DA20
DIGITAL AUSTRALIA 2020
THE POWER OF GAMES
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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video: The Power of Games</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOREWORD</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: DA2O Highlights</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KEY FINDINGS</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF GAMES</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: What Type of Games do People Play?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN: The Stress Relief Player</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF PLAY</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: Why Do People Play Games?</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: I Play Games but I also ...</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REBECCA: The Empowered Player</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF CONNECTION</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: What Do Games Mean to People?</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRY: The Connected Player</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAT: The Community Player</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF CREATIVITY</strong></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF LIVING WELL</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOTTIE: The Retired Player</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video: How Have Games Improved Your Life?</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERI: The Inspired Player</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POWER OF ECONOMICS</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN THEIR OWN WORDS</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL: The Achieving Player</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN THEIR OWN WORDS</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABOUT</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Video: The Power of Games

Digital Australia (DA20) is the culmination of over 14 years of research on how, why, and by whom video games are played in Australia.
Imagine not having video games. What would be lost?

On the surface, video games entertain us when we play. However, games have proven themselves to be a powerful medium through which people connect from all over the world; even people in the same home connect through video games.

**THE POWER OF VIDEO GAMES**

Today, games are used to educate in schools and train at work. Video games are used to help us live well through mental and physical stimulation in a range of contexts, including hospital care, aged care, and psychological care. Video games have produced one of the most vibrant and active communities of fans who gather together at major international popular culture festivals, and who play together online in competitive esports. Video games are designed and produced in a digital economy that promotes creativity and, in turn, enhances the economic gift of nations.

Video games are a surprisingly old medium. The first patent for a “cathode-ray tube amusement device” was filed in the United States Patent Office on 25 January 1947.

The first experimental video game was displayed in the late 1950s and the first commercial video game, Computer Space, was launched in 1971. The first home console video game system to begin widespread consumer access to games was sold in 1975.

Since then, video games have sold billions of copies to billions of players who enjoy them on billions of electronic computing devices. There are thousands of titles and hundreds of platforms on which to play them. There are many genres of video games and multiple objectives and motivations for playing them.

**THE POWER OF PLAY**

There are many ways to play: we play sport, we play-act, we play music, we play with toys, we play with language, we play with ideas and so on.

Austrian scholar Johan Huizinga claimed in the 1930s that play is older than culture. Academics have demonstrated over time that play is a powerful tool not only for human culture, but for human productivity, creativity, and knowledge. They have shown that by engaging in amusement and sport we explore who we are and what we can be.

Games are a powerful vehicle for play and we play many types of games. We play card games, games of chance, board games, driving games, games of strategy, simulation games, tactical games, timed games, learning games, memory games, puzzle games, adventure games, silly games and on the list goes. One researcher divided games into four major types that promote play, including competitive, chance, simulation and movement.

**THE POWER OF KNOWING GAMES AND PLAY**

Digital Australia 2020 (DA20) is the culmination of over 15 years of research on how, why, and by whom video games are played in Australia.

In this edition of the research, we explore the Power of Games. In doing so, we observe the power of connection, community, creativity, living well, education, and economics through this remarkable medium.
In this edition of the research, we explore the Power of Games. In doing so, we observe the power of connection, community, creativity, living well, education, and economics through this remarkable medium.
**DA20 Digital Australia 2020**

**The Power of Connection**
- 3 Top Reasons Parents Play with Children:
  - Family Fun
  - Children Ask
  - A Way to Spend Time Together
- 59% Play with Children in the Same Room
- 25% Play with Partners Online
- 89% Familiar with Parental Controls

**The Power of Education**
- 60% Games Promote Student Creativity
- 2/3 Use Games for Work Training
- 52% Say Their Children Use Games for School

**The Power of Creativity**
- 27% Post Gameplay Videos
- 28% Participate in Cosplay

**The Power of Entertainment**
- The Power of Play
  - 5 Top Reasons to Play:
    - Have Fun
    - De-Stress
    - Pass Time
    - Keep Mind Active
    - Be Challenged
- Older Play to Keep the Mind Active

**The Power of Community**
- 66% Read or Watch Walkthroughs Shared by Others
- 41% Watch Esports
- 31% Attend Game Events
- 38% Enjoy the Culture of Esports

