

Understanding the Latest Research on ADHD & Video Games



ADHD Awareness Month – The Facts on Technology and ADHD (article originally published in LearningWorks for Kids)

A [recent study](#) published in the journal Pediatrics details serious concerns about the use of video games with children with ADHD. This study suggests that children with ADHD who play excessive amounts of video games are likely to display higher levels of inattention. There is also the suggestion that problematic video-game use is associated with difficulty in impulse control and response inhibition. This new study has helped to bring this important issue to the forefront and highlights the need to look carefully at the research on ADHD and video games.

Previous studies have addressed a variety of issues about the impact of video games on ADHD. Much of the research on ADHD and video games has explored problematic use, including the amount of time children with ADHD play video games, why they are drawn to playing video games, possible addiction to video games for children with ADHD, and concerns about violence in video games. Some studies have attempted to answer questions about how video games and other digital technologies affect attention span, concentration, and multi-tasking skills.

There is also substantial research on ADHD and video games

suggesting that the use of screen-based technologies can help children with ADHD acquire self-management skills, learn breathing and relaxation techniques, and train working memory skills. Other researchers have begun to explore how video games can be helpful in psychotherapy for children with ADHD, improve executive functions, and increase attention and learning of reading, mathematics, and other academic content.

[LearningWorks for Kids](#), an affiliate of SCCFC, has developed a series of articles about the research on ADHD and video games. These resources provide parents, educators, and clinicians with more detail about the research in each of these areas. Each post also details specific recommendations based upon what is currently known about ADHD and video games.

We take a balanced view of this important issue. We recognize that screen-based technologies are not going away and are vitally important for the development of the digital-literacy and creativity skills needed for school and jobs. At the same time, there are risks associated with excessive and inappropriate video-game and technology use, particularly among children with ADHD and other psychiatric disorders.

We hope to help parents, educators, and other healthcare professionals make the engagement that many children with ADHD demonstrate with digital media into more productive activities by providing them with the latest research on ADHD and video games. While we do not advocate unfettered use of digital media, we also do not see total restriction from technology as being helpful to children with ADHD (along with being virtually impossible in today's digital world). Through the use of this up-to-date, research-based information parents will be better able to find effective strategies for integrating these tools into their children's lives.