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VIDEO GAMES FUEL YOUNG ATHLETES: SURVEY SHOWS PARENTS SPENDING OVER £500 ON GAMING GEAR

London 25 July 2024: With the Paris 2024 Olympics just days away, video games are increasingly recognised for their role in nurturing young sporting talent. A new survey by nimbl, the leading pocket money card and app for 6 to 18 year olds highlights how video games are helping to shape children's sports skills and enthusiasm for real-life sports.

Bridging the Gap Between Virtual and Physical Sports

Sports video games like FIFA, NBA 2K and Tony Hawk's Pro Skater are increasingly recognised for their educational value. Well-known sport professionals such as Jadon Sancho (Football), Ben Simmons (Basketball) and Erica Bougard (Athletics) are known to play video games to study skills, game strategies, and fine tune motor skills. Many sports professionals are bringing their skills, expertise and experience to the gaming world.

A nimbl survey of 410 parents across the UK found that sports video games has helped 41% of children understand the rules and strategies of sports games, 37% have seen improvements in their cognitive skills such as problem-solving and teamwork and 42% in fine motor skills such as reaction times, hand-eye co-ordination and anticipation.

Sandy's daughter (12 years old), from Epsom, plays football for her school and local clubs said, "Lilly lives and breathes football. Gaming has given her a better understanding of the rules, strategy and range of skills she can develop. Because the games are immersive and she can play with family and friends, it's been great socially as well as playing with different people. You learn more about yourself as well as working together with others."

Inspiring Participation and Passion

Beyond entertainment and skills development, video games are also inspiring a curiosity and passion for sports in children, opening opportunities to try and explore sports they may never have considered. The immersive nature of video games gives children the opportunity to try new sports, discover new skills and take risks in a 'safe space'.

The nimble survey showed action and adventure was the most popular genre (35%), followed by sport (23%) and online platforms such as Roblox and Minecraft (11%).

Of those surveyed, 35% of children were inspired to try sports after playing video games and hobbies from football (27%), basketball (5%) and tennis (3%) to skateboarding (3%), gymnastics (3%) and motorsports (3%).

Jo's son (11 years old), from Watford, enjoys bowling and playing tennis online and offline, she said, "Issac has great hand-eye co-ordination. I can't say for certain gaming has contributed to this but it has inspired him to try new sports that he might not have considered before, such as golf. After playing the Nintendo golf game, he wanted to go to a driving range and loved it!"

Finding balance and getting fit

The survey found that 69% of children are gaming over 4 hours a week, of which 28% are playing over 10 hours a week. Finding the right balance is key. 44% of children are spend more time physically active or with offline interests than gaming, 36% surveyed have no specific balance, 15% spend equal time on both, whilst 5% are gaming more.

Whilst most parents surveyed feel there is no substitute for spending more time playing sports, dancing or getting exercise, 25% of parents said that the motion-based video games have improved or maintained their child's physical fitness, especially for those with disabilities, not participating in out-of-school activities and if bad weather prevails.

Summer Boredom Buster Promotion: Wettest summer in 100 years

The Met Office estimated there could be as many as 50 wet days over the course of summer, that is just under two days out of every three ([TimeOut](#)). In a quest to keep young minds active and parents sane for those rainy days nimbl has just launched a [Summer Boredom Buster](#) promotion. From July to September, nimbl is giving away every week an X Box Series S or a Nintendo Switch OLED Model to anyone who opens an account or is an existing customer. In the last week of August anyone can enter the prize draw for a chance to win the bundle every day.

According to [Global Market Insights](#) the gaming accessories market is valued at US\$9.2 billion in 2023. The nimbl survey found the most popular accessories purchased were headsets (79%), mics (45%), gaming chairs (31%) and racing wheel kits (11%).

Alana Parsons, nimbl Chief Executive explains, "Our nimbl survey found that 42% of parents spent over £500 on gaming equipment, of which 8% spent over £1000. We know many families are really feeling the pinch and have had to put off going on holiday. Our Summer Boredom Buster promotion is all about children just having some fun especially on those wet days and giving families a good chance to win these fantastic prizes worth £300 each!"

"By recognising the educational and inspirational value of sports video games, we can foster well-rounded athletes and inspire lifelong passion for sports. There's so much research out there showing we learn best when we're playing and having fun. We just need to ensure that we get the right healthy offline/online balance."

Ends

Notes to Editor

nimbl surveyed 353 parents of children aged under 11 – 18 years old.

Images:

[Lilly 12 Plays Football 1](#)

[Lilly 12 Plays Football 2](#)

[Lilly 12 Plays Football 3](#)

[Lilly 12 Plays Video Games 1](#)

[Lilly 12 Plays Video Games 2](#)

About nimbl

nimbl is an award-winning pocket money card and app, designed with parents, carers and young people in mind. <https://www.nimbl.com/>

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