

Aggressive video games: Effects on mental health and behaviors in young people

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Aggressive video games are not a risk factor for mental health problems, according to a new study of more than 3,000 youth. This study is part of a special issue on the effects of violent video games published in the

peer-reviewed journal *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

Christopher Ferguson, Ph.D., Stetson University, and C.K. John Wang, Ph.D., Nanyang Technological University, examined whether [early exposure](#) to aggressive games was predictive of anxiety depression, somatic symptoms, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder 2 years later.

In an editorial entitled, "Effects of Violent Video Games: 50 Years On, Where Are We Now?" Guest Editors of the special issue, Simon Goodson, Ph.D. and Kirstie Turner, Ph.D., University of Huddersfield, state: "The aim of this special issue is to present empirical findings based upon meticulous research in order to provide a more informed resource for the debate of the effects of playing [violent video games](#)."

Manuel Ibáñez, , Ph.D., Universitat Jaume I, and coauthors examined the role of violent video game exposure, personality, and deviant peers in aggressive behaviors among adolescents. They found that aggressive behavior was predicted by having deviant peers and specific personality traits, especially low agreeableness. Violent video game exposure had no long-term effects on aggressive behaviors.

"Video games have been criticized from the moment they came into being and, like with most other new technologies, we've discovered there are benefits as well as shortcomings to consider. My hope is that by publishing this special issue, highlighting cutting-edge research with objective data, we may come to better understand both the promise and peril of videogames," says Editor-in-Chief Brenda K. Wiederhold, Ph.D., MBA, BCB, BCN, Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, California and Virtual Reality Medical Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

More information: Simon Goodson et al, Effects of Violent Video

Games: 50 Years on, Where are we now?, *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* (2021). [DOI: 10.1089/cyber.2020.29205.vvg](https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2020.29205.vvg)

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