

Futurelab Gaming in Families Research

Parents' and children's views on and experiences of gaming

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Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Time spent playing video/computer games

- Two in five adults play video/computer games (39%). Among those who play such games, most either spend a lot of time playing them (25% of those who play video/computer games play them for *more than three hours each week*) or not much time at all (22% spend *less than half an hour each week* playing video/computer games).
- Video/computer gaming is more popular among children than adults. Around four fifths of children play video/computer games *at least a few times a week* on their own or with friends (79%), with 37% playing *every day*. Conversely, the majority of adults *do not* play video/computer games at all (61%).

1.2 Experience of gaming together – adults and children

- Thirty-six per cent of adults have *played video/computer games with a child aged 3 to 16 in the last six months*, while almost two thirds (64%) of children who play video/computer games say they *play such games with adults*. This could suggest that adults who play video/computer games with children tend to do so with more than one child.
- A higher proportion of adults play video/computer games with pre/primary school aged children than with those of secondary school age (28% compared to eight per cent). Children aged 5-10 are also more likely than those aged 11-15 to say they *play video/computer games with adults* (70% compared to 57%).
- Almost three in five adults who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3 to 16 in the last six months play these games with a *son* the most (58%), while less than two in five play with a *daughter* the most (37%). Similarly, children most commonly mentioned their parents as the adults they spend the most amount of time playing video/computer games with (41% say they play with their *father* the most and 38% with their *mother*).

1.3 Frequency of gaming together

- Most adults who play video/computer games with a child tend to do this either *a few times a week* (38%) or *a few times a month* (39%). Likewise, almost half (46%) of

children who play video/computer games with adults say they play these with an adult *a few times a week* and 35% do this *a few times a month*.

- The majority of adults who play video/computer games with a child tend to do so for *more than half an hour* on each occasion (69% compared to 31% who play for *less than half an hour*).

1.4 Preferences for time spent gaming together

- The proportion of adults and children who say they would like to spend *about the same amount of time* as they do now, playing video/computer games with each other is very similar (56% of children say this compared to 55% of adults). However, adults are more likely to say they would like to spend *less time* playing video/computer games with children (19% compared to six per cent of children), whereas children are more likely to state they would like to spend *more time* playing with adults (29% compared to 12% of adults). This may reflect the finding that video/computer gaming in general is more popular among children than adults.

1.5 Type of video/computer game played when gaming together

- When asked to choose from a list which types of video/computer games they play the most with children, the top mentioned answers given by adults were: **active technology/fitness games** (44%), **racings and other sports games** (40%), **educational games** (39%) and **puzzles** (36%). Adults are least likely to play **role playing games** (eight per cent) and **massively multiplayer online games (MMO)** (five per cent) with a child.
- Children were asked the same question in relation to the video/computer games they play with adults, however the list of games they were asked to choose from was slightly different due to their likely cognitive ability¹. Children aged 8-10 were most likely to say they have played **active games** with an adult (85%), reflecting the top mentioned answer given by adults. Around two-thirds of 8-10 year olds have played **games where you have to reach the end of the course** (65%) and **sports games** (63%) with adults.

¹ Children aged 5-7 were not asked this question due to their likely cognitive ability and children aged 8-10 were asked this question in a slightly different way from 11-15 year olds and were shown a shorter list of games. Please see the marked-up questionnaires in appendix 1 for the games asked about.

- Children aged 11-15 are also most likely to have played **active technology/fitness games** with an adult (53%). The same proportion have played **racing and other sports games** (53%) and **fighting games** (52%) with an adult.

1.6 Choosing the game and the role of adults when playing together

- When playing video/computer games with children, most adults say that *the child usually chooses what game to play* (86%), while just over one in ten say *they choose the game themselves* (12%).
- Adults were asked about the roles they take when playing video/computer games with a child. Adults are most likely to say they *always/sometimes watch the child play the game* (89%) and **play the game as a competitor with the child** (81%). They are least likely to say they *always/sometimes choose the game* (44%), corresponding with the finding that 86% say the child usually chooses which game to play.
- Children were asked to choose from a list, the one thing they would most like the adult to do when playing video/computer games with them. Children are most likely to say they want the adult to **set it (the game) all up and get everyone started** (21%), followed by wanting the adult to **watch them play the game** (17%), **make sure people play fairly and no-one cheats** (13%) and to **teach the child the rules** (13%).

1.7 Reasons for and against gaming together

- The most commonly mentioned spontaneous reason given by adults for playing video/computer games with a child/young person is that it is **for their or the child/young person's enjoyment** (72%). Similarly, when asked why they play video/computer games with an adult, children are most likely to say that this is because **it is more fun with an adult** (49%).
- Adults who have *not played* video/computer games with a child/young person aged 3-16 in the last six months are most likely to give the reason for this as being that they **don't enjoy playing video/computer games** (33%). One in seven say they **don't have time to play video/computer games** (16%), which is almost the same as the proportion of children who say they do not play video/computer games with adults because adults **don't have time to play video/computer games** (18%). The top mentioned reasons children give for not playing video/computer games with adults are that **it's more fun without an adult** (28%) and **they (the child) like to play these games by themselves or with other children** (23%).

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and objectives

Futurelab is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes the benefits of using digital and other technologies in education, and develops resources and practices that support new approaches to learning. Working in partnership with Becta (the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency), Futurelab commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct two surveys – one with parents of children under 16 and one with children aged 5-15, with the key objective of examining their views on and experiences of video/computer gaming.

The findings of this research will be used in the development of policy recommendations and a 'Parental guidance on computer gaming handbook'. Aimed specifically at parents, this accessible publication will provide guidance on the benefits and risks of video/computer games for their children, and will detail the ways in which video/computer games may be used beneficially in family contexts.

2.2 Methodology

An omnibus approach was selected as the most appropriate methodology for this research. Omnibus surveys are a quick and cost-effective way to obtain statistically robust data from a representative sample of respondents.

Futurelab placed 12 questions on the Ipsos MORI Capibus, a general public omnibus which interviews a nationally representative sample of around 2,000 adults aged 15 or older, face-to-face in their homes each week, using CAPI technology (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). Only those who were parents or legal guardians of children aged under 16 years old were asked the gaming survey questions. In total, a representative sample of 558 parents or legal guardians (aged 15 and over) was interviewed throughout Great Britain between 21st August and 27th August 2009. Data were weighted to the known population profile of adults in Great Britain.

All of the adults interviewed are the parents or the legal guardians of a child/children under the age of 16, and almost all (97%) of the adults live with their child/children. A very small minority of respondents have a child/children who does not/do not live with them and to whose upbringing they contribute financially (three per cent) and just one per cent have a

child/children who does not/do not live with them and to whose upbringing they *do not* contribute financially.

In addition, Futurelab placed nine questions on the August wave of the LVQ Research dedicated children's omnibus. In total, a representative sample of 737 children aged 5-15 was interviewed between 13th August and 20th August 2009. Data were weighted to Government Office Region based on national statistics, and to enable equal proportions in each age year/gender category.

Similar questions were asked of both the adults and children, however, where wording had to be adapted to account for likely differences in cognitive ability, direct comparisons between parent and child data will not be possible. Moreover, there were two versions of the children's questionnaire; one for children aged 5-10 and another for children aged 11-15.

2.3 Interpretation of data

All results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. Further information on this and a guide to statistical reliability is provided in Appendix 2. Throughout the report the results reported on are statistically significant, unless otherwise stated. Caution should be exercised, especially when interpreting findings from sub-groups of fewer than 100 respondents, and any data from sub-samples of fewer than 50 respondents should be treated as indicative rather than statistically significant. Where this is the case, a cautionary footnote has been included. The actual number of responses has also been included alongside the percentage, shown by 'n='.

In charts where percentages do not add up to 100 per cent, this is due to multiple answers, or to rounding. An asterisk (*) denotes a value greater than zero, but less than 0.5 per cent.

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3. Main findings

This section of the report details the main findings from the two surveys, grouped under several key themes. These themes include experience and time spent playing video/computer games, gaming with adults and children, game type and motivations for playing video/computer games with adults and children.

3.1 Time spent playing video/computer games

Adults and children were asked about the amount of time they spend playing video/computer games, both individually and/or with friends.

Two in five adults play video/computer games (39%). Of these, men are more likely to play than women (48% compared to 32%), as are those of white ethnic origin (42% compared to 21% of those who are non-white), those in social grades C1 and C2 (47% and 50%, respectively, compared to 34% of those in social grade DE and 33% in AB), and those aged 25-34 (47% compared to 37% aged 35-44).

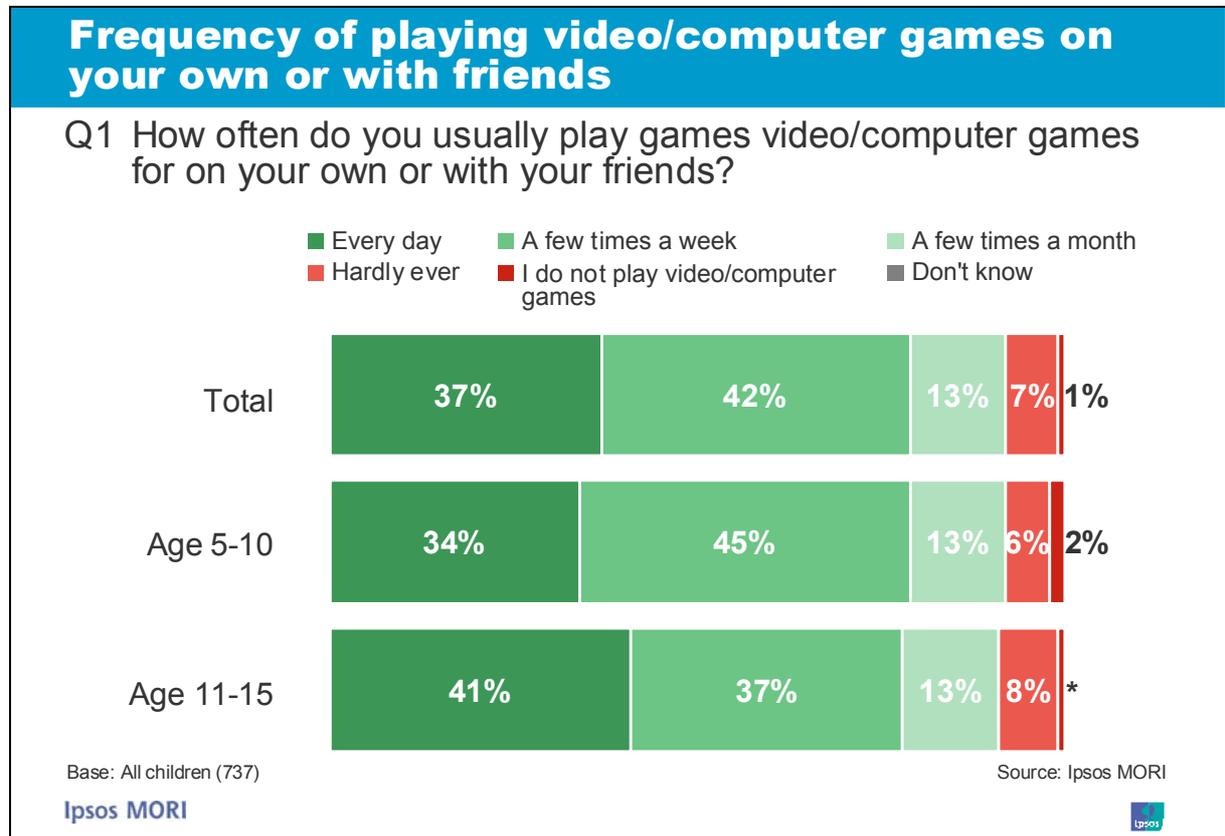
Adults most likely to play video/computer games for *more than two hours on each occasion* include men (21% compared to nine per cent of women), those aged 25-34 (21% compared to 11% of 35-54 year olds), those who are of white ethnic origin (15% compared to three per cent of those of non-white ethnicity), and social grades C2 and DE (20% and 18%, respectively, compared to eight per cent of ABs).

