



futurelab
innovation in education

“YOU CAN
LEARN YOUR
PARENTS ARE
IMMATURE!: AN
ANALYSIS OF
WHAT LEARNING
CAN RESULT
FROM FAMILY
VIDEO GAMING





Gaming in Families - Christmas 1978



Gaming in Families - Christmas 2009



Gaming in Families - Christmas 2008

Project structure



Expert seminar



Literature review



Survey



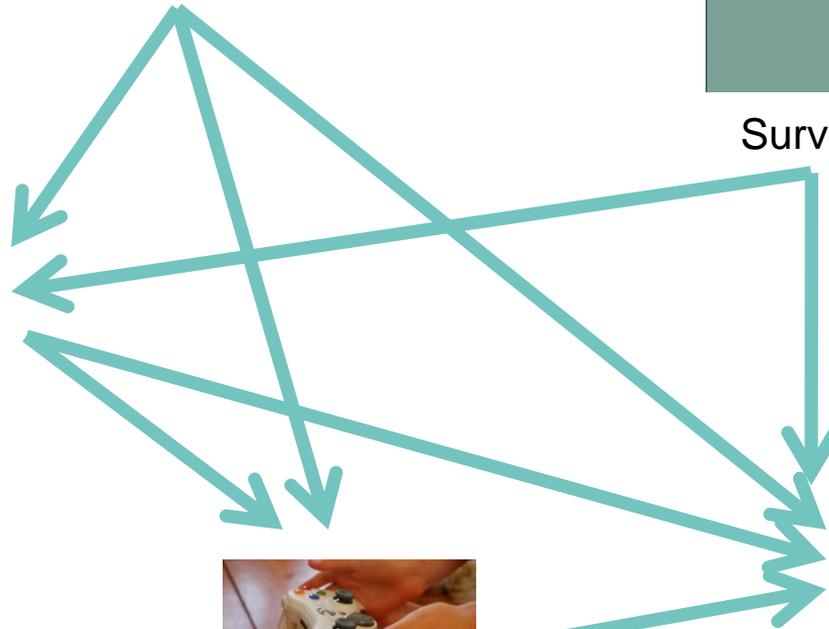
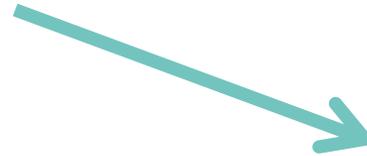
Interviews