**The Power of Economics**
- 74% Say Making Video Games Benefits Australian Economy
- 15% CAGR Digital Game Sales in Australia 2013-2018

**The Power of Games**
- 9/10 Homes Have a Device on Which Games Have Been Played
- 78% of Players Are Aged 18 Years and Over
- 34 Years Average Age of Video Game Players
- 47% of All Players Are Female
- 42% of Those Aged 65 Years and Over Play Video Games

**Top Reasons to Play**
- Have Fun
- De-Stress
- Pass Time
- Keep Mind Active
- Be Challenged

**Average Daily Total Play for Males**
- 89 Minutes
- Enjoy the Culture of Esports

**Average Daily Total Play for Females**
- 71 Minutes
- Participate in Cosplay

**Average Age of Video Game Players**
- 34 Years

**CAGR Digital Game Sales in Australia 2013-2018**
- 15%

**Top Reasons to Play**
- Have Fun
- De-Stress
- Pass Time
- Keep Mind Active
- Be Challenged

**Top Reasons to Play**
- Have Fun
- De-Stress
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**Top Reasons to Play**
- Have Fun
- De-Stress
- Pass Time
- Keep Mind Active
- Be Challenged
### Key Findings

#### Power of Games

- **2/3** of Australians play video games.
- Most **homes** have a device for playing video games.
- **21%** of households have a virtual reality headset.
- **70%** use mobile phones for playing games.
- **65%** use consoles for playing games.
- The average age of video game players is **34 years**.
- Almost **1/2** of video game players are **female**.
- **78%** of Australian video game players are aged 18 years or older.
- **42%** aged 65 and over play video games.
- The average Australian adult has been playing video games for **12 years**.

#### Power of Play

- The **top 5** reasons Australians play video games: have fun, pass time, de-stress, take a break from daily life, keep the mind active.
- **Younger** and **working age adults** play to have **fun, pass time**, and **de-stress**.
- **Older adults** play to keep the mind active.
- Average daily **total of play** for Australians of all ages who play video games is **81 minutes**.
- **Male** video game players play on average for **89 minutes**.
- **Female** video game players play on average for **71 minutes**.
- The typical daily casual game play is **10 minutes, twice a day**.
- The typical daily in-depth game play is **1 hour**. Children play on average **100 minutes a day**.
- Working age adults play on average **83 minutes a day**.
- Retirement age adults play on average **59 minutes a day**.

#### Power of Connection

- **Top 3** reasons parents play with children:
  1. **Family fun**
  2. **Children ask**
  3. **A way to spend time together**
- **59%** of parents **play with their children** in the same room.
- **43%** of parents play online games with their children.
- **54%** are mostly or completely familiar with family controls on game systems.
- **83%** of parents say they have talked with a child about playing games online.

#### Power of Community

- **2/3** have used walkthroughs, wikis or forums to help their gameplay.
- **Over 1/2** of players watch YouTube videos of gameplay.
- **Over 1/3** have watched esports.
- Of these, over **1/3 watch to improve their own gameplay**.
- Nearly a **1/4 watch to follow an esports team**.
- **38%** enjoy the **culture of esports**.

#### Methods

*Digital Australia 2020 (DA20)* is a study of **1,210** Australian households and **3,228** individuals of all ages in those households.
### Key Findings

#### Power of Creativity

- More than a $\frac{1}{4}$ of players have shared videos of their own game play online.
- Almost a $\frac{1}{4}$ have competed in esports. Of these, $\frac{1}{2}$ compete because of social connections.
- A $\frac{1}{3}$ compete because they enjoy the challenge.
- 28% participate in cosplay.

#### Power of Living Well

- 85% say video games can help thinking skills.
- 74% say video games can help emotional wellbeing.
- 66% say video games can help social wellbeing.
- 87% say video games may increase mental stimulation.
- 81% say video games may help fight dementia.
- 67% say video games may help maintain social connections.
- 73% say video games may improve life satisfaction.
- 58% say video games may help manage pain.
- 84% say video games may promote general knowledge.
- 83% of players say video games can be effective in stress reduction.