Existing research suggests that adult gamers are divided into ‘casual’ and ‘hard-core’ gamers², and this divide appears to be reflected in the results. Among those adults who do play video/computer games each week, most either spend a lot of time playing such games (25% of those who play games spend *more than three hours each week* doing so) or not much time at all (22% spend *less than half an hour each week* playing video/computer games). The data in the following chart shows the amount of time spent playing video/computer games, but as a proportion of those adults that play games (i.e. the base excludes adults who do not play video/computer games).



² Cragg, A., Taylor, C. and Toombs, B. (2006). Video Games: Research to improve understanding of what players enjoy about video games, and to explain their preferences for particular games. BBFC: London.
<http://www.bbfc.co.uk/downloads/pub/Policy%20and%20Research/BBFC%20Video%20Games%20Report.pdf>

Compared with adults, children are much more likely to play video/computer games; around four fifths of children play video/computer games *at least a few times a week* (79%), in fact, 37% play *every day*. Only one fifth play video/computer games *less than a few times a week* (20%) and a mere one per cent *do not play at all*. These gaming habits differ markedly with adults, the majority (61%) of whom *do not play video/computer games*.



As with the adult gamers, there is a gender divide, with boys more likely than girls to play *every day* (48% compared to 26%). Conversely, girls are more likely than boys to play *a few times a month* (18% compared to eight per cent of boys).

Furthermore, older children play video/computer games more frequently than younger children (41% of children aged 11-15 play video/computer games *daily* compared to 34% of children aged 5-10). In contrast, younger children are more likely to play video/computer games *a few times a week* (45% 5-10 year olds compared to 37% 11-15 year olds). There is no significant difference in age between those children who play less frequently than this.

The presence of siblings appears to influence how often children play video/computer games; children with either older (41%) or younger siblings (39%) are more likely to play *everyday* than those without siblings (29%). In addition, there are differences according to social grade, with children of social grade DE more likely to play *everyday* than children of social grade AB (45% compared to 37%). Once again, this corresponds with the adult

findings, where 18% of adults of social grade DE play for *more than two hours each week* in contrast to eight per cent of adults of social grade AB.

Interestingly, the data reveal a slight geographical split between East and West, with children in the North East (45%), Yorkshire (50%), East Midlands (41%), East (44%) and South East (40%) significantly more likely to play video/computer games *every day* than children in the West Midlands (24%) and London (27%). Children in London are most likely to play *a few times a week* (55% compared to 42% overall).

Whilst there is a significant difference in the tendency of white and BME adults to play video/computer games, this is not reflected by children.

3.2 Experience of gaming together – adults and children

Adults were asked about the ages of children they have mostly played video/computer games with in the last six months. Thirty-six per cent of adults have *played video/computer games with a child aged 3 to 16 in the last six months*. In contrast, almost two thirds (64%) of children who ever play video/computer games report that they play such games with adults. This could suggest that adults who do play video/computer games with children tend to do so with more than one child.

The age of the child has an impact on whether or not they play video/computer games with adults. Adults say that they more commonly play video/computer games with pre/primary school aged children (28% compared to eight per cent who play with secondary school aged children) – this is further reinforced by the responses from the children's survey, whereby 5-10 year olds are more likely than those aged 11-15 to say they play video/computer games with adults (70% compared to 57%).

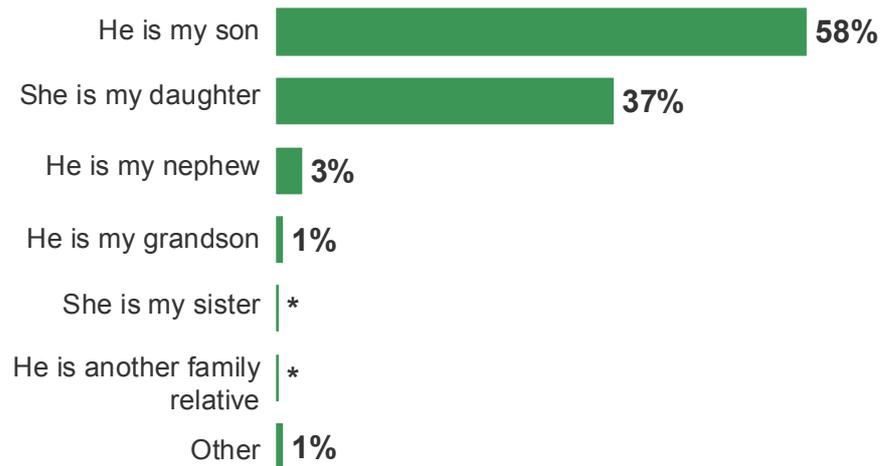
Children who live in households where there are more children are actually more likely to *play video/computer games with adults* (73% who have more than 3 children in the household compared to 60% who have less than 3). Boys are also more likely than girls to say they *play video/computer games with adults* (69% compared to 59% of girls).

In line with the adult survey, children of white ethnicity are more likely to *play video/computer games with adults* than those who are non-white (65% white compared to 48% BME).

Adults who have played video/computer games with children aged 3 to 16 in the last six months were asked to specify their relationship to the child they play video/computer games the most and unsurprisingly, they play with their offspring most commonly. However, the findings indicate there is a gender divide in terms of the child with whom they play video/computer games with the most. Almost three in five adults play with a *son* the most (58%), whereas less than two in five play with a *daughter* the most (37%). A small minority of adults say that they play with a *nephew* (three per cent) and a *grandson* (one per cent). Less than one per cent play with a *sister* or *another male family relative* the most (each cited by one respondent). There are no significant differences between the gender of the parent and whether or not they play with their son or daughter.

Child spend most time playing games with

Q4 What is the relationship you have with the child/young person with whom you play these video/computer games the most?

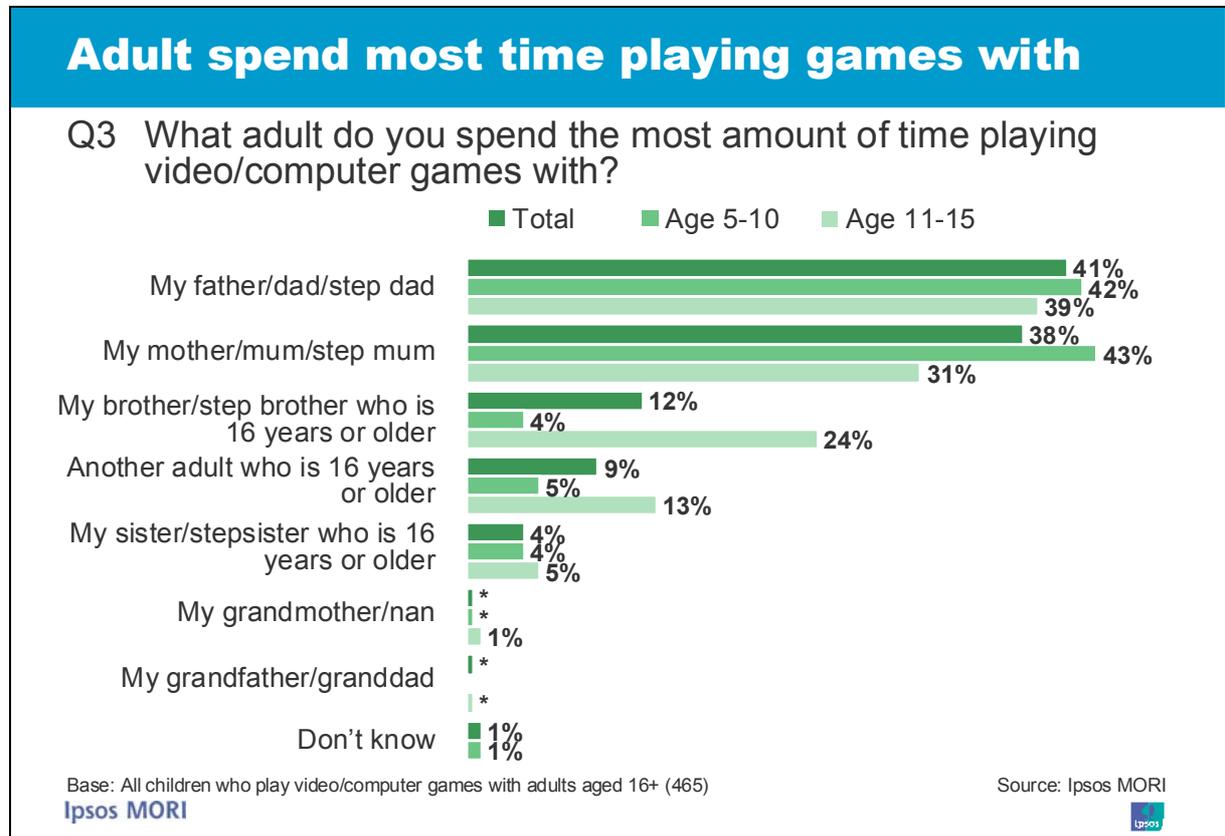


Base: All adults who played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196) Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Similarly, when asked which adult they spend the most amount of time playing video/computer games with, children most commonly mentioned their parents (41% say they play with their *father* the most and 38% with their *mother*). Around one in ten children say they play these games with their *brother* (12%) and 14% mentioned *another adult*, including *sisters* and *grandparents*.³



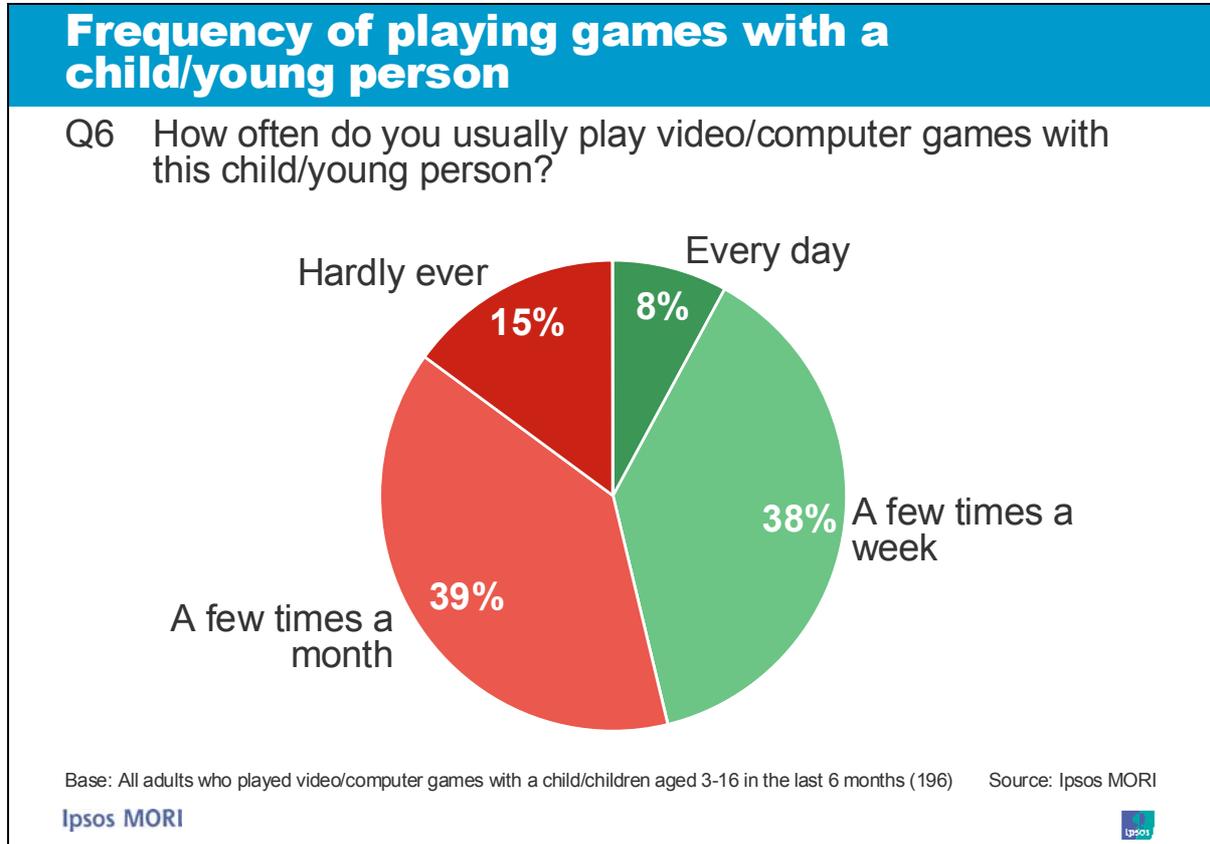
Boys are more likely than girls to say they play video/computer games with their *fathers* or *brothers* (46% and 16% compared to 35% and nine per cent, respectively). Conversely, girls are more likely than boys to report that they spend the most time playing video/computer games with their *mother* (48% compared to 30%).