Workshops



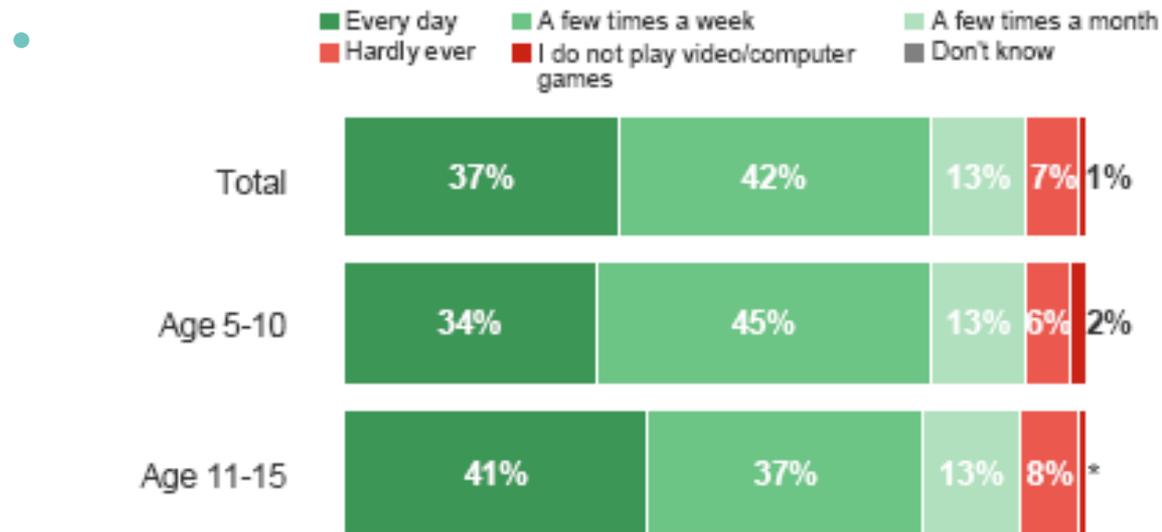
Final report



Patterns of play

Survey key findings

- 39% of parents played a video game without children in the last 6 months

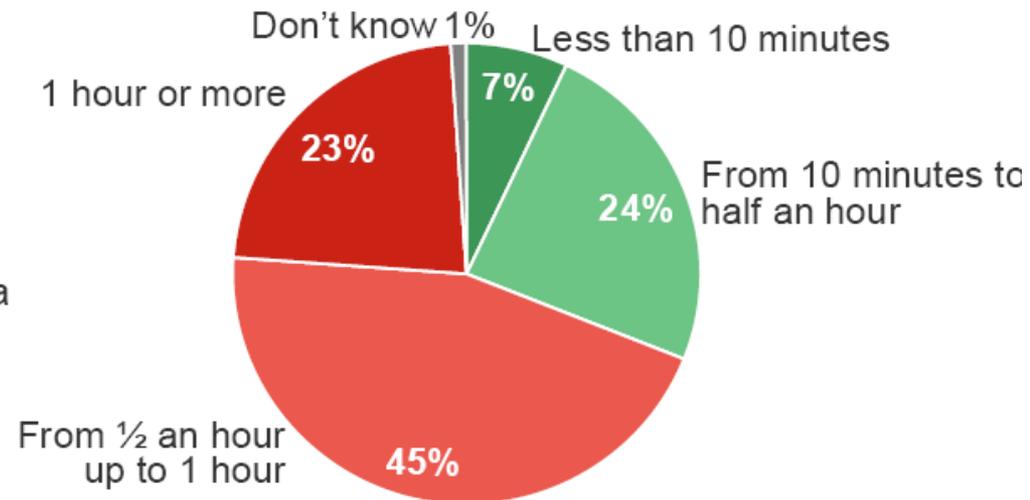
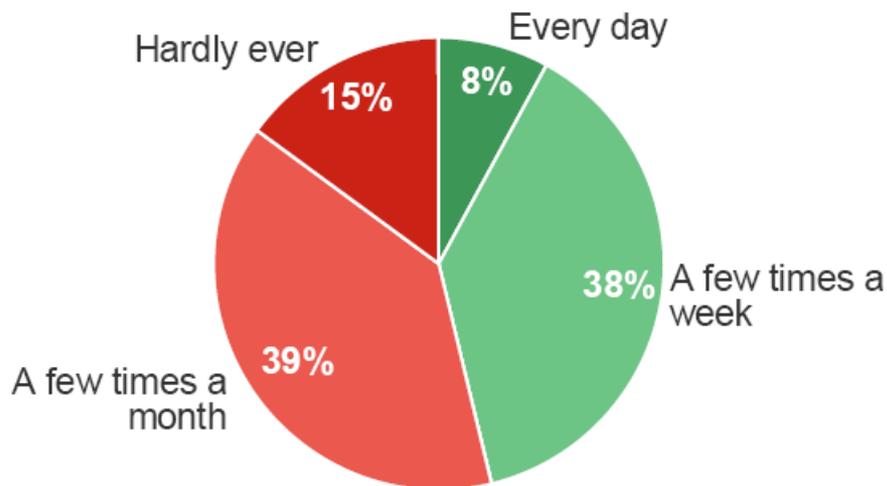


- 36% of parents played a video game with a young person under 16 in the last 6 months

