Digital Gaming and Young People’s Friendships: A Mixed Methods Study of Time Use and Gaming in School

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

One full cohort of Swedish pupils surveyed on three occasions during their first year in upper-secondary school (n = 115) and one interview sample of 10 game users, from two geographically close upper-secondary schools (high school) in a Swedish big city area.

## Implications For Parents About

Other

## Other Parent Implication

Gaming as a social activity; management of leisure time among children

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

In this mixed methods study, we investigate the impact of digital gaming on school social life among young people (17–19 year old) by combining over-time data investigating friendships as they form, with subjective experiences of friendships. We draw on one full cohort of Swedish pupils surveyed on three occasions during their first year in upper-secondary school (n = 115) and one interview sample of 10 game users. Results indicate that how much time young people spend on gaming is not a significant factor for friendship formation in the studied sample. Moreover, high use did not make game users socially isolated or less popular in school. We discuss how young people adhere to ideals of responsible leisure in order to become adults; practising time-management strategies to make place for time-consuming leisure while not letting it impact personal relationships.

# Outcome

"We found no indication that high-use players made fewer friends during their first year of upper-secondary school than non- or infrequent players. This is consistent with the idea that leisure is not necessarily a zero-sum game and that it could be the case that how game time is managed, rather than how much time is used, is a key to how well young people are able to fit time-consuming hobbies into their lives. Results indicated that similar usage of digital gaming facilitated social relationships, but did not support the idea that this similar use determined friendship formation." (Authors, 44)