#### Power of Education

- 1/2 of parents say their children’s schools use video games for education.
- 61% of parents believe video games can be effective for learning STEM.
- 53% of parents believe video games can give students greater confidence at school.
- 31% of adults have used games at work for health and safety training.
- 29% have used video games at work for new skills training.
- 61% of players say video games can be effective in motivating people to get fit.
- 60% say games promote student creativity.

#### Power of Economics

- 3/4 of adults believe making video games in Australia benefits the economy.
- Video games sales (CAGR) in Australia grew at a rate of 15% between 2013 and 2018.
- Australian video games retail industry sales in 2013 were $2.04 Billion.
- In 2018, total retail industry sales for video games were $4.03 Billion.
- In 2018, digital sales reached $2.85 Billion.
- Physical sales in the Australian retail industry were $1.18 Billion.
- 65% have made in-game purchases for themselves.
- 40% have made in-game purchases for others.

#### Methods

Participants were drawn randomly from the Nielsen Your Voice Panel in March 2019; research was designed and conducted at Bond University. The margin of error ranges from ± 2.3% to ± 3.3%.
This report provides evidence for the power of games: video games are not only mainstream, they are now normalised in everyday Australian culture.

In 2005, we observed that just under eight out of ten Australian households had at least one device on which video games were played. That rise quickly to nine out of ten by 2009 and has remained stable at this peak since then.
For many years, nine out of ten Australian households have had at least one device on which video games are played. There is near symmetry in the proportion of households with roughly a quarter each having one, two, three, and four or more game devices, meaning that most (72%) have more than one device. Households with children are slightly more likely than households without children to have a game device and child homes are more likely to have a greater number of devices.

We refer to these as game households throughout this report.

"GROWN [sic] UP PLAYING GAMES ON ONE PLATFORM NINTENDO, FROM GAME AND WATCH, GAME CUBE TO THE LATEST SWITCH. LOVE THE MASTERY I HAVE OVER SOME GAMES, ENJOY THE THRILL, KEEPS MY MIND ACTIVE - LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT IT."

Male, 59, Sydney, New South Wales.
The devices used for playing in game households include PCs or personal computers including laptops, consoles such as Sony PlayStation 4 and Microsoft Xbox One X, mobile phones such as iOS and Android phones, tablet computers running iOS and Android systems, and dedicated handhelds including devices such as Nintendo Switch.

The prevalence and mix of broad types of game devices in Australian game households has changed little in recent years. In order of common use are: PCs, mobiles, consoles, tablets and handhelds. The ongoing and consistent presence of these platforms invokes a sense of the power of games.

I enjoy playing games on both my laptop and mobile phone. I don’t think I am obsessed with them or they have much power over my life, but I enjoy playing them to relax and escape reality sometimes. I generally play mind games e.g: Sudoku or Tetris, but I also play the Sims or virtual reality games on the internet.

Female, 23, Melbourne, Victoria.
Given the relative novelty and apparently increasing ways in which augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) may be used, we measured both the use of the technologies and their perceived importance to the future of games.

One in five game households have players who have used a VR headset.

However, because AR (as opposed to VR) may be used as a service on a mobile phone without additional headset hardware, it is not surprising that three in four game households have players who have used AR. Asked whether AR and VR are important for future game play experiences, nearly nine out of ten confirmed the technology will play an important role.
Video: What Type of Games do People Play?

This video is a snapshot of the type of games people play and why they play them.
Based on our analysis of all household members, video games are played by two thirds of Australians and, of those who play, the average age in this sample remains 34 years, the same as it was in the DA18 report.

Over the years, we have observed a slow and steady, stepped increase in the average age of Australian video game players.
We provided participants with the option to identify other. However, all participants identified either as male or as female and they identified other members of their households using this binary. Nearly half of all video game players in Australia are female (47%). When we started this series of studies in 2005, we observed the proportion was 38%.
As a proportion of all players, children under the age of 18 constitute 22% of those who play video games, working-age adults 68%, and retirement-age adults 10%; the proportion of players who are older has increased modestly but steadily since each of the DA16 and DA18 reports (from 7% and 8%, respectively) and will continue to do so.

The proportion of those who play video games within simple age groups has remained relatively stable, showing modest consolidation across the board since the 2018 report, with 69% of all children under the age of 18 playing, 62% of working-age adults playing and 42% of retirement-age adults playing.
Drilling down on the proportion who play using the ABS convention for narrower age bands, almost all children between ages 5 and 14 play and almost all between ages 15 and 24 years play. Unsurprisingly, the youngest and oldest Australians play least.
Video games are part of the larger media and leisure ecology in Australian homes and we are compelled to understand their place in our society.