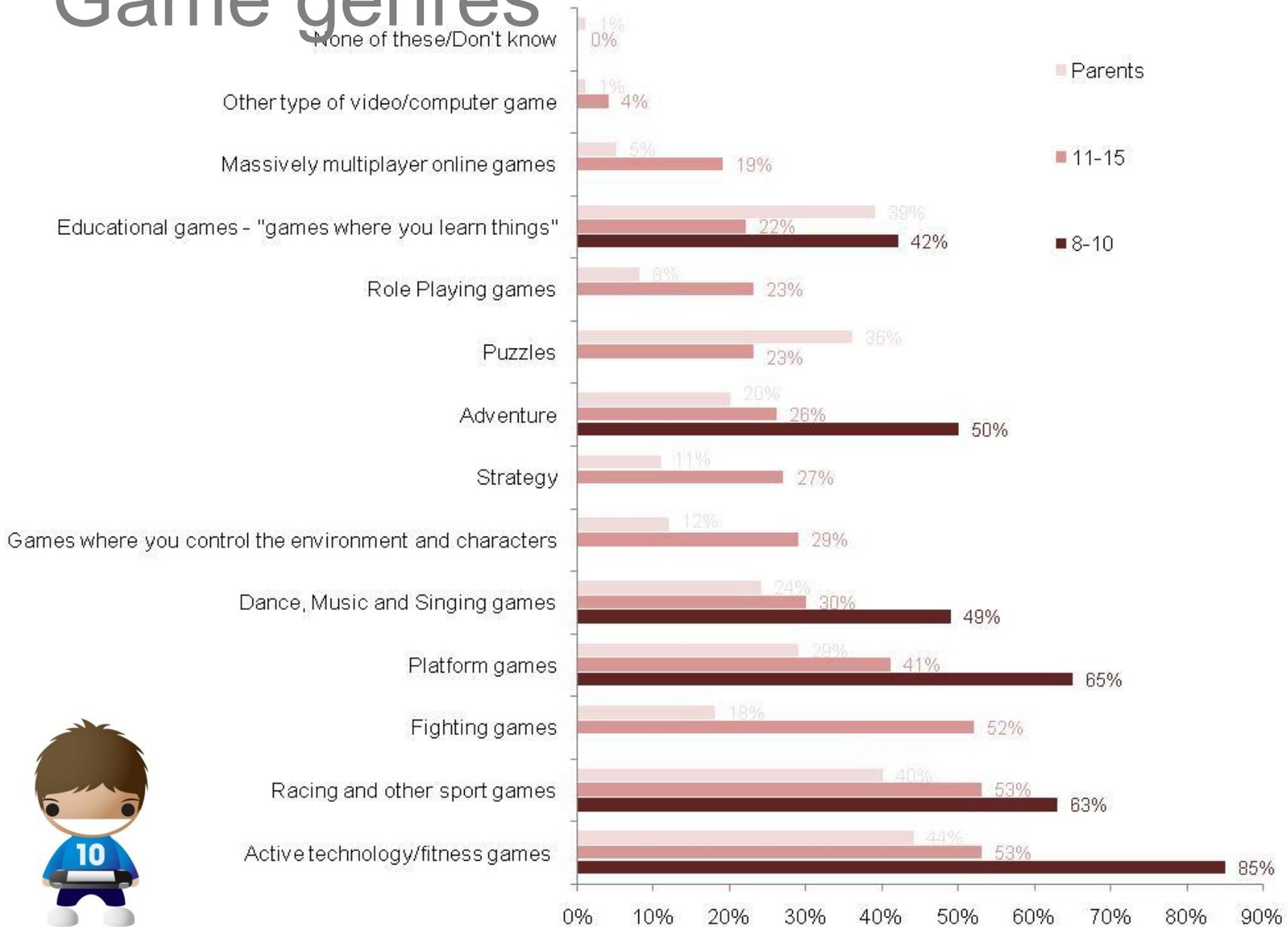


Survey key findings

- 28% with pre-primary and primary, 8% with secondary
- 64% of children play with adults (70% primary, 57% secondary)
- Frequency of play
- Length of play



Game genres



Motivation for playing

From Times Online

December 1, 2008

Guitar Hero leads children to pick up real instruments

New research shows up to 2.5 million children have picked up guitars and drums after playing music-themed video games

Murad Ahmed, Technology Reporter

RECOMMEND?

Video games have led many anxious parents to fear that children could turn into addicted, uncultured sloths.