In addition, children aged 5-10 are more likely to play video/computer games with their *mothers* than children aged 11-15 (43% compared to 31%). However, there is no difference between the ages of children who spend the most time playing with their *fathers*.

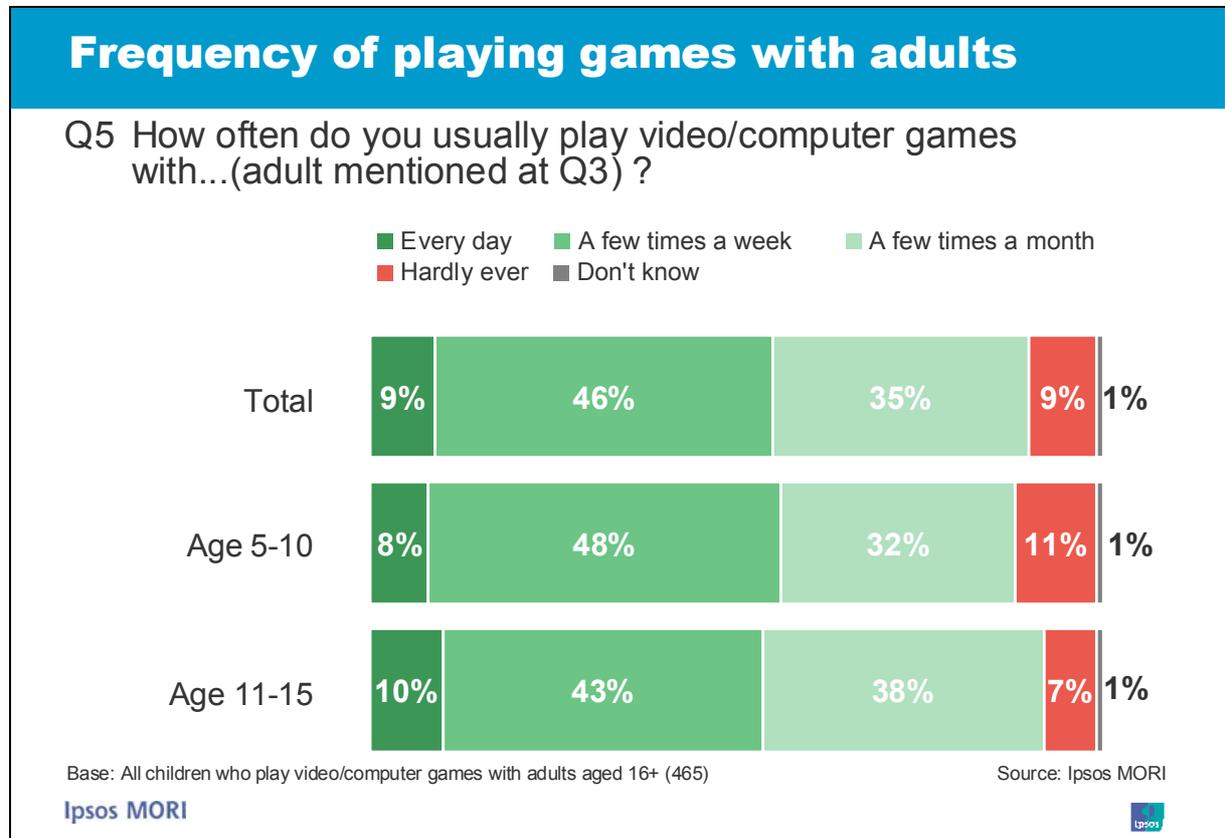
³ The percentages do not sum to 100% because a number of respondents stated that they play with two adults for the same amount of time.

3.3 Frequency of gaming together

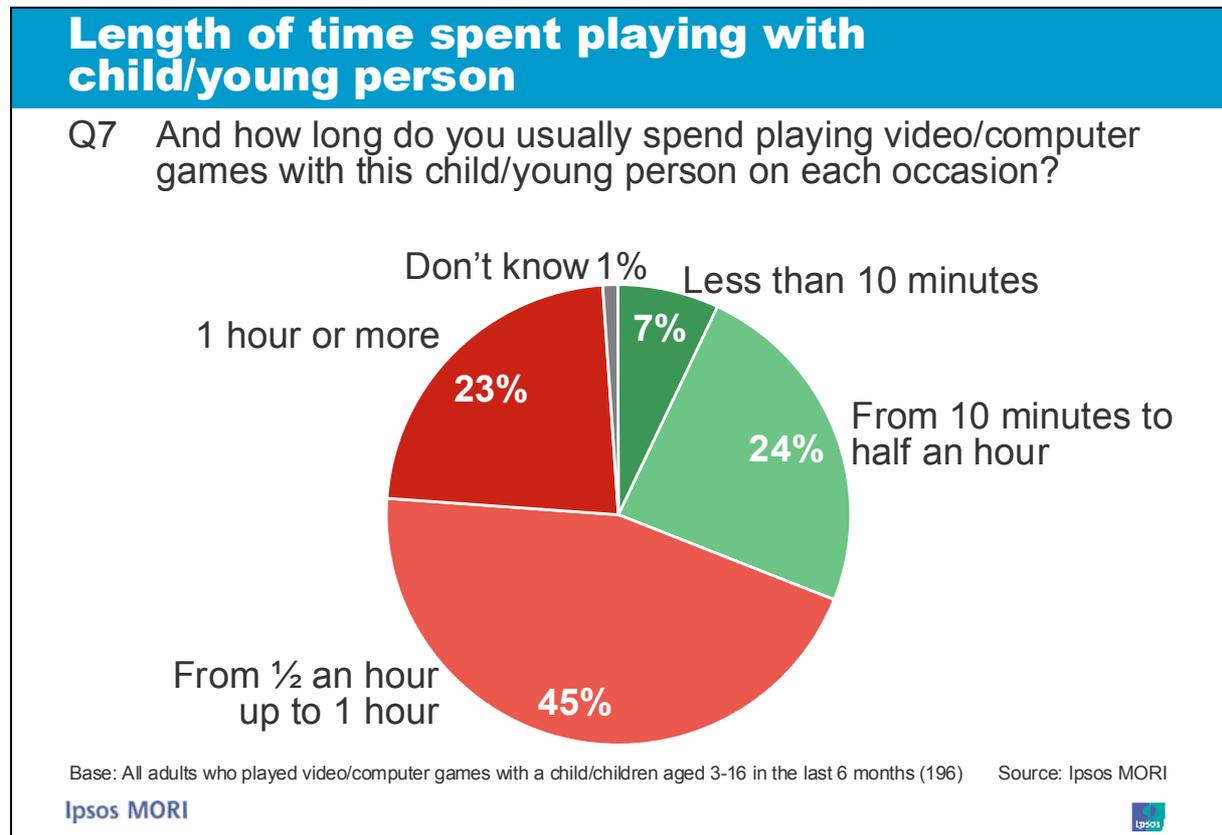
As the following chart highlights, the majority of adults who play video/computer games with a child tend to do so either *a few times a week* (38%) or *a few times a month* (39%).



Similarly, less than one in ten (nine per cent) of the children who play video/computer games with adults say they play such games *every day* with the adult they play these with most. Almost half (46%) say they play video/computer games with an adult *a few times a week* and 35% do this *a few times a month*.



The majority of adults who do play video/computer games with a child tend to do so for *more than half an hour* on each occasion (69% compared to 31% who play for *less than half an hour*). This suggests that the role the adult plays goes beyond short discrete tasks such as setting up the console/game and is more likely to involve playing or watching the child play video/computer games. We discuss the role of adults when playing video/computer games with children later on in the report under section 3.6.

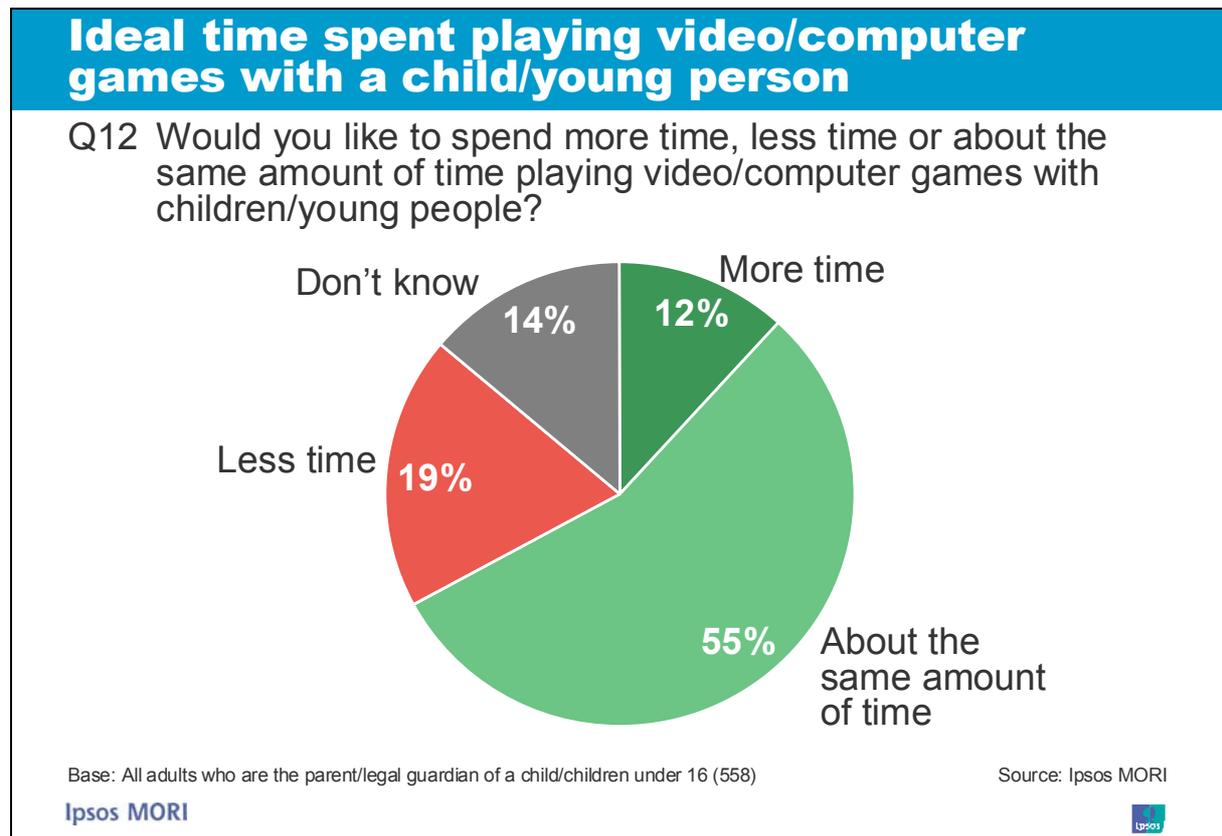


There are very few significant sub-group differences when it comes to the length of time adults spend playing video/computer games with children. However, adults aged 25-34 are more likely than average to play such games with a child for *more than half an hour* on each occasion (83% compared to 69% on average). As mentioned previously, adults in this age group are also more likely to play video/computer games *a few times a week* with the child they play with the most (52% of those aged 25-34 compared to 38% on average).

Adults who play video/computer games in general for more than an hour a week (67%) are more likely than those who play for an hour or less (33%) to say they play video/computer games with a child/young person every day/a few times a week.

