

From Screen Time to Family Time: Why Gaming with Your Kids is a Good Move

Learning about your child's relationship to screen time can be challenging, especially when it comes to managing screen time and deciding whether to engage in video games with your children. While concerns about excessive screen time and its potential links to obesity are valid, it is also true that play is a fundamental way children learn, and technology now plays a significant role in their playtime. Integrating video games into shared activities can be a constructive approach to learning and bonding.



While some parents may be intimidated by their children's gaming skills, this should not discourage family gaming sessions. Instead, it offers a unique opportunity for children to take on a teaching role, which can boost their communication skills and cognitive development. By inviting your child to instruct you in their favorite video game, you're providing them with a platform to enhance their ability to organize thoughts, empathize, articulate complex ideas, and cultivate patience.

Therefore, video gaming together can foster improved family

relationships and social competencies. Research, such as the study from Brigham Young University, suggests that shared screen time during gaming can lead to better behavior and a stronger sense of family connection. The Joan Ganz Cooney Center emphasizes the importance of “joint media engagement,” recommending that parents and children participate together in various forms of digital media.

Recent research has also outlined the positive effects of video gaming, including advancements in reading comprehension, fluid intelligence, and executive functioning. In today’s world, proficiency with games, apps, and other digital media is becoming increasingly essential for developing the skills necessary for the workforce of the future. Therefore, parents are encouraged to integrate not only traditional activities like sports and board games into their parenting styles, but also to embrace digital play as a meaningful part of their interactions with their children.



Here are four new suggestions for parents looking to incorporate video games into their time with their kids:

1. **Select Cooperative Games:** Choose video games that require teamwork, which can help you and your child learn to work together towards common goals, enhancing cooperation and communication.

2. Engage in Active Gaming: Opt for video games that encourage physical activity, such as dance or fitness games. This type of screen time promotes a healthy lifestyle and can be an enjoyable way for the whole family to stay active.

3. Set Screen Time Goals: Use gaming as an opportunity to teach your child about balance. Set clear goals for screen time that include breaks for physical activity and other interests, helping your child develop a healthy relationship with technology.

3. Explore Educational Game Platforms: Investigate educational platforms that offer a variety of games designed to enhance learning in subjects like math, science, and language arts. These games can make screen time more productive and align with your child's academic needs.



Here are five resources for parents on gaming with their kids:

1. [Common Sense Media](#): Common Sense Media provides reviews

and age recommendations for games, helping parents select appropriate and educational video games for their children. They also offer articles and tips on how to manage screen time effectively.

2. [Family Video Game Database](#): This database is a comprehensive resource offering detailed information about video games, including their themes, duration, and the number of players that can participate. It's designed to help families find games they can enjoy together.
3. [AskAboutGames](#): AskAboutGames provides answers to common questions parents might have about video gaming, including advice on family gaming and understanding game ratings. It also highlights the positive aspects of gaming and how it can be a force for good.
4. [Childnet International](#): As part of their online safety advice, Childnet International offers guidance on how parents can engage with their children's gaming, including how to get involved and how to address safety concerns.
4. [The Entertainment Software Rating Board \(ESRB\)](#): The ESRB provides a rating system for video games and apps to help parents make informed choices. Their website also includes resources on setting parental controls and understanding the content and context of games.
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In conclusion, navigating the digital landscape as a family

can be a rewarding journey that enhances the parent-child relationship and equips children with essential life skills. By actively participating in their children's gaming, parents can foster a healthy balance between screen time and other activities, while also taking the opportunity to understand and guide their children's screen time. By diving in with the right mindset and some handy tips and tools, parents can switch up gaming and screen time from being a solo activity to a team effort that is both fun and educational. Screen time can be about strengthening family ties and getting the kids ready for a world where tech is everywhere, all the time.