But research by one of Britain's largest music charities that the popularity of active music titles such as *Guitar Rock Band* have prompted up to 2.5 million children to pick up instruments for real.

The report conducted by Youth Music found that of the young people aged from 3 to 18, more than half played video games. A fifth of those gamers said that they now play a real instrument after catching the musical bug from the game.

"We have long known that young people are encouraged to develop an interest in music if it is presented to them in a computer game," said Andrew Missingham, the music industry expert who conducted the report. "This research for the first time shows conclusively that young people are being inspired to make their own music after playing games that first piqued their interest."

Connect with your Teens through Pop Culture and Technology

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Page last updated at 09:59 GMT, Saturday, 26 December 2009

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Scottish education secretary backs 'brain training'

Education Secretary Michael Russell has said computer games can play a key role in encouraging children's learning.

Mr Russell said educational "brain training" technology could motivate young people to develop skills.

There has been disagreement among academics about the benefits of the computer games.



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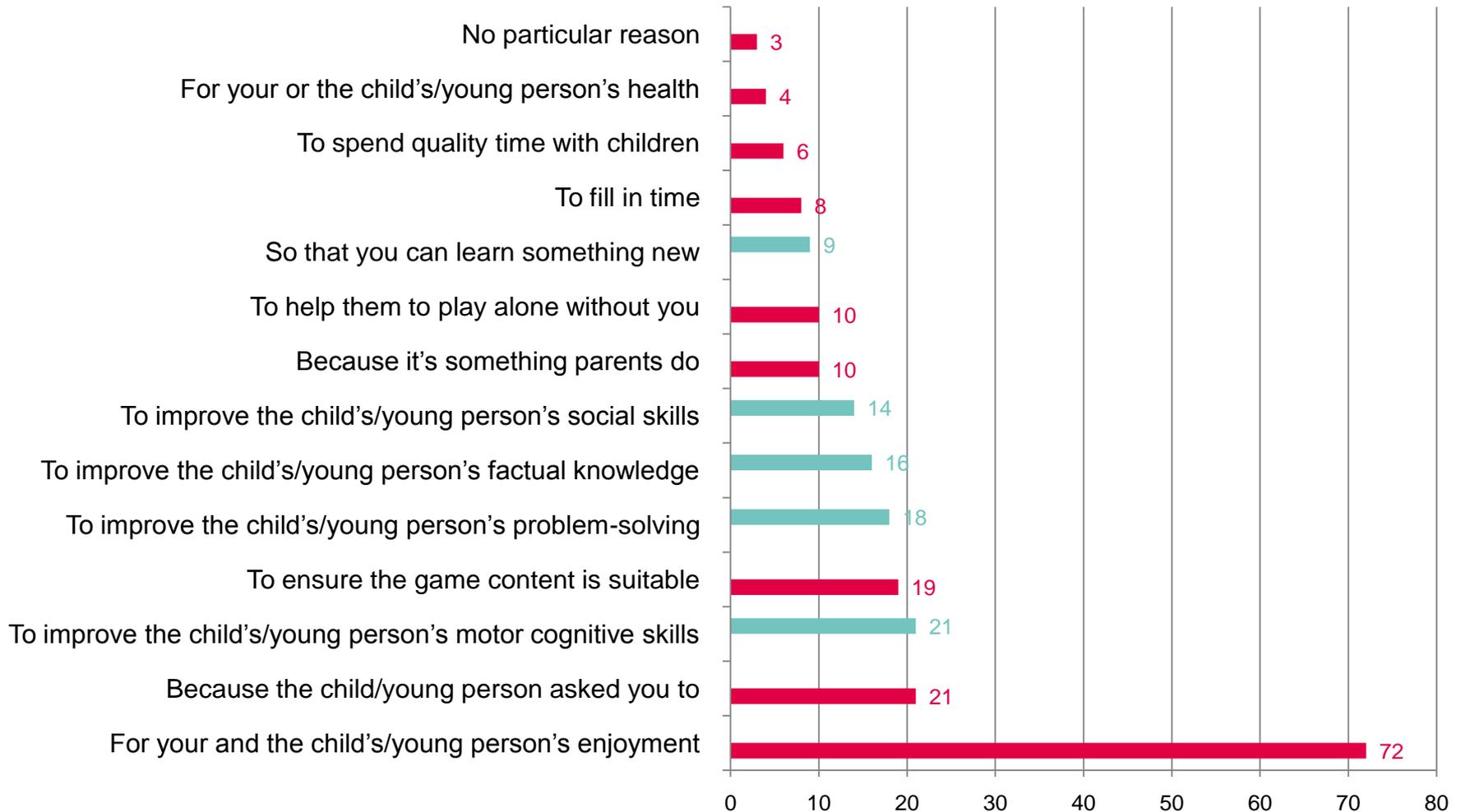
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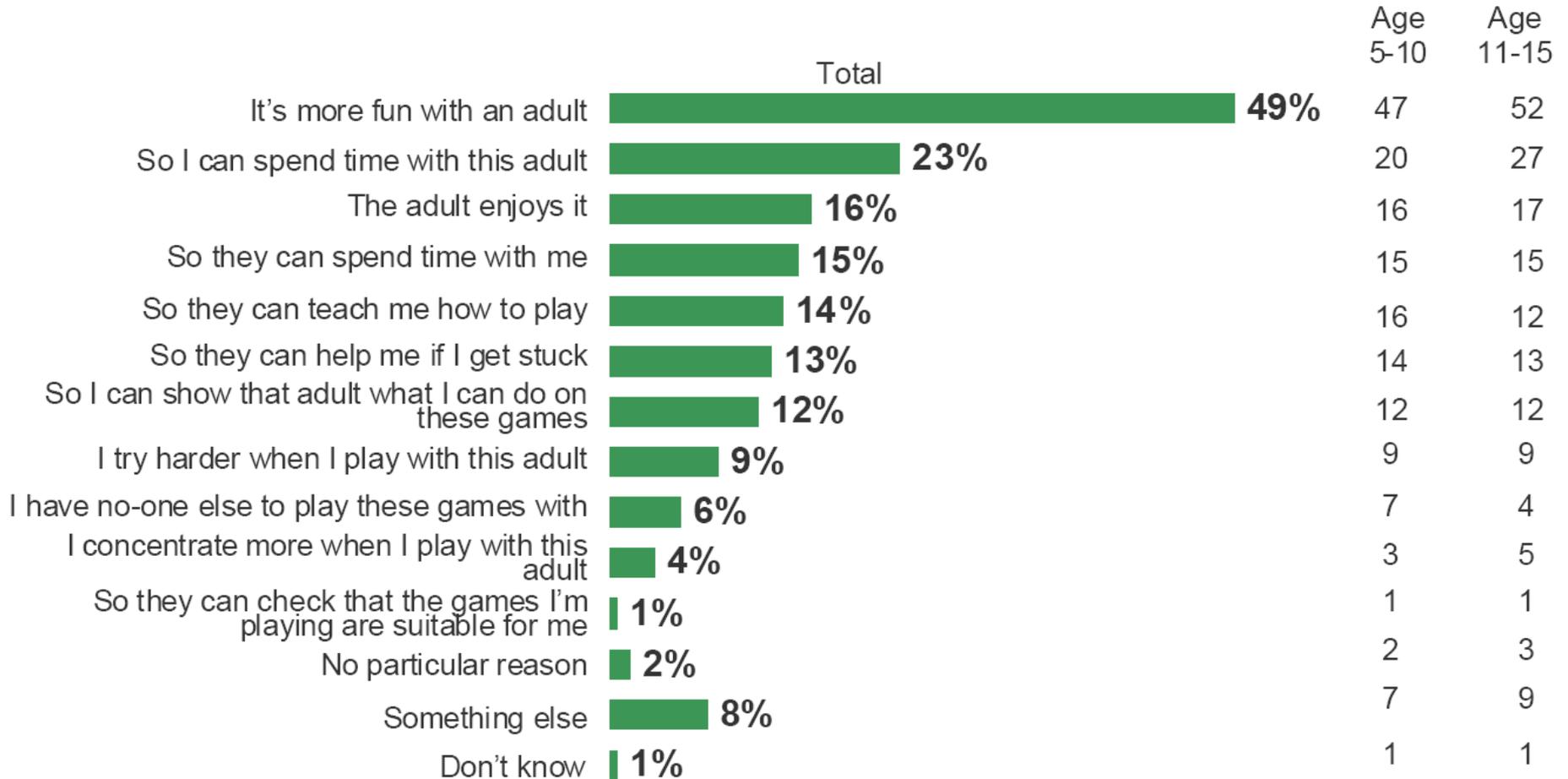
“... games force you to decide, to choose, to prioritize. All the intellectual benefits of gaming derive from this fundamental virtue, because learning how to think is ultimately about learning to make the right decisions: weighing evidence, analyzing situations, consulting your long-term goals, and then deciding. No other pop cultural form directly engages the brain’s decision-making apparatus in the same way”