While free-to-air television remains popular in Australian households and top the list of media regardless of whether a household is home to adults or adults and children, **digital media** like games are a normal part of the media mix.

We used an index asking adult participants to rank their household’s media preferences from ten (highest preference) to one (lowest preference).

Free-to-air TV clearly dominates in households without children living in them and pips movies and streaming TV at first place in households with children.

**Games** rank sixth in child households, but only equal tenth with newspaper in households without children.
JOHN: THE STRESS RELIEF PLAYER

AS A TEENAGER IT WAS A SOCIAL THING TO DO WITH FRIENDS. NOW AS AN ADULT IT IS FOR STRESS RELIEF AND TAKING A BREAK FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

John, 45, New South Wales.

Player: Male, 45. Finance Industry Professional.
Location: New South Wales.
Cultural Background: Australian.
Years Playing Games: 30 years.
Types of Play: In-depth play.
Typical Duration: Twice a week for 1 hour.
Access to Games: Computer, tablet, smartphone, Xbox One, Nintendo handheld, older console.
Motivations for Play: To have fun, de-stress, take a break from daily life.
As the diversity of devices on which to play video games increases and the diversity of video game software explodes, there are many new and different ways to play. The arrival of smartphones over a decade ago opened up the opportunity for more casual play experiences that are both shorter and more frequent than longer established playing experiences on personal computers and video game consoles. However, some have argued that differences between casual play and more in-depth play are blurring. We observed clear differences between casual games played frequently and for short periods of time, usually on mobile devices, and in-depth games played less frequently but for longer play sessions on computers and consoles. We classified casual gameplay as play in short bursts of up to 20 minutes each time, many times a day. We classified in-depth gameplay as longer play periods in which games are typically played from daily to weekly to less frequently.

Key players in our sample usually play casual games one to three times a day for five to 15 minutes per session. The total estimated daily investment in casual games is therefore between 20 and 30 minutes and only varies greatly from this pattern among the youngest and oldest players. There is little gender difference until middle adulthood when women overtake men in overall casual gameplay in their mid 40s.
The most commonly reported frequency for playing in-depth games in our sample is **daily**. The most common duration is an hour. We have observed this pattern now in the past four studies. The total estimated in-depth play ranges greatly by both age and gender.

Younger players as a whole play more frequently than older players and they play for longer durations, peaking in late adolescence and early adulthood.

"Although I play games on my PC and mobile, I play them to break the day and as a respite from the task at hand. I play daily for very short lengths of time."

Female, 54, Adelaide, South Australia.

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**Women and girls play for 71 minutes a day on average**

**Men play for 89 minutes a day on average**
Combining total casual gameplay and total in-depth gameplay, males play more across the ages except between ages 55 and 85, when females spend more time playing games. We observed in the previous two studies that among the oldest players, women played more than men; however, in this sample, men played markedly more than women. Findings for this age group are prone to higher variations due to smaller sample sizes.

Altogether, Australians who play video games spend an average of 81 minutes a day including both casual and in-depth play. Women and girls play for 71 minutes a day on average while men and boys play for 89 minutes a day on average.

These play times have declined by eight to ten minutes compared with times reported in the 2018 report. Explanations for this modest decrease may include more spectatorship of games through streaming video, and competition from streaming television and movies. Popularity of these media is explored later in the report.
Top reasons adult players give for playing video games include to have fun, de-stress, and pass time.

There are also more “serious” reasons people play games. **Adult players in our study report they want to keep their mind active by playing, to be challenged, and to learn.**

To better understand the range of potential reasons Australians play, we expanded our list of 10 reasons to 20. By doing so, we discovered the relative importance of playing games for wellbeing reasons such as to take a break from daily life, to feel accomplishment, and for managing mental health.

**To compare 2019 responses with those of earlier years, we calculated responses for each reason to play as a proportion of the total out of 100.** We then weighted results for the same reasons to play in two previous report years, leaving out the new reasons to play added to the 2019 questionnaire.

