

VIDEO GAMES

"A 2022 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that video games have a positive effect on children including better performance on **cognitive skills** tests involving **impulse control** and **working memory** compared to children who have never played video games."



On the other hand, if kids play for hours and don't engage in any normal social interactions with their peers this can **negatively impact** their social development and ability to manage real relationships.

Studies show playing video games can contribute to **poor sleep** and **impact attention**, **academic performance**, **mood**, and **wellbeing**. Exposure to violent video games can contribute to **aggressive behaviors** in kids. Playing video games for long periods of time has also been linked with developing **obesity**.

WHAT DO EXPERTS SAY?

Online games can affect children's behavior both positively and negatively, depending on the child, the content, and the amount of time spent gaming. Negatively, excessive play can lead to aggression, poor sleep, and lower academic performance. On the other hand, moderation can foster cognitive benefits, social skills, and stress relief.

"Games like Minecraft can benefit kids in several ways. Through these brain games they **learn problem solving**, **strategizing**, flexibility and also **social skills**," said Dr. Bilge-Johnson.

"Also, if the content is pro-social – helping or doing something good (Mario Brothers) – we know that has a **positive effect** on the brain structure," said Dr. Bilge-Johnson.