Steven Johnson (2005) “Everything bad is good for you” - p41

Parents reasons for playing games as a family



Children's reasons for playing games as a family



“They don’t learn much from it [videogames] I don’t think ... maybe how to laugh a little, you know ... how to get cross, you know, and how to handle that. So again it’s more those sorts of things than learning anything ... school’s for education”

Father of 13 and 9 year old sons



“No, I don’t think they’re educational. I think they’re fun and you know certainly the Wii because it’s very interactive ... you can play it as a family. So that’s fun.”

Mother of three children



“[Halo] has got some more intricate puzzles in it, and it’s a wider, more in depth sort of a game. So there are definitely ... definitely scope for challenging different parts of the psyche there. And any kind of challenge is going to bring ... any kind of mental challenge is going to bring your mental ability up.”

Father of 11 year old boy

“I play Ice Hockey and it helps me learn positions and rules and ... like you can start a fight sometimes on there.”

11 year old boy



“I’ve asked him how he feels about particular sort of acts or ... if there’s something that’s particularly bloody I’ll ask him what he feels about it and what he thinks about it. And he does ... in his replies he does differentiate between well it’s a game. I say ‘Well what is it based on?’ and I’ll try and get him to look at it from a perspective as if it wasn’t a game. He knows ... he knows what’s right and wrong.”

Father of 11 year old boy

Toby But yeah we do take ... like when there's three of us playing on Gran Turismo we make sure it's one, two, three, one two three. So it's consistent.

Dexter Sometimes if we're playing a game and we both ... me and Toby both want to go first, we toss a coin.

Toby Yeah toss a coin.

Dexter I have never lost a toss.

Toby Every time, I always lose every single time.

13 and 9 year old boys



If you want learning

“it became clear that [teachers] **parents** needed to spend as much time encouraging reflection and focusing specifically upon such skills development ... in articulating the acquisition of concepts and content knowledge through games play”

Teaching with Games final report, p 50

But is that the purpose of games?

The safety perspective

Do parents use the control settings?

“Harry’s got this thing generally, if there’s a problem, particularly on a computer, if there’s a problem he will go to a site and find a fix for it. So if I was to do something that disabled his computer from doing something, 5 minutes later he’d be on Google and he would be doing a search to find out there’s a bit of software that you could undo the control...”

Father of 3 children

Are parents aware of game content?

“She was like ‘Oh he doesn’t know what to do on it’, he just like goes and gets in a car and drives around so I’ll let him play on it. And then like when I got older I started finding guns on it and then like I sort of went around blowing up stuff. And then ... “

David (11)



Do parents find the age classifications useful?

- Some parents were unaware of game age ratings and content icons
- Some parents were aware of the PEGI ratings but not that they cover suitable content, not level of difficulty (Football Manager 2010 3+ game but meant for older children)
- Some parents preferred to use their own judgement based on their knowledge of their children, the game and other parents' experiences



Conclusions

Family gaming is more frequent in families with young children

Parents don't automatically understand game play, age ratings and icons

Family gaming is done for fun!



<http://www.futurelab.org.uk/projects/gaming-in-families>



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