3.4 Preferences for time spent gaming together

Adults were asked whether they would like to spend more, about the same or less time playing video/computer games with children and as the following chart shows, over half of adults *would not change the amount of time* they spend playing video/computer games with children (55%).

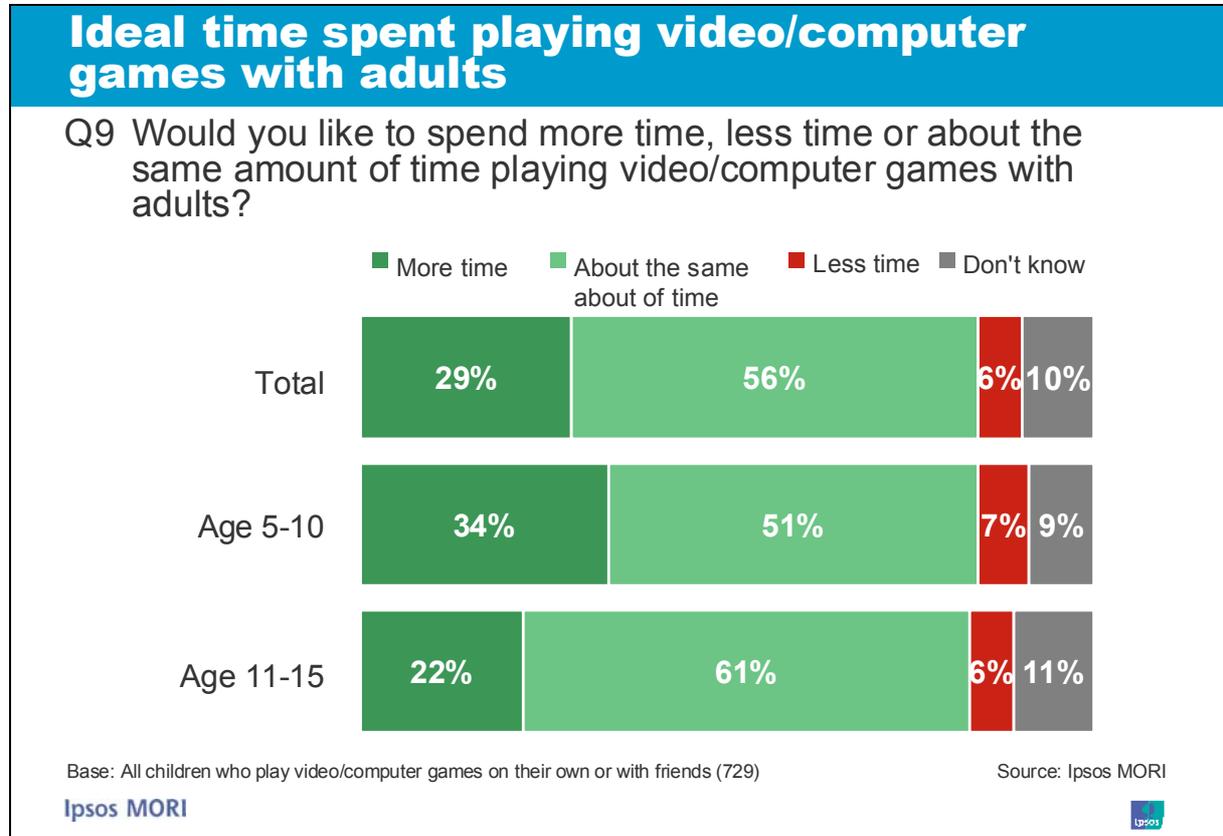


Adults of non-white ethnic origin are more likely than those of white ethnicity to say they do *not play* video/computer games, either with or without children (81% and 79% compared to 58% and 61% respectively) and they are also more likely to state that they would like to spend *less time* playing video/computer games with children (30% compared to 17%).

Those who own technical goods such as video games consoles (66%), MP3 players (64%), laptops (60%), and digital cameras (60%) are amongst those who would like to spend *about the same amount of time* as they currently do, playing video/computer games with children.

Adults who spend less than one hour each week playing video/computer games (in general and not specifically with children) are more likely to say they would like to spend *more time* playing with children (20% compared to 12% on average).

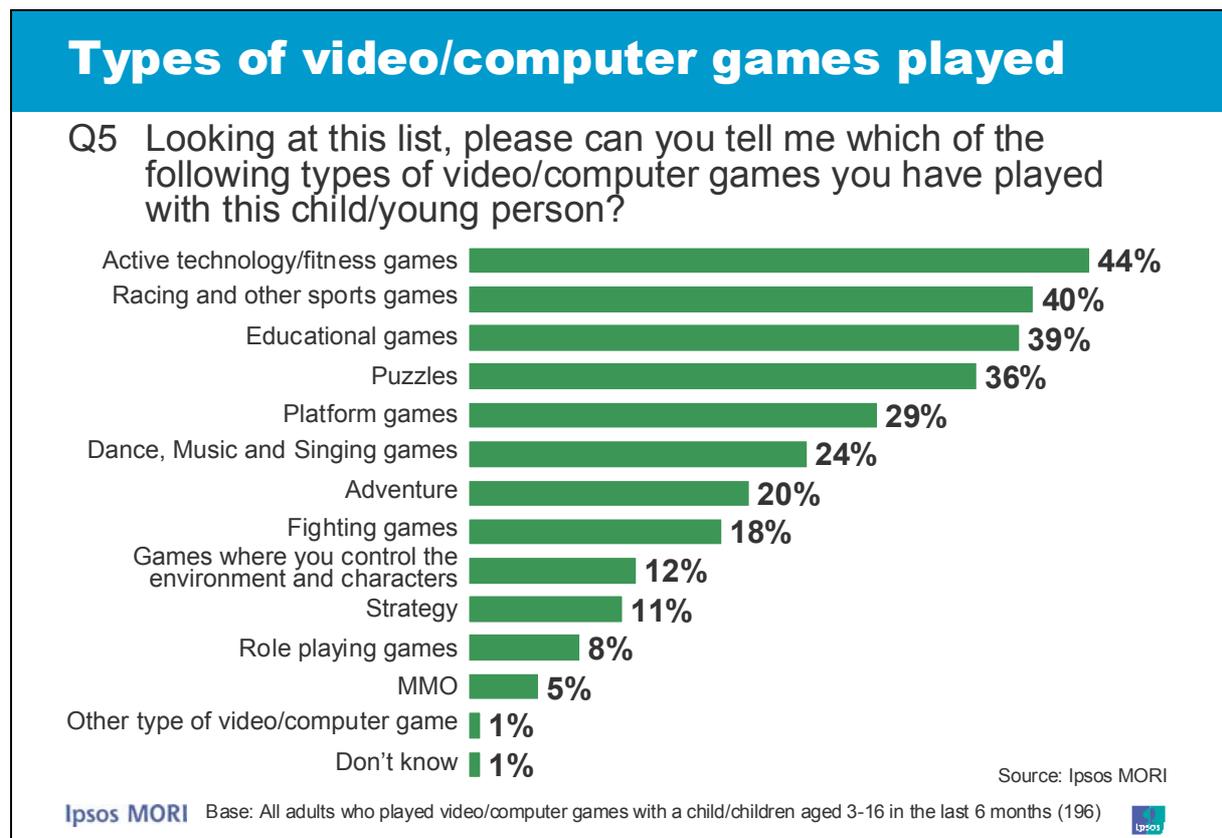
When asked the same question, more than half of children responded that they would like to spend *about the same amount of time* playing video/computer games with adults (56%). Less than one third (29%) stated they would like to spend *more time* and only six per cent claimed they would like to spend *less time*.



It is interesting to observe that the proportion of children saying they would like to spend *the same amount of time* closely matches the parents' results (56% and 55% respectively). However, adults are more likely to state that they would like to spend *less time* playing video/computer games with children (19% compared to six per cent of children), whereas children are more likely to state they would like to spend *more time* (29% compared to 12%). This may reflect the higher popularity of video/computer gaming in general among children compared to adults.

3.5 Type of video/computer game played when gaming together

Adults were asked to think about the child they play video/computer games with the most and to choose from a list, which types of games they have played with that child⁴. As the following chart shows, **active technology/fitness games** are the most commonly mentioned video/computer games played (44%), followed by **racing and other sport games** (40%), **educational games** (39%) and **puzzles** (36%). The least popular games played by an adult with a child are **role playing games** (eight per cent) and **massively multiplayer online games (MMO)** (five per cent).



Women are more likely to say they play **active technology/fitness games** with a child than men (54% compared to 34%). They are also more likely than men to play **educational games** (46% compared to 31%) and **dance, music and singing games** (34% compared to 13%). Conversely, men are more likely than women to play **fighting games** (24% compared to 12%) and **strategy games** (17% compared to five per cent) with a child.

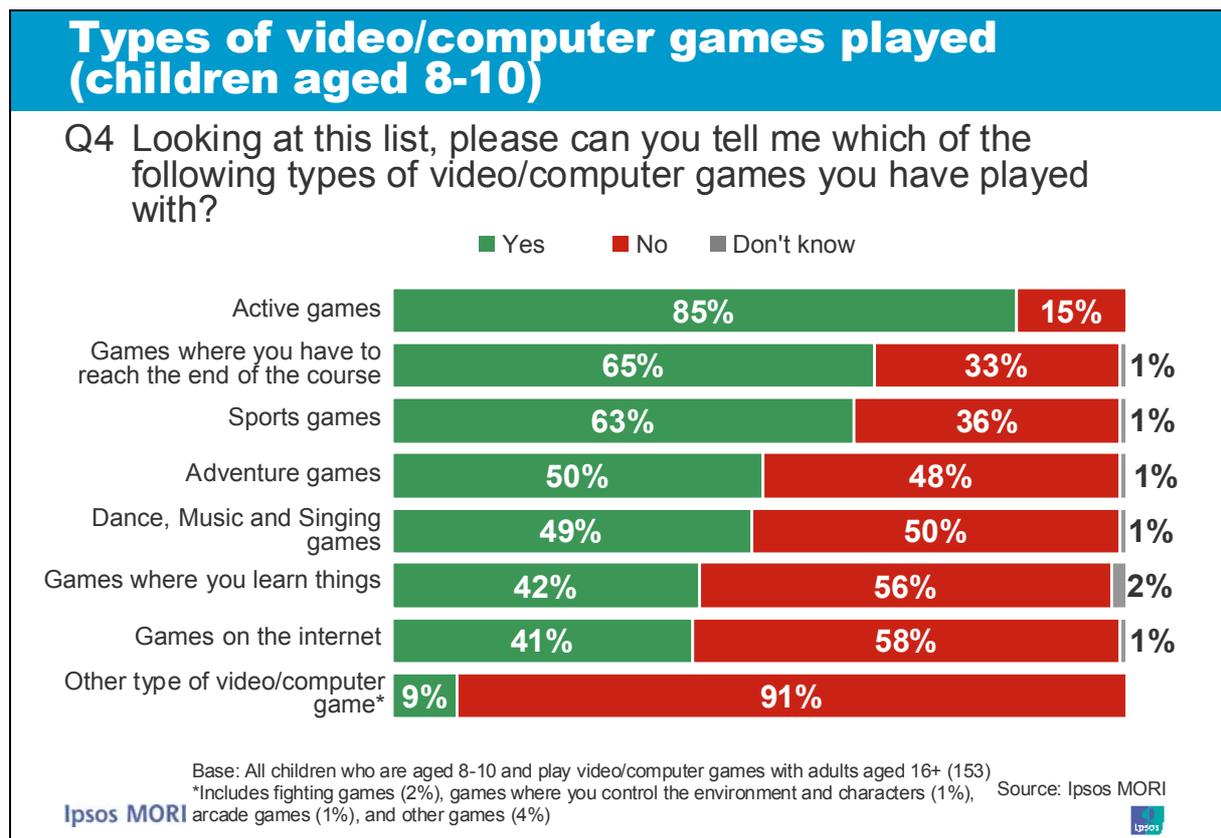
Adults with a child in their household aged 10-15 are most likely to play **active technology/fitness games** with a child (56% compared to 37% with a child aged 4-9 in their

⁴ Please see the marked-up questionnaires in appendix 1 for the games asked about.

household). They are also more likely to play **fighting games** than those with a child aged 0-3 in their household (26% compared to 12%).

