



## Screening Time and Video Game Playing Use Among Children Aged 6-8 Years

Beril Aydın<sup>1</sup>, Ayşe Tolunay Oflu<sup>2</sup>, Sıddika Songül Yalçın<sup>3</sup>

1: Başkent University Faculty of Medicine Department of Pediatrics, Ankara, Turkey;

2: Afyon Kocatepe University Faculty of Medicine Department of Pediatrics, Afyon, Turkey;

3: Hacettepe University Faculty of Medicine Department of Pediatrics Unit of Social Pediatrics, Ankara, Turkey.

### Abstract

**Aim:** Due to the widespread use of computers and video games, the positive and negative effects of computers on children and young people have begun to be questioned. On the other hand, violent video games have been reported to cause aggressive behaviors in children and adolescents. Also, it has been reported that long-term use of the computer can cause psycho-social problems, obesity, physiological problems, musculoskeletal system problems, adversities in social development and internet addiction. The aim of the research is to determine the habits of children at school education and their families and to evaluate certain beliefs and attitudes of parents about children’s media use.

**Material and Methods:** The study was conducted between 1 to 28 February 2018 with the permission of the school children and their families. The study group was consisted of 6-8 year old school-age children (n = 100) and their families who applied to Baskent Hospital in Ankara. The questionnaire which was a form developed by the researchers was used in order to reach demographic information and computer usage habits of the child and their family, Results: In this study the mean age of the children was  $83.3 \pm 8.6$  months and 50% of them are boys. The age at which girls started using the screen was  $10.4 \pm 4.2$  months, and for boys it was  $10.5 \pm 4.3$  months ( $p = 0.852$ ). 40% of the girls and 34% of the boys used more than 2 hours of screen ( $p = 0.534$ ). 68% of the children were playing video games. 48% of the girls and 88% of the boys were playing video games ( $p < 0.001$ ). The rate of playing video games more than two hours was 14% for girls and 40% for boys. The age at which girls began using video was  $33.6 \pm 14.4$  months, and that of boys was  $27.6 \pm 12.0$  months ( $p = 0.091$ ). There was no correlation between the screen time and body mass index z score. In the study, 69% of the children were living with a person who played video games in their home. The percentage of children playing video games varied according to the playing status of another person at home (75.4% in playing video games at home, 51.6% in non-playing,  $p = 0.019$ ). There was also a significant relationship between parents' habits of playing video games and their children ( $p < 0.05$ ). The frequency of using video and using social media was not affected by the parents working, the educational status, the place where the family lived, the number of children family haved, index child’s birth order and the family structure ( $p > 0.05$ ). There was no significant relationship between the use of social media by the parents



and the children ( $p > 0.05$ ). The limitations on the use of the screen for children by their family were 34.4% in cases with screen time  $< 30$  minutes, 60.9% for 1 hour, 61.1% for 1-2 hours and 37% for  $> 2$  hours. Overall, 37.3% of the children preferred another social activities instead of playing video. 29% of the children felt positive, 19% of the children felt negative and 52% of the children felt as if inside when they were playing video. 41% of the children used the computer in their own room and 12% of the children used it outside the home.

**Conclusions:** The important finding in this study was onset age of playing video game had come down to preschool period. More than one third (39.7%) of the children who played video games performed more than two hours. The families should consider that the duration of playing computer games would be possibly prolonged in the older age group. In the study, it was determined that the behavior of children playing video games increased according to the situation of parents playing video games. It was also determined that boys were more likely to play computer games than girls. The interests of parents were directly influencing children's computer use rates. It could be explained that children were searching for a role model pattern in this period. Technological developments were seemed to affect the habits of playing video games in children. For this reason, parents should help their children to get the right play habits during this period. The information and counseling on selection of computer games, duration of computer use and playing computer games should be provided for the families.

**Key words:** Child, computer games, video games, social media use



International Child and Information Safety Congress  
“Digital Games”  
April 11–13, 2018 – Ankara, TURKEY