



## How Violent Video Games Will Ruin Your Child

Violent video games are legalized drugs for children and teens, and parents must be given the ability to control the explicit content that their children are exposed to. Doing so would not be directly taking anything away from the kids and it would help prevent them from becoming destructive members of society. In 2010 the California Legislative body passed a law banning the sale and rental of violent video games to minors. This law would only regulate who

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purchased these games, not who played them. The kids would still be able to play their games, but parents would have more control and say in what their child is being exposed to. The video game companies challenged this law and sent their lawyers to court. The issue continued to be unresolved, and made it all the way to the Supreme Court. I stand resolved that violent video games lead to increased aggressive behavior, and expose kids to explicit and sexual content that parents should have some say in.

The complexity of video games promotes intelligence, problem solving, stimulates keen responses, improves hand eye coordination, and the list goes on and on. When played in moderation, video games can be a tool that even our military takes advantage of. However, my first contention is that not all video games are of such positive influential content. To begin, violent video games produce violent youth. Studies have shown that the playing of violent video games has a direct correlation to increased aggressive behavior. When the player uses violent actions and wins the game, they learn to associate violent behavior with pleasure. It is a proven fact that anything done in repetition forms habits. If children practice killing for hours a day, it would be naive to say that those actions on the controller would not relay to real life. This is supported by expert opinions from Gentile, Lynch, Linder, and Walsh, writers for the national institute on Media and the Family. The authors say, "Teens who play violent video games for extended periods of time show the following behaviors: 1. Tend to be more aggressive. 2. Are more prone to confrontation with their teachers. 3. May engage in fights with their peers. 4. See a decline in school achievements" (Sheff). This shows just how influential violent video games are.

Violent video games teach kids to be okay with fighting and killing and desensitize them to the seriousness of those actions. For example, when kids play a video game recreating war

they begin to think of war as just another thing people do, and not as people sacrificing their lives and fighting for their countries; they begin to not be able to distinguish the difference between real life and what they see in their game. In an excerpt from "A Closer Look: Effects of Violent Video Games" in the *Los Angeles Times* researchers state, "aggressive personality traits of self-reported aggressive acts- physical fights, arguments with teachers- often find an association between games and aggression(Adams)." In 2000 a number of important American medical associations such as The American Medical Association, American Association of Pediatrics, and many more came together to inform the public about the negative effects of violent video games. In their joint statement they say, "The exposure to violent media can elevate aggressive feelings and thoughts, especially in children. These effects on aggressive behavior can be long term." You trust these same associations with your child's life when you take them to the hospital or to doctor's appointments, so why stop now just because it pertains to a video game? Not only do the violent video games have an immediate effect on the childrens day to day lives, but can have long term ones too. So, while the other side of this argument tries to dispute this side by saying that videogames are beneficial and increase mental capacity, this side never disagreed. Researchers acknowledge the usefulness of video games, but those useful ones can not cause the negative ones to be overlooked and assumed beneficial.

There is no reason that these video games should not be subject to the same standards as sex. Courts should be able to apply the same legal standard that prohibits the sale of sexual content, to violent video games. It is not a matter of whether or not the content of these games is okay for children to play, because that is a whole other argument, but that the content is much too mature for kids to take part in without parent consent. As stated in an article by experts Eric Walsh and Todd Eastham, "the law defines a violent video game as one that depicts 'killing,



maiming, dismembering or sexually assaulting an image of a human being'." This proves that the law acknowledges that violent video games contain sexual content, and yet they still create a double standard and do not apply the same rules to violent video games as sexual content. This is truly flabbergasting due to the fact that violent games are sexually explicit themselves, but instead of just watching it happen before them on a screen, they control what is happening on a video game. Parents should have a say in what their children take part in. To dispute this law, it is argued that video games have the power to remove pain from sick children. The video games do so by distracting the sick or injured person and giving them a level of enjoyment to where their bodies release endorphins that override the pain they are feeling. However, this argument is invalid to the topic being debated because they state these benefits about video games as a whole. The law never disputes video games as a whole, but only violent ones that contain explicit and detrimental content. It is agreed that wholesome video games can be beneficial, but how is killing and sexual content is to the advantage of any party?

