas Lunch
19 th Dec	Last day of term Christmas Jumper Day (for ‘Save the Children’ charity)

School Term Dates:

Term 1	4 Sept - 18 Oct	October Break
Term 2	29 Oct - 19 Dec	Christmas Break
Term 3	6 Jan - 13 Feb	February Break
Term 4	24 Feb – 2 Apr	Easter Break
Term 5	20 Apr - 22 May	May Break
Term 6	1 Jun - 21 Jul	Summer Holiday