

Video games do not
make us violent, if
anything, they are
good for us

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Jake sat down on his bed after a long day at school, the smell of sweat had consumed his room because it's been a while since he last cleaned it.

He turned on his TV and plugged in his gaming console, he inserted his favourite game in the disc slot and started playing his favourite video game. Shortly after, his father walked in his room and started his usual lecture, "How many times did I tell you not to play this game?" "Do you not realize how violent this game can make you?" "I do not tolerate violent video games in this house and you should know that by now" he finished and walked out of the room with the disc in his hand, Jake is so angry that his skin turned to a dark shade of red, his grip tightens forming two scary and intimidating fists, he could feel the heat coming out of his body as his anger increases he's ready to punch a hole in the wall but he soon calms himself, realizing that the only way to solve this problem is by reasoning with his dad.

Violence has been around in our social media for a long time, people are exposed to violence through TV shows, movies, music videos, video games and even through modern advertisements, but as soon as something goes wrong in our society, from mass shootings to murder cases, we dump all the blame on video games, It's like if violent video games didn't exist, we would live in a perfectly peaceful world. People have to understand that violence in video games doesn't make us more violent. I understand that the blood, gore and antisocial behavior seen in games like Grand Theft Auto make parents nervous, but after several studies conducted on mass murderers involved in several shootings in the US, scientists failed to prove that there is a connection between the incidents and playing violent video games. If we consider this theory to be true and effective, it means that everyone that

plays soccer as a video game will become a professional soccer player, or anyone that plays Need For Speed will become a street racer, it's like what Marcus Brigstocke said " If Pac-Man had affected us as kids, we'd all be running around in dark rooms, munching pills and listening to repetitive electronic music.

" Of course we know that this theory is unrealistic and so is comparing violence in video games to violence in real life. Another study that was published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence showed that as the sales of video games increased by 24% in the US in the past 5 years, the crime rate for minors decreased by 8%, you might be thinking how these two are linked, the answer is very simple, video games keep teenagers occupied and it keeps them away from the streets and all the troubles they might face. Another study conducted by the University of Harvard in 2009, which included teenagers between the ages of 14 to 18. The teenagers were split into two groups, the first group got to play violent video games like Call Of Duty and Battle Field for an hour, and the other group got to play less violent video games like Little Big Planet and NHL 2009 for the same period of time, the two groups then answered a group of questions and none of the teenagers showed any signs of aggressions or change in their behaviour, at the end of the experiment, the scientists dropped a group of pens to see if both groups would react the same way and help them pick them up, both groups had the same reaction and they both rushed to help them. Philip Hatcher, a psychology professor and an expert in his domain, came to the conclusion that virtual violence and aggression featured in video games does not affect our brains if we don't allow it.

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In other words, if you are mature enough or have a little bit of common sense you will know that what you are seeing is only virtual and it's still morally wrong to carry out that aggressive behaviour to the real world. Hatcher published a report where he showed a series of questions he asked to teenagers who played violent video games regularly, examples of the questions were "do you still think its ok to kill a cop" and "do you think it's acceptable to rape a women?" Hatcher finished with a lot of positive results which showed that teenagers understood and realized that what they saw on TV should always stay on TV. If violent video games were the root of all evil, then shouldn't we see more violent acts committed in our society? Statistics show that the percentage of bullying had dropped by 16% in Canadian highschoools in the last five years. This drop might not be directly related to teenagers playing more video games; but it's definitely significant because 70% of Canadian teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18 reported that they play violent video games on a regular basis. In other words, if violence in video games was really related to aggressive behaviour in real life, we should expect more violent behaviours; but instead, the percentage of bullying has dropped even though a lot of teenagers play violent video games would also expect more mass shootings than now.

A report on CBC showed that there has been only 16 mass shootings in the history of Canada in the last 3 decades, if video games really did have such a huge impact on our behaviour, I would expect a mass shooting every two weeks. Jake decided to have a little chat with his father to try to explain why he should let him play his video game, he started by saying "People who demonise violent video games have to understand that they do us more

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good than bad. First of all, they help develop our sense of teamwork and helping each other, for example, in games like Call of Duty and Battle Field people have to come up with a strategy, as a team, in order to win. Secondly, video games make us more aware and more conscience of our environment. People who play fast paced games have to be ready all the time to get through any obstacle they might face. Finally, he finished by saying that video games are an escape for people who would like to blow out some stress, so instead of taking your anger out on somebody, you can do it on a video game and not avoid hurting anybody.

“ Jake looked up to see his father’s reaction, a wide smile was formed on his face , luckily for Jake, his father was reasonable man and took all of his points into consideration and returned the game to him. I hope that people start to be more understanding like Jake’s dad and start thinking rationally. Most importantly, we should start looking for the real reason of violence in society and instead of blaming video games all the time, maybe we should evaluate the parents who have raised their kids to be that way.