

Should Parents Play Videogames With Their Children?

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About twice a month the Davis family microwaves a bag of popcorn and sprawls around a large flat-screen TV for the night. But they don't stream Netflix. They fire up a Nintendo Wii U and play "Mario Kart," the gravity-defying racing game.

"It's not just pressing buttons," said Gary Davis, 53, of Webster, N.Y. "There's a lot of joking going on." Despite the fact that "Mario Kart" involves neither senseless slaughter nor barbaric hedonism, his sons are into it. "It's cool to see my parents interested in things I'm interested in also," said Will, 14.

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"Many games not only teach academic subjects like math and science but also important life skills, like working toward a goal and persisting even after failure," said Yalda T. Uhls, a child psychologist who studies how media affects children. (Minecraft, for example, is all about geometry.) According to Dr. Uhls, those lessons are reinforced when a parent is on hand to encourage children who might be having trouble beating a tricky level. "If you're in there with them or just watching, you can teach your kids critical thinking," said Dr. Uhls.

Read the whole story: [The Wall Street Journal](#)