

Making Smart Decisions About Video Games

(NAPSA)—If it sometimes seems that every young person you see has a video game in hand, it may be because they do. According to recent research by The NPD Group, 91 percent of kids—more than 60 million across the country—play video games.

There's a great deal of debate over the content and nature of many games on the market and about whether video gameplay has a negative effect on attitudes and behaviors. As technology continues to evolve, however, and parents demand better options, the popularity of online and mobile games presents a valuable opportunity to provide developing minds with interactive, stimulating options—with the added benefit of improving classroom skills.

While parents can turn to ratings for information about language, violence and suggestive themes, determining the games that provide teachable moments for their children can be more of a challenge. To find games that offer educational value and entertain and engage in a meaningful way, look for these key characteristics:

- **Skills Based:** Some of the most effective educational games don't necessarily teach specific subject matter but focus on improving skills, from reading comprehension to math and science proficiency. As a result, these games prepare students for classroom instruction through cognitive exploration and engagement.

- **Stimulating:** Rich multimedia engages different types of learners with an interactive experience, more lasting than a traditional classroom lesson or one-dimensional game. They engage



Parents can find games for their children that are educational as well as entertaining.

visual learners through the visual presentation of ideas, auditory learners through voice-overs and music, and kinesthetic learners through interactive exercises and engagement in the story.

- **Age Appropriate:** Such challenges and learning opportunities are much more effective.

- **Third-Party Endorsements:** Credible organizations such as The National Parenting Center, Parents' Choice Foundation, and Common Sense Media verify which games feature quality, educational content, are age appropriate and deliver a good value.

- **Factual:** Nonfiction content embedded within games teaches players facts and information about the subject matter. With accurate details, games test players' knowledge in a fun, entertaining way. For example, "Mayan Mysteries" from Dig-It! Games is 100 percent historically accurate, incorporating detailed factual information about the ancient civilization contributed by a world-renowned Maya expert.

Learn More

For further facts on educational gaming, visit www.dig-it-games.com.