All things considered, violent video games lead to increased aggressive behavior, and expose kids to explicit and sexual content that parents should have some say in. A law in place prohibiting minors from purchasing these games would remove this controversy. These games increase aggressive behaviors in children, desensitize kids to killing, and expose kids to sexual content. The more kids that are exposed to these violent video games without parent consent, the more our society will become okay with the idea of killing and think of it as nothing more than something you do before bed; it will lead to an aggressive generation who had over exposure at early ages. While the opposing side of this argument may state that these efforts are an unnecessary hassle because the law does not even stop kids from playing these games, or that there are plenty of loopholes around the law (such as an older sibling purchasing the video game

and giving it to them), we say the least we can do is try. We can not sit around and watch the morality and ethics of our youth deteriorate just because the opposing side says our goals are unrealistic. We choose to have an optimistic point of view, supported by logic and evidence, that says putting this law in place will give parents more control over their children's lives and ultimately be a positive contribution to society.

### Rebuttal

My opponent is on the opposing side of this argument; he claims that there should not be a law regulating the buying and renting of violent video games. To begin his argument, \*\*\*\* states that if there is no law regulating who is able to view "R" rated movies, then there should not be one regulating who buys violent video games. This argument is invalid because the federal government told the movie industry that regulations were needed for these movies, and if the industry did not put rules in place, they would. So while there is no legitimate law for "R" rated movies, there would have been if the industry did not implement them themselves. Movie theatres require that viewers must be at least seventeen years of age to purchase a ticket, and if you are not of age your parent must come purchase it for you. So while there is no federal law in place for these movies, there is still a policy in place to regulate their distribution to the public and parent consent is needed. \*\*\*\*'s next point is that violent video games are good for you. However, in his explanation he solely states ways in which video games as a whole are beneficial, and gives zero evidence as to how violent ones are. And as I stated above, this side of the argument acknowledges that video games can be beneficial, but not ones that expose kids to killing, sexual images, and overall explicit content. \*\*\*\* also states that there are more things than video games that cause aggression such as, "a history of abuse, poverty, genetics, and

personality”, and I completely agree. There are many things that can cause kids to become violent, just like there are many things that can cause kids to be happy or sad. Violence is a reaction towards an emotion, and emotions come from all aspects of life. So while yes, there are other factors that contribute to a person becoming aggressive, violent video games most definitely make the situation worse. After further review of \*\*\*\*’s stance, I am only more convinced of mine. There should be a law in place regulating the selling and rental of violent video games to minors.

#### Works Cited

Adams, Jill. “A CLOser Look: Effects of Violent Video Games.” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May 2010.

Norcia, Andrea. “The Impact of Video Games on Children.” *Palo Alto Medical Foundation*, September 2004.

Sheff, David. “Game Over: Press Start to Continue.” *Cyber Active Publishing*, 1999.



Junior English  
High Level

All Subject Essay Rubric				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Writing Type:	Essay (Thesis Support/Informal)	Essay (Informative/Explanatory)	Narrative (ELA only)	Research (Analytic/Argumentative)
Score	5	4	3	2
Content	The writing has a sharp focus and clarity of purpose. The ideas are developed with examples and specific details including textual evidence and are thoroughly elaborated. All elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a clear central idea and a clear focus. Ideas are developed with textual evidence, even though the development may be uneven. Information is relevant. Most elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a vague central idea; there are shifts in focus or digressions. Ideas are listed, information may be incomplete or irrelevant, textual evidence may be lacking, and there is little development. Some elements of the prompt are not addressed.	The writing has unclear or confusing ideas. The ideas are missing relevant information, there is not enough information, or there is little or no development, and little textual evidence. Significant elements of the prompt are not addressed.
Organization	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with strong transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and there is a sense of completion about the writing.	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with simple transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and the writing may have a weak ending.	There is a weak beginning, middle, and end with gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in random order, there may be significant repetition, and the writing may have no ending.	There is no beginning or end with severe gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in a random or repetitive order. There may be too little information to demonstrate organization.
Conventions (Grammar and Spelling)	The writing exhibits superior control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits proper control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be a part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits weak control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors minimally affect the meaning of the writing.	The writing exhibits little to no control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors greatly affect the meaning of the writing.

Rationale:

This paper represents a high score because it uses both research and rhetorical appeals to inform and persuade its audience about the topic. The author addresses multiple counter arguments and persuasively argued for the thesis, despite some awkward phrasing and grammatical errors.