Owning a video games console appears to affect the types of video/computer games adults' play with a child, as those who own a video games console are more likely than average to play **active technology/fitness games** with a child (54% compared to 44%). They are also more likely to play **racing and other sports games** (45% compared to 40%), **platform games** (33% compared to 29%), and **dance, music and singing games** (30% compared to 24%).

Children who play video/computer games with adults were also asked which types of these games they play (in relation to the adult they spend most time playing such games with)⁵. Children aged 8-10 were read out a number of types of video/computer games and asked if they have played these with the relevant adult, while 11-15 year olds were shown a list of video/computer game types and asked to read this and select the video/computer games they have played with the adult⁶.

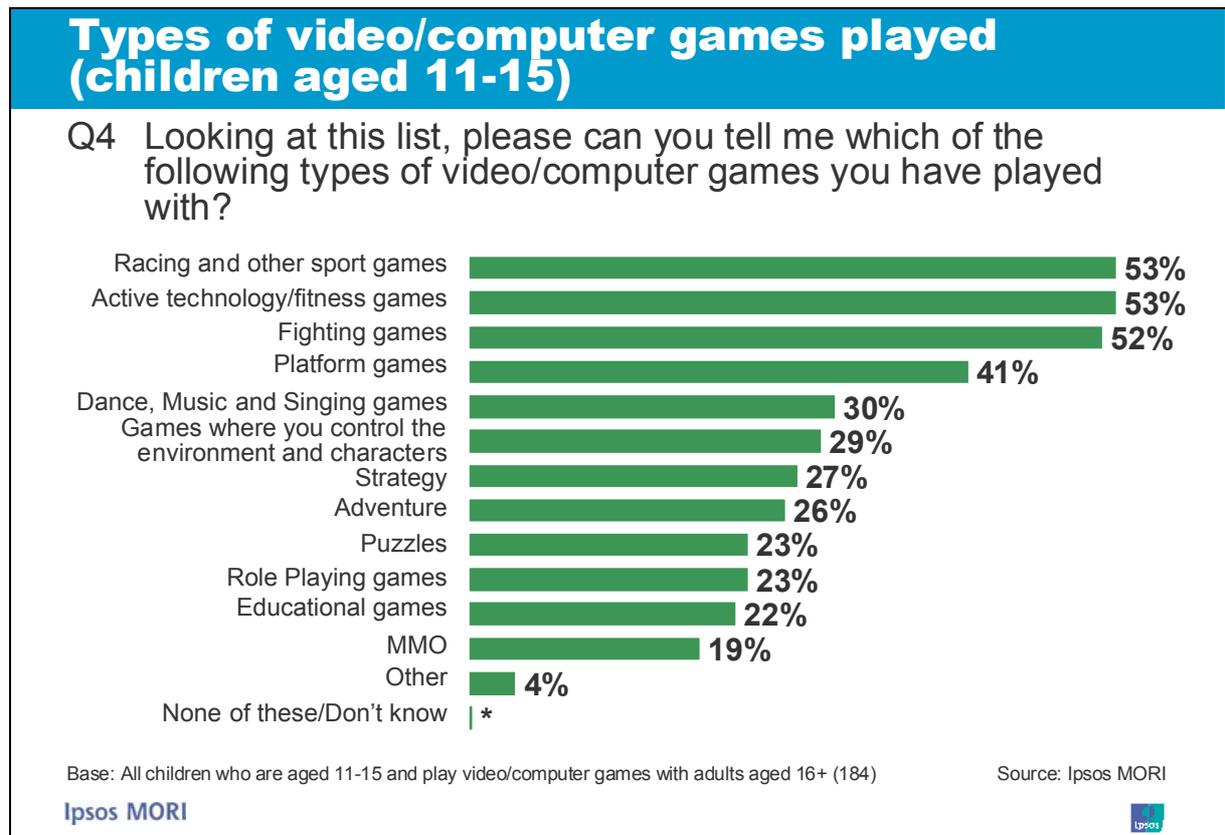


⁵ Children aged 5-7 were not asked this question due to their weaker cognitive ability.

⁶ Due to their different cognitive abilities, 8-10 year olds were asked this question in a slightly different way from 11-15 year olds and were shown a shorter list of game types. Please see the marked-up questionnaires in appendix 1 for the games asked about.

Of the types of video/computer games asked about in the survey, 8-10 year olds were most likely to say they have played **active games** with an adult (85%) which, unsurprisingly, is the game type mentioned most by adults as the one they play with a child. Around two thirds of 8-10 year olds say they have played **games where you have to reach the end of the course** (65%) and **sports games** (63%). Half of this age group say they have played **adventure games** (50%) and **dance, music and singing games** (49%), and two in five have played **games where you learn things** (42%) and **games on the internet** (41%). One in ten mentioned **another type of game** (nine per cent), including **fighting games** (two per cent) and **games where you control the environment and characters** (one per cent).

Due to their likely cognitive ability, children aged 11-15 were given a slightly different and longer list of video/computer games to choose from than the 8-10 year olds. From the video/computer games asked about, 11-15 year olds are most likely to say they have played **active technology/fitness games** (53%), **racine and other sport games** (53%) and **fighting games** (52%) with the adult they play video/computer games with the most. Two in five have played **platform games** with this adult (41%). As the following chart shows, other types of video/computer game are played by three in ten or fewer.



Again, the fact that 11-15 year olds are most likely to have played **active technology/fitness games** and **racing and other sport games** corresponds with these being mentioned by adults as the types of video/computer games they play most with a child.

As with the adults, boys ages 11-15 are more likely than girls of the same age group to have played **fighting games** (68% compared to 31%) and **strategy games** (34% compared to 18%). They are also more likely than girls to have played **racing and other sport games** (62% compared to 42%).

Children aged 11-13 are more likely than 14-15 year olds to have played **active technology/fitness games** with an adult (64% compared to 32%).

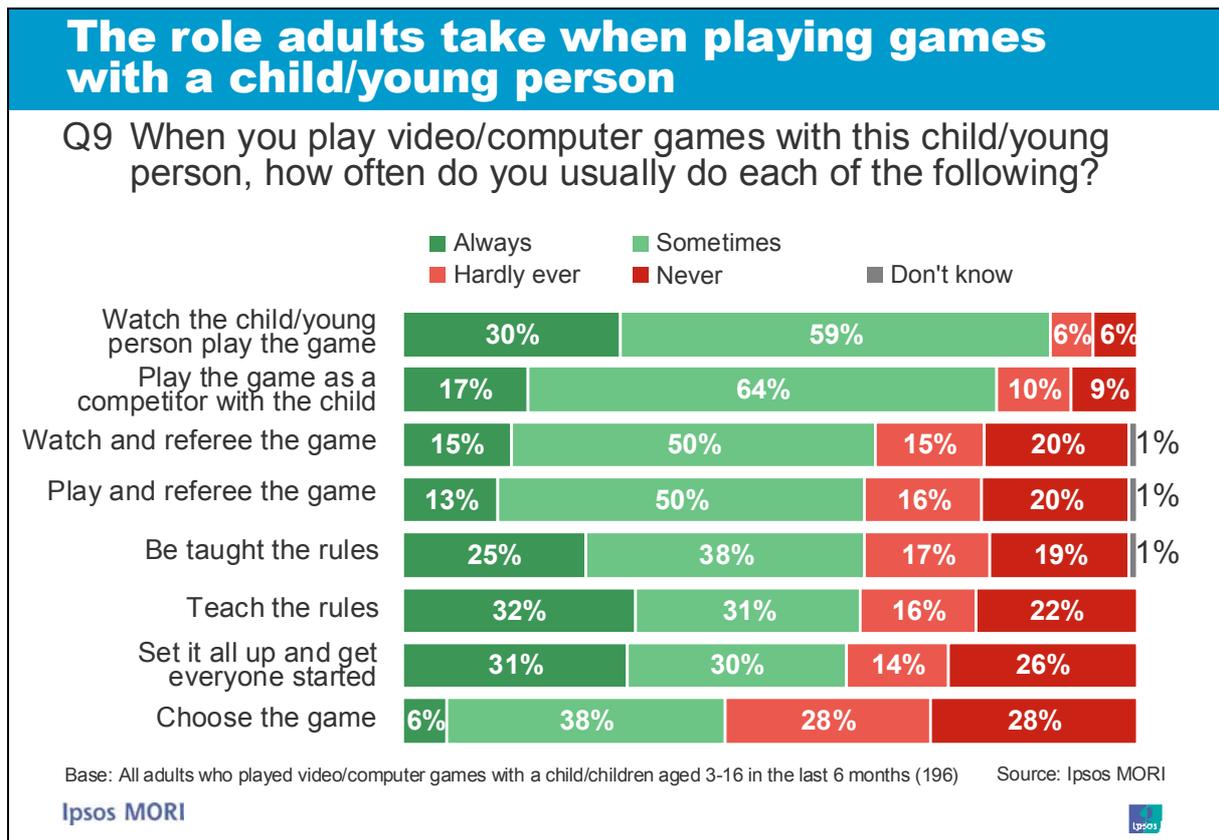
3.6 Choosing the game and the role of adults when playing together

When playing video/computer games with a child, the majority of adults say that *the child usually chooses what game to play* (86%). Just over one in ten say that they (the adult) *choose the game themselves* (12%), one per cent say *another adult usually chooses the game*, and less than one per cent say *other children choose the game*.

Adults with a child in their household aged 6-9 are more likely than those with a 10-15 year old to say that the *child they're playing with usually chooses the game* (91% compared to 81%), while those with a child aged 10-15 in the household are more likely to *choose the game themselves* (18% compared to six per cent of those living with a 6-9 year old).

In order to establish the kinds of roles adults take when playing video/computer games with a child, they were asked how often they do particular activities, while children were asked what the main role would be that they would like the adult to take.

Of the activities measured in the survey, adults are most likely to say they *always/sometimes watch the child play the game* (89%) and *play the game as a competitor with the child* (81%). Around three in five say they *watch and referee the game* (64%), *play and referee the game* (63%), *teach the rules* (62%), *are taught the rules* (62%), and *set the game up and get everyone started* (60%). Adults are least likely to say that they *always/sometimes choose the game* (44%), corresponding with the earlier mentioned finding that 86% say the child they are playing with usually chooses the video/computer game. Thirty-five adults mentioned **another role** they do (among these eleven said they coach/mentor/help the child, three limit the use of the game/time played, and seven observe).

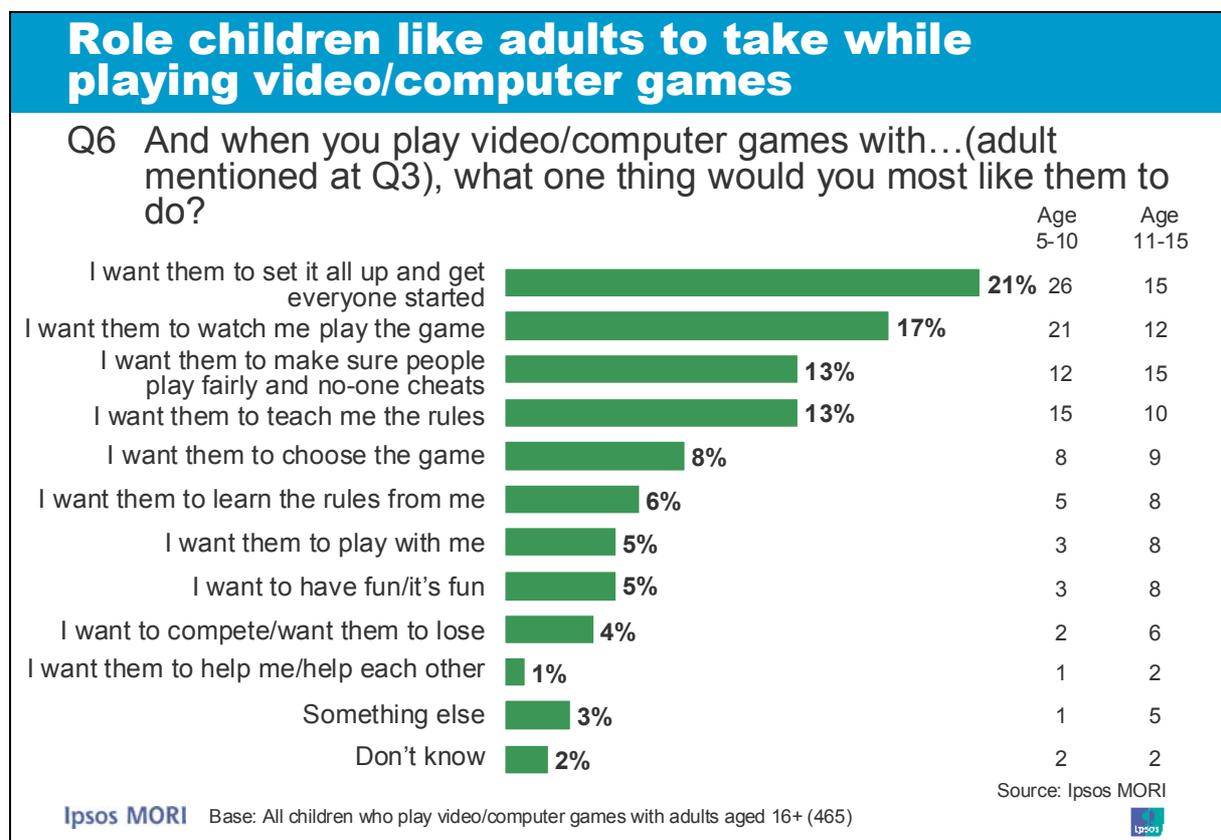


Adults who own a video games console are more likely than average to say they *hardly ever/never choose the game* (62% compared to 56%). However, they are more likely to say they *always/sometimes watch the child play the game* (92% compared to 89% on average) and *play the game as a competitor with the child* (85% compared to 81% on average).

Interestingly, adults of a lower social class, DE, are more likely than those of social grades AB to say they *always/sometimes set up the game and get everyone started* (74% compared to 46%) and those adults with younger children aged 0-5 in their household are more likely to do this than those with 10-15 year olds (79% compared to 41%).

The ages of children in the household also appears to influence how often the adult **teaches the rules** of the game. Those who live with younger children, aged 0-9, are more likely than those with a child aged 10-15 to say they *always/sometimes teach the rules* (72% compared to 47%) and **watch and referee the game** (73% compared to 51%), and those who live with children aged 4-9 are also more likely to say they **play and referee the game** (73% compared to 54% with a child aged 10-15).

Children were asked to choose from a list the one thing they would most like the adult to do when playing video/computer games with them. The most commonly mentioned role a child would like the adult to do is to **set it (the game) all up and get everyone started** (21%). This is followed by wanting the adult to **watch them play the game** (17%), to **make sure people play fairly and no-one cheats** (13%) and to **teach the child the rules** (13%). Less than one in ten say they want the adult to **choose the game** (eight per cent) and to **learn the rules from them** (six per cent). Around one in five mentioned another role (18%), including **wanting the adult to play with them** (five per cent), **wanting to have fun** (five per cent), to **compete/wanting the adult to lose** (four per cent), and **to help them/help each other** (one per cent).

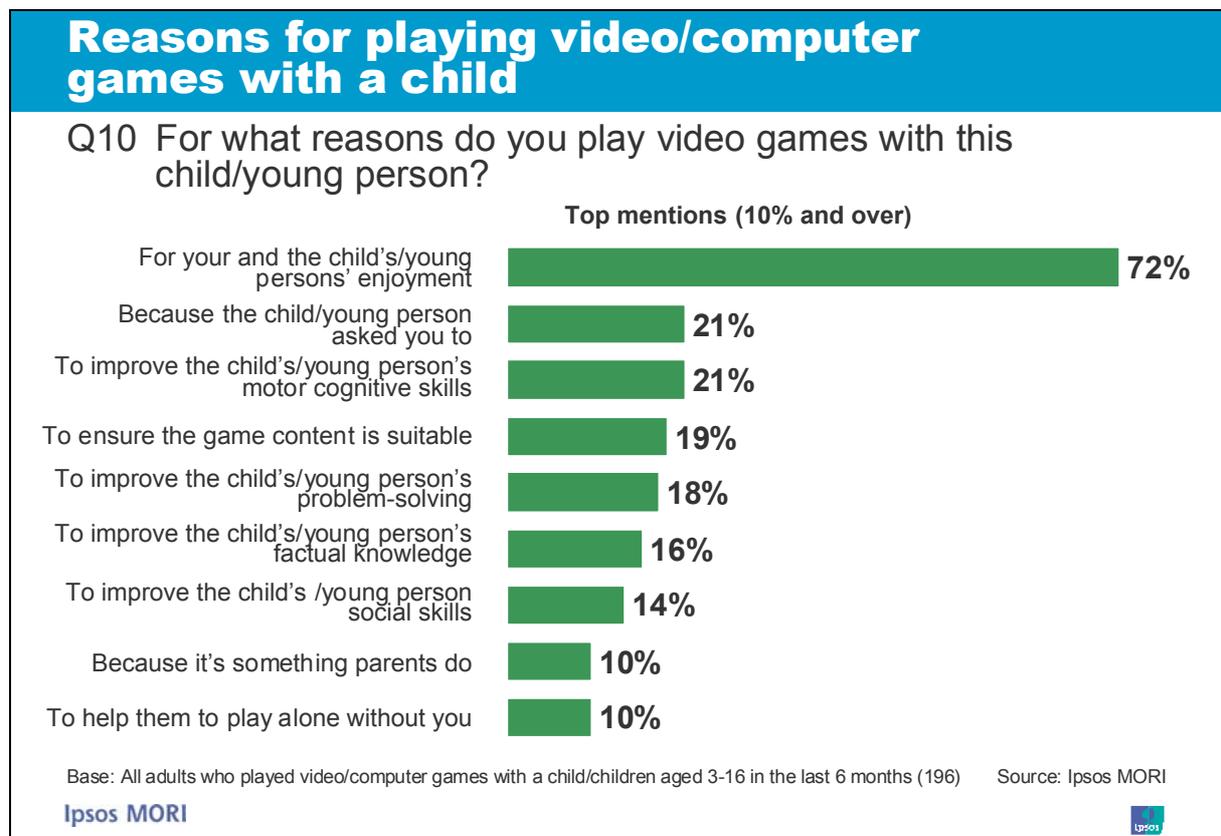


It is not possible to make statistically robust comparisons between adult's responses to the question about roles and children's responses, because the lists of roles asked about were slightly different for each group and while adults were asked how often they do a particular activity, children were asked what one thing they would most like the adult to do. However, it does appear that a much larger proportion of adults say they actually watch the child play the video/computer game (89% *always/sometimes* do this) than children say they want them to do this (17%). Also, as stated previously, a large proportion of adults also say they *always/sometimes* set the game up and get everyone started (60%), which is the top mentioned role children say they would like an adult to take (21%).

3.7 Reasons for and against gaming together

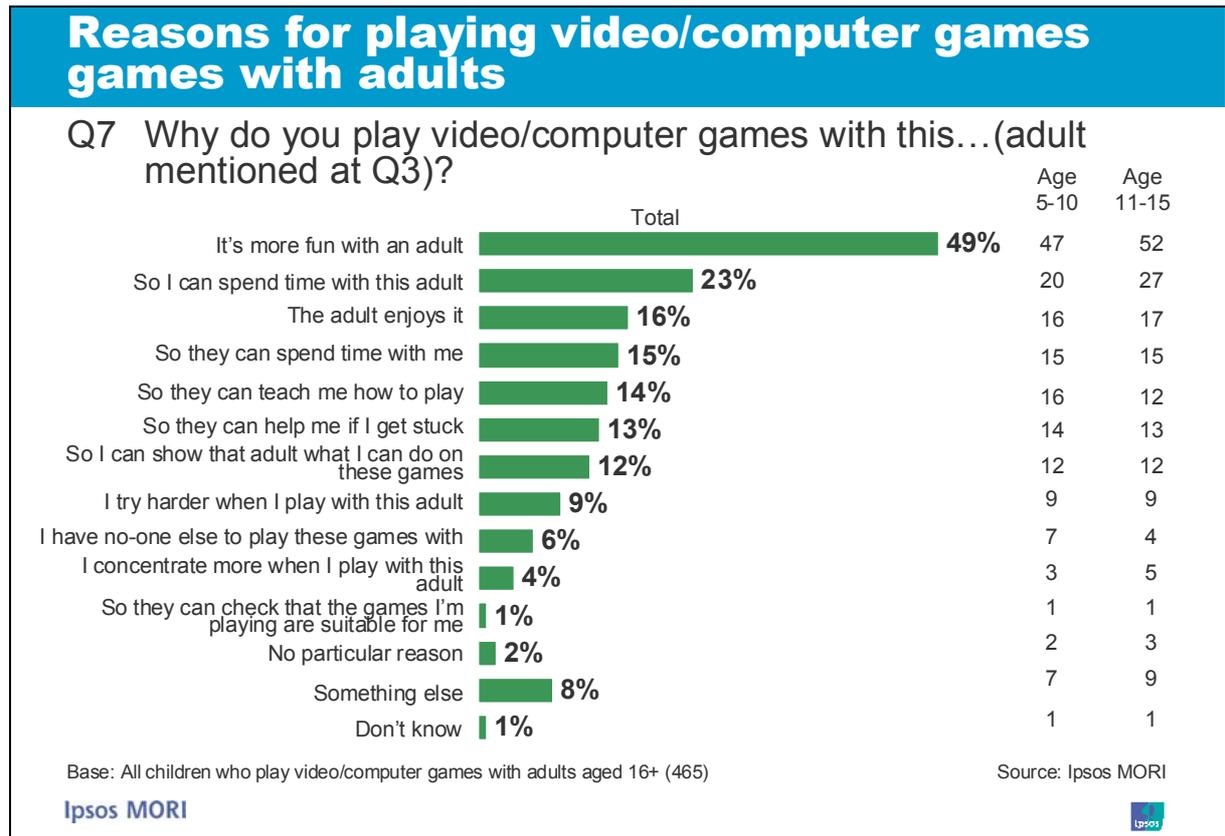
Adults who have played video/computer games with a child in the last six months were asked about their reasons for playing such games, with reference to the child they have played these with the most, while those who have not played video/computer games with a child were asked why they have not done this. Children were asked similar questions in relation to adults they play video/computer games with.

As the following chart shows, the most commonly mentioned spontaneous reason given by adults for playing video/computer games with a child/young person is that it is **for their or the child/young person's enjoyment** (72%). One in five adults say they play video/computer games with a child/young person **because the child/young person asked them to** (21%), **to improve the child's/young person's motor cognitive skills⁷** (21%), **to ensure the game content is suitable** (19%), and **to improve the child's/young person's problem solving, strategic thinking etc.** (18%). The least common reasons given by adults for playing video/computer games with a child/young person are **to fill in time** (eight per cent), **to spend time/quality time with the child** (six per cent), and **for their or the child's/young person's health** (four per cent).



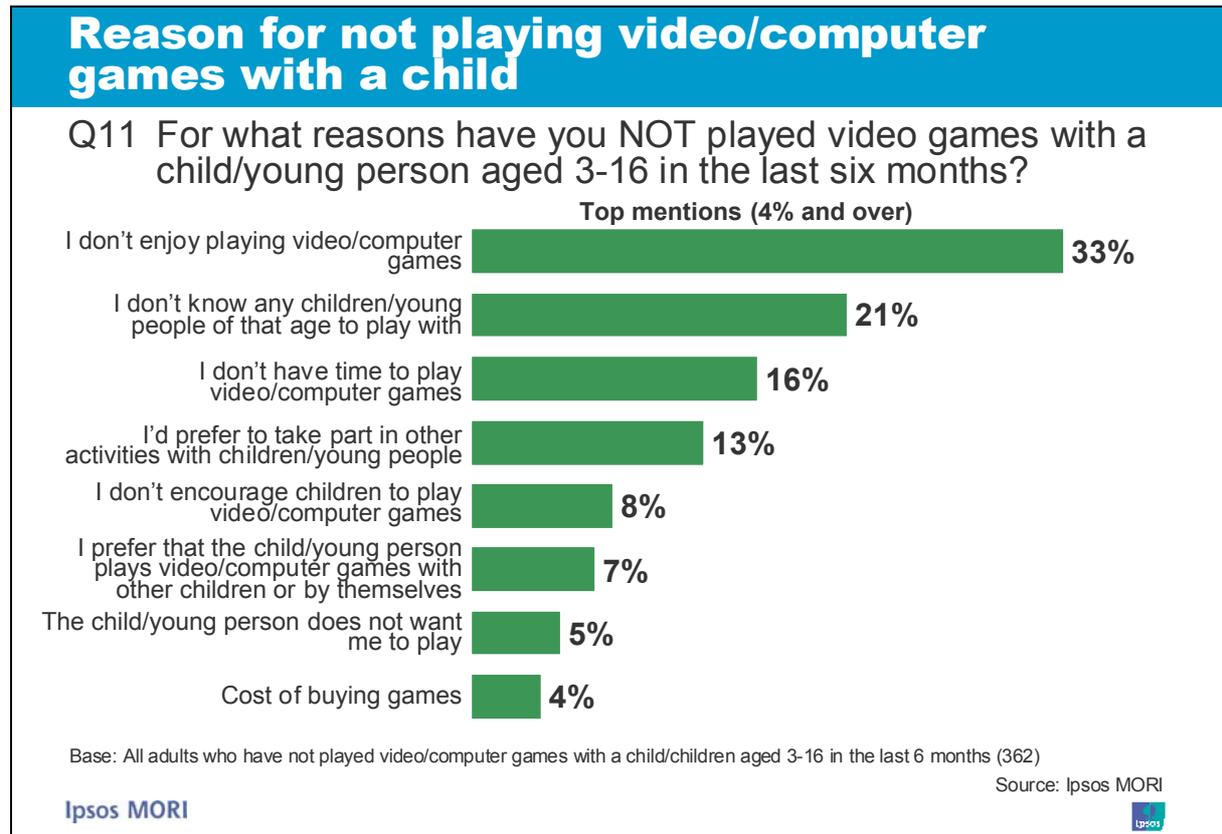
⁷ The following examples were given for improving motor cognitive skills: better hand eye co-ordination, and faster reaction times.

When asked why they play video/computer games with an adult, the top reason, given by half of children, is that it is **more fun with an adult** (49%), which is in line with the top reason given by adults for playing video/computer games with a child/young person; that it is for the child's enjoyment (72%). One in five children say it is **so they can spend time with the adult** (23%) and around one seven say it is because **the adult enjoys it** (16%), **so they (the adult) can spend time with them** (15%), so the adult can **teach them how to play** (14%), and can **help them if they get stuck** (13%).



Children who mostly play video/computer games with their mother/step-mum are more likely than those who play with their father/step-dad the most to say they play video/computer games with this adult so they can **help them if they get stuck** (18% compared to 10%). Also, those who play such games with an adult every day are more likely than those who play less often to say they play with them because **the adult enjoys it** (33% compared to 14%).

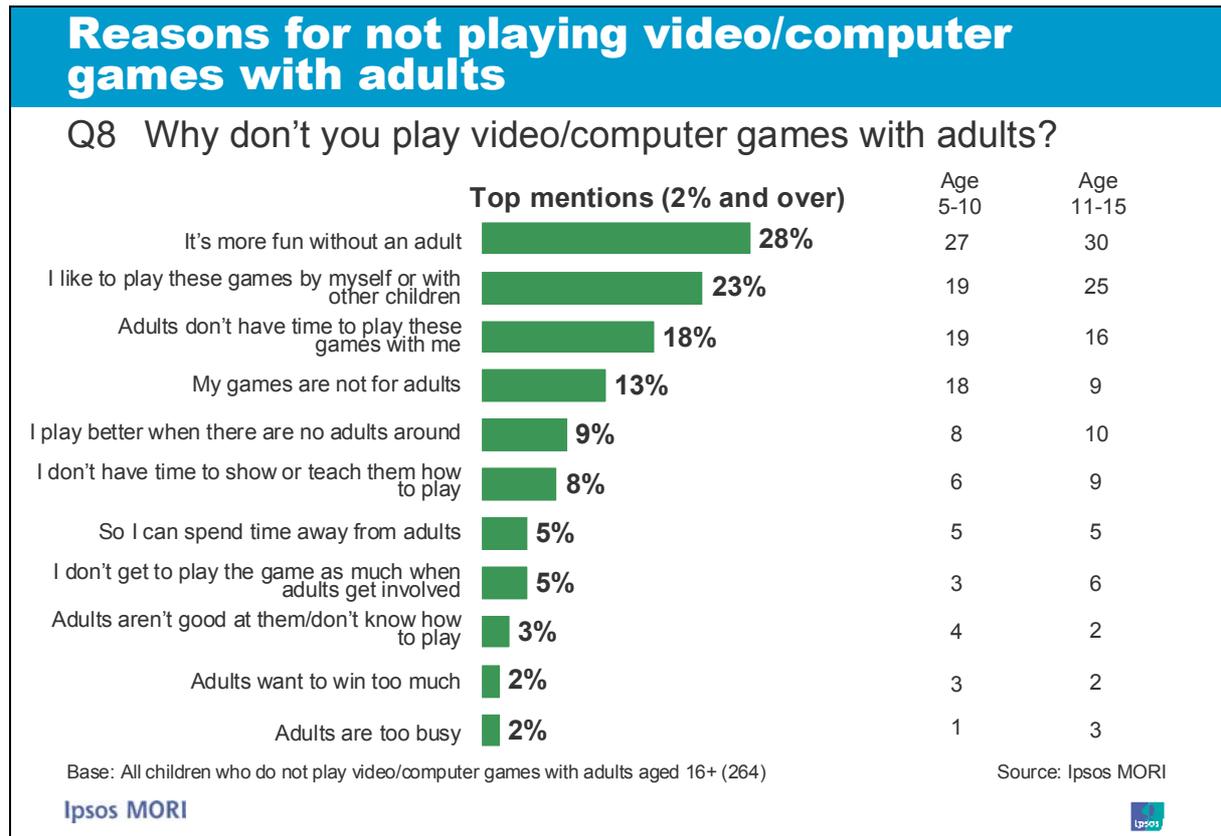
Adults who have *not played* video/computer games with a child/young person aged 3-16 in the last six months were asked for their spontaneous reasons why they have not done this. A third of adults say this is because they **don't enjoy playing video/computer games** (33%). One in five say they **don't know any children/young people of that age to play computer/video games with**⁸ (21%) and even fewer say they **don't have time to play video/computer games** (16%), and **prefer to take part in other activities with children/young people** (13%).



Adults aged 18-34 (36%) are more likely than those aged 35-54 (nine per cent) to say they **don't know any children/young people of that age to play computer/video games with**.

⁸ All adult respondents are parents of a child/children aged 0-16 but may have said they do not know any children/young people aged 3-16 to play video/computer games with if they are specifically parents of under 3s.

Among children who do *not* play video/computer games with adults, the most common spontaneous reasons they give for this are that **it's more fun without an adult** (28%), and **they (the child) like to play these games by themselves or with other children** (23%). Around one in five children say **adults do not have time to play these games with them** (18%), which is consistent with the finding that a similar proportion of adults who do not play video/computer games with children say they **don't have time to play video/computer games** (16%). Other reasons were given by 13% or less.



Boys are more likely than girls to say they do not play video/computer games with adults because they **play better when there are no adults around** (15% compared to five per cent), and children aged 5-10 are more likely than 11-15 year olds to give the reason that **their games are not for adults** (18% compared to nine per cent).

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1: Marked-up questionnaires

Adults

TOPLINE RESULTS
FutureLab Gaming
August 2009

- Data are based on 558 adults aged 15+ who are parents/legal guardians of a child/children under 16.
- Interviewed face to face in home
- Fieldwork dates: 21st - 27th August 2009
- An asterisk (*) denotes a figure less than 0.5% but greater than zero
- Data are weighted to the population profile of Great Britain
- Where results do not sum to 100% this may be due to multiple responses or computer rounding

Q1. **Which, if any of the following apply to you? I am the parent or legal guardian of....⁹**

Base: All (558)

	Total %
a child/children under the age of 16 who does/do live with me	97
a child/children aged under 16 who does not/do not live with me and to whose upbringing I contribute financially	3
a child/children aged under 16 who does not/do not live with me and to whose upbringing I do not contribute financially	1
a child/children aged 16 to 19 who is/are currently in full time education	-
None of the above	-

⁹ Anyone who was not the parent/legal guardian of a child/children under 16 was screened out of the survey at this question.

Q2. For how long, if at all, do you usually play video/computer games each week?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as Play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base : All who are the parent/legal guardian of a child/children under 16 (558)

	Total %
Less than half an hour	9
From ½ an hour up to 1 hour	5
From 1 up to 1 ½ hours	4
From 1 ½ up to 2 hours	7
From 2 up to 2 ½ hours	2
From 2 ½ up to 3 hours	2
3 hours or more	10
I do not play video/computer games	61
Don't know	1

Q3. Thinking about the last 6 months, please tell me which of the following statements most applies to you.

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base : All who are the parent/legal guardian of a child/children under 16 (558)

	Total %
I have mostly played video/computer games with children aged between 3 and 4 years old	6
I have mostly played video/computer games with children aged 5-7 years old	11
I have mostly played video/computer games with children aged 8-11 years old	11
I have mostly played video/computer games with children aged 12-14 years old	5
I have mostly played video/computer games with children aged 15-16 years old	3
I have not played video/computer games with any children aged between 3 and 16 in the last 6 months	64

Q4. What is the relationship you have with the child/young person with whom you play these video/computer games the most?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
He is my son	58
She is my daughter	37
He is my grandson	1
She is my granddaughter	-
He is my nephew	3
She is my niece	-
He is my brother	-
She is my sister	*
He is another family relative	*
She is another family relative	-
Other	1

- Q5. Looking at this list, please can you tell me which of the following types of video/computer games you have played with this child/young person?**
 INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
Active technology/fitness games	44
Racing and other sports games	40
Educational games	39
Puzzles	36
Platform games	29
Dance, Music and Singing games	24
Adventure	20
Fighting games	18
Games where you control the environment and characters	12
Strategy	11
Role Playing games	8
MMO	5
Other	1
Don't know	1

Q6. How often do you usually play video/computer games with this child/young person?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
Every day	8
A few times a week	38
A few times a month	39
Hardly ever	15
Don't know	-

Q7. And how long do you usually spend playing video/computer games with this child/young person on each occasion?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
Less than 10 minutes	7
From 10 minutes to half an hour	24
From ½ an hour up to 1 hour	45
1 hour or more	23
Don't know	*

Q8. When you play video/computer games with this child/young person, who usually chooses what game to play?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
You	12
The child you're playing with	86
Other adults	1
Other children	*

Q9. When you play video/computer games with this child/young person, how often do you usually do each of the following?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Always %	Sometimes %	Hardly ever %	Never %	DK %	N/A %
Choose the game	6	38	28	28	-	-
Set it all up and get everyone started	31	30	14	26	-	-
Teach the rules	32	31	16	22	-	-
Be taught the rules	25	38	17	19	1	-
Watch the child/young person play the game	30	59	6	6	-	-
Play and referee the game	13	50	16	20	1	-
Watch and referee the game	15	50	15	20	1	-
Play the game as a competitor with the child/young person	17	64	10	9	-	-
Other role	1	9	4	-	1	85

Q10. **For what reasons do you play video games with this child/young person?**
 INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY REMIND THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ONLY OF THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON THAT ANSWERED ABOUT AT THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (196)

	Total %
For your and the child's/young person's enjoyment	72
Because the child/young person asked you to	21
To improve the child's/young person's motor cognitive skills	21
To ensure the game content is suitable	19
To improve the child's/young person's problem-solving	18
To improve the child's/young person's factual knowledge	16
To improve the child's/young person's social skills	14
Because it's something parents do	10
To help them to play alone without you	10
So that you can learn something new	9
To fill in time	8
To spend quality time with children	6
For your or the child's/young person's health	4
No particular reason	3
Other	2

Q11. For what reasons have you NOT played video games with a child/young person aged 3-16 in the last six months?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who have not played video/computer games with a child/children aged 3-16 in the last 6 months (362)

	Total %
I don't enjoy playing video/computer games	33
I don't know any children/young people of that age to play video/computer games with	21
I don't have time to play video/computer games	16
I'd prefer to take part in other activities with children/young people	13
I don't encourage children to play video/computer games	8
I prefer that the child/young person plays video/computer games with other children or by themselves	7
The child/young person does not want me to play	5
Cost of buying games	4
I'm worried about looking silly in front of the children/young people	2
The game is in an inconvenient location	2
Do not have the equipment/games	1
Not interested	1
Child would not understand/know what to do	1
No answer	1
Other	2

Q12. Would you like to spend more time, less time or about the same amount of time playing video/computer games with children/young people?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games I mean playing games on a computer – including those on the internet, using a handheld device like a Game Boy or PSP or via a console such as play stations or the Wii at a TV.

Base: All who are the parent/legal guardian of a child/children under 16 (558)

	Total %
More time	12
About the same amount of time	55
Less time	19
Don't know	14

Children

TOPLINE RESULTS FutureLab Gaming August 2009

- Data are based on 737 children aged 5-15
- Interviewed face to face in home
- Fieldwork dates: 13th-20th August 2009
- An asterisk (*) denotes a figure less than 0.5% but greater than zero
- Data is weighted to Government Office Region based on national statistics, and to enable equal proportions in each age year/gender category
- Where results do not sum to 100% this may be due to multiple responses or computer rounding

Q1. How often do you usually play games video/computer games for on your own or with your friends?

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including on the internet, or on a hand held gaming toy like a Game Boy, or at a TV using something like a Wii or Play Station

Base: All (737)

	Total % (737)	5-10 % (409)	11-15 % (328)
Every day	37	34	41
A few times a week	42	45	37
A few times a month	13	13	13
Hardly ever	7	6	8
I do not play video/computer games	1	2	*
Don't know	-	-	-

Q2. Do you ever play video/computer games with adults? Adult means anyone who is over 16 years old.

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including on the internet, or on a hand held gaming toy like a Game Boy, or at a TV using something like a Wii or Play Station

Base : All who play video/computer games on their own or with friends (729)

	Total % (729)	5-10 % (402)	11-15 % (327)
Yes	64	70	57
No	36	30	43

Q3. What adult do you spend the most amount of time playing video/computer games with?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including on the internet, or on a hand held gaming toy like a Game Boy, or at a TV using something like a Wii or Play Station

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults aged 16+ (465)

	Total % (465)	5-10 % (281)	11-15 % (184)
My father/dad/step dad	41	42	39
My mother/mum/step mum	38	43	31
My brother/step brother who is 16 years or older	12	4	24
Another adult who is 16 years or older	9	5	13
My sister/stepsister who is 16 years or older	4	4	5
My grandmother/nan	*	*	1
My grandfather/granddad	*	-	*
Don't know	1	1	-

- Q4. Looking at this list, please can you tell me which of the following types of video/computer games you have played with [INSERT ADULT MENTIONED AT Q3].

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including on the internet, or on a hand held gaming toy like a Game Boy, or at a TV using something like a Wii or Play Station

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults and are aged 8-10 (153)

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Active games	85	15	-
Games where you have to reach the end of the course	65	33	1
Sports games	63	36	1
Adventure games	50	48	1
Dance, Music and Singing games	49	50	1
Games where you learn things	42	56	2
Games on the internet	41	58	1
Other type of video game	9	91	N/A
Other types of video games mentioned include:			
Fighting games	2	N/A	N/A
Games where you control the environment and characters	1	N/A	N/A
Arcade games	1	N/A	N/A
Other	4	N/A	N/A

- Q4. Looking at this list, please can you tell me which of the following types of video/computer games you have played with [INSERT ADULT MENTIONED AT Q3].

INTERVIEWER READ OUT IF NEED REMINDER:

By video/computer games, I mean playing games on a computer – including on the internet, or on a hand held gaming toy like a Game Boy, or at a TV using something like a Wii or Play Station

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults and are aged 11-15 (184)

	%
Racing and other sport games	53
Active technology/fitness games	53
Fighting games	52
Platform games	41
Dance, Music and Singing games	30
Games where you control the environment and characters	29
Strategy	27
Adventure	26
Puzzles	23
Role Playing games	23
Educational games	22
MMO	19
Other	4
None of these/Don't know	*

- Q5. How often do you usually play video/computer games with [INSERT ADULT MENTIONED AT Q3]?

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults aged 16+ (465)

	Total % (465)	5-10 % (281)	11-15 % (184)
Every day	9	8	10
A few times a week	46	48	43
A few times a month	35	32	38
Hardly ever	9	11	7
Don't know	1	1	1

Q6. And when you play video/computer games with [INSERT ADULT MENTIONED AT Q3], what one thing would you most like them to do?

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults aged 16+ (465)

	Total % (465)	5-10 % (281)	11-15 % (184)
I want them to set it all up and get everyone started	21	26	15
I want them to watch me play the game	17	21	12
I want them to teach me the rules	13	15	10
I want them to make sure people play fairly and no-one cheats	13	12	15
I want them to choose the game	8	8	9
I want them to learn the rules from me	6	5	8
I want them to play with me	5	3	8
I want to have fun/it's fun	5	3	8
I want to compete/want them to lose	4	2	6
I want them to help me/help each other	1	1	2
Something else	3	1	5
Don't know	2	2	2

Q7. Why do you play video/computer games with this [INSERT ADULT MENTIONED AT Q3]?

Base: All who play video/computer games with adults aged 16+ (465)

	Total % (465)	5-10 % (281)	11-15 % (184)
It's more fun with an adult/grown-up	49	47	52
So I can spend time with this adult/grown-up	23	20	27
The adult/grown-up enjoys it	16	16	17
So they/the grown-up can spend time with me	15	15	15
So they can teach me how to play	14	16	12
So they can help me if I get stuck	13	14	13
So I can show that adult what I can do on these games/grown-up how well I play the game	12	12	12
I try harder when I play with this adult/grown-up	9	9	9
I have no-one else to play these games with	6	7	4
I concentrate more when I play with this adult/grown-up	4	3	5
So they can check that the games I'm playing are suitable for me to play/ok for me	1	1	1
No particular reason	2	2	3
Something else	8	7	9
Don't know	1	1	1

Q8. Why don't you play video/computer games with adults?

Base: All who never play video/computer games with adults (264)

	Total % (264)	5-10 % (121)	11-15 % (143)
It's more fun without an adult	28	27	30
I like to play these games by myself or with other children	23	19	25
Adults don't have time to play these games with me	18	19	16
My games are not for adults	13	18	9
I play better when there are no adults around	9	8	10
I don't have time to show or teach them how to play	8	6	9
So I can spend time away from adults	5	5	5
I don't get to play the game as much when adults get involved	5	3	6
Adults aren't good at them/don't know how to play	3	4	2
Adults want to win too much	2	3	2
Adults are too busy	2	1	3
Adults cheat	1	3	-
We don't like the same games	1	-	2
I prefer to play on my own	1	2	-
No particular reason	15	16	14
Something else	7	2	11
Don't know	3	3	3

Q9. Would you like to spend more time, less time or about the same amount of time playing video/computer games with adults?

Base: All who play video/computer games on their own or with friends (729)

	Total % (729)	5-10 % (402)	11-15 % (327)
More time	29	34	22
About the same amount of time	56	51	61
Less time	6	7	6
Don't know	10	9	11

Appendix 2: Guide to statistical reliability

Statistical Reliability

It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population of residents in Great Britain have been surveyed. Therefore, the figures obtained may not be exactly those we would have if everybody in Great Britain had been surveyed (the “true” values). However, the variation between the sample results and the “true” values can be predicted from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which this prediction can be made is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the “95% confidence interval” in face-to-face surveys using random probability sampling. Though these cannot necessarily be applied to the Capibus and Children’s omnibus surveys, which used quotas and sampling points rather than purely random sampling, they provide a broad indication of how reliability is affected by sample size.

An indication of approximate sampling tolerances is given in the table below.

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)

Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
558 (i.e. all adult respondents)	3	4	4
737 (i.e. all child respondents)	2	3	4

Source: Ipsos MORI

For example, with a total sample size of 558 completed adult questionnaires, where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been surveyed) will fall within the range off four percentage points, plus or minus, from the sample result.

Sample tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results between the groups within the sample. In order to be statistically significant, a difference must be of at least a certain size. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons between sub-groups.

Differences required for significance at the 95% confidence level at or near these percentages

	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
Size of sample on which survey result is based			
e.g. All children aged 5-10 (409) vs. all children aged 11-15 (328)	4	7	7
e.g. boys (374) vs. all girls (363)	4	7	7
e.g. All men (216) vs. all women (342)	5	8	9
e.g. All white adults (456) vs. all non-white adults (100)	7	10	11

Source: Ipsos MORI

Appendix 3: Sample profile

Adults

Sample profile of all adults who took part in the survey

	No. of people unweighted	Unweighted %	Weighted %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(558)	(558)	(613)
Gender			
Male	216	39	42
Female	342	61	58
Age			
15-17	9	2	2
18-24	55	10	7
25-34	176	32	31
35-44	213	38	41
45-54	94	17	18
55-64	11	2	2
65+	0	0	0
Ethnicity			
White	456	82	87
Non-white	100	18	13
Refused	2	*	*
Social grade			
AB	117	21	30
C1	162	29	26
C2	115	21	20
DE	164	29	24
Government office region			
East Midlands	33	6	6
Eastern	46	8	10
London	71	13	15
North East	33	6	5
North West	74	13	12
Scotland	50	9	7

South East	52	9	13
South West	33	6	7
Wales	38	7	5
West Midlands	74	13	13
Yorkshire and Humberside	54	10	7
Durables owned			
TV sets	550	99	98
Satellite TV	246	44	43
Telephone	438	78	81
Video recorder	238	43	45
Car or van	411	74	77
Mobile phone	512	92	93
Personal computer/desktop	372	67	69
Laptop	309	55	60
Video games console	280	50	52
Digital camera	351	63	68
Cable TV	97	17	19
Freeview	242	43	45
DAB digital radio	112	20	23
Credit cards	296	53	58
Debit cards	429	77	81
DVD recorder	165	30	32
DVD player	443	79	80
MP3	242	43	47
Freesat	26	5	5

Source: Ipsos MORI

Children

Sample profile of all children who took part in the survey

	No. of people unweighted	Unweighted %	Weighted %
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(737)	(737)	(737)
Gender			
Male	374	51	50
Female	363	49	50
Age			
5 years	68	9	9
6 years	60	8	9
7 years	60	8	9
8 years	71	10	9
9 years	80	11	9
10 years	70	9	9
11 years	54	7	9
12 years	65	9	9
13 years	56	8	9
14 years	76	10	9
15 years	77	10	9
Ethnicity			
White	689	93	94
Non-white	48	7	5
Social grade			
AB	111	15	15
C1	231	31	31
C2	178	24	24
DE	217	29	29
Government office region			
East Midlands	60	8	7
Eastern	80	11	9
London	99	13	13
North East	40	5	4
North West	79	11	12
Scotland	55	7	9

South East	104	14	14
South West	60	8	9
Wales	40	5	5
West Midlands	60	8	9
Yorkshire and Humberside	60	8	9

Source: Ipsos MORI