**NB: ADULT PLAYERS**
People play games for so many different reasons and this video explains some of the reasons why they play and the benefit and enjoyment these players receive from games.
Although there are no systematic differences for why adult women and men in our sample play video games, we observed one pronounced difference among three age groups of adults (18-34, 35-64, and 65 years and older) for the top five reasons adults say they play:

Older players play predominantly to keep the mind active.

Among working age adults (18-34 and 35-64), playing games to relax and de-stress is the number one reason to play, followed in order by relax, and de-stress, and lastly by being challenged and keeping the mind active.

For older adults, playing to keep the mind active ranks first and playing to relax and de-stress ranks last with having fun, passing time and being challenged in the middle. It appears from these results that working life is stimulating and challenging enough for working age adults who need to de-stress and have fun. Arguably video games serve rather therapeutic needs for all players.

“AS I AM AGEING I FEEL THE NEED TO KEEP MY MIND ACTIVE AND BY PLAYING GAMES ON PHONE OR TABLET I HAVE THE LUXURY OF CHOOSING WHEN, WHERE AND FOR HOW LONG.
Female, 73, Victoria.”

“IT ALLOWS MY MIND TO GO INTO THIS OTHER CALMING ZONE. AFTERWARDS I FEEL MORE EMPOWERED AND CALM.
Male, 28, Australian Capital Territory.”
Australians who play video games also enjoy a wide range of other media for leisure. We demonstrated back in the second Digital Australia study (Interactive Australia 2007) that players and non-players mapped nearly identically to media and non-media leisure.

This year, we asked players to identify all the things they do in addition to playing video games and found that 72% say they watch television, 63% watch movies and 59% enjoy listening to music.

Browsing the Internet (56%) and watching YouTube videos (46%) round out the top five. Podcasts (12%) and audio books (8%) finish the list of non-game media activities.

NB: ADULT PLAYERS
Australians who play video games also enjoy many of the non-media leisure activities commonly enjoyed by all Australians as we have demonstrated in past reports.

This year, we asked players to identify all the things they do in addition to playing video games and using other media.

First among these leisure choices is dining out, nominated by 53% of the sample, followed by shopping (52%), gardening (40%), exercising (39%) and going to a pub (36%).

Rounding out the list of 16 activities were playing sport (19%) and playing with pets and children (12%).

POKEMON, I’VE BEEN ABOUT [sic] TO INTERACT WITH PEOPLE BY CONNECTING OVER A COMMON INTEREST.

Male, 29, Sydney, New South Wales.

NB: ADULT PLAYERS
Unsurprisingly, games are just another entertainment medium people enjoy in their busy lives and sit alongside lots of other activities as well.
In June 2018, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) issued an update to its report, Internet Activity in Australia, showing there are **6.6 million** mobile wireless connections out of the **14.7 million** connections overall.

The volume of downloaded data across fixed and wireless broadband increased by more than **75%** between June 2017 and June 2018 in Australia, arguably a product of increased game downloads and video streaming. As games move from fixed media to online downloads and cloud services, these volumes will increase and place more pressure on infrastructure and consumer demand for better broadband data plans.

This year, we observed players are seeking to upgrade data plans on their mobiles due to data limits and mobile data speeds. Moreover, compared with DA18 report, more players say they are applying the brakes on game downloads both at home and on mobile devices to avoid going over poor data limits.

Given growth in digital sales discussed later in this report, there is clearly an appetite for more bandwidth.
**REBECCA: THE EMPOWERED PLAYER**

**Player:** Female, 32, Stay at home parent.

**Family Background:** Lives in household of 4.
- Married. Husband, 34.
- Parent, guardian of 2 children, 5, 8.

**Location:** Sydney, New South Wales.

**Cultural Background:** Other Asian.

**Years Playing Games:** 1 year.

**Types of Play:** In-depth play.

**Typical Duration:** 1 hour.

**Access to Games:** Tablet, smartphone.

**Motivations for Play:** Relieve boredom, pass time. To feel excitement, thrills. Keep mind active. Take a break from daily life. Fulfil a fantasy. Try something new.


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*POWER OF GAMES IN MY LIFE IS THAT WHEN I PLAY GAMES AFTER DOING ALL [MY] CHORES I FEEL SO MUCH RELAXED [sic], AND ENERGETIC, AND BECOME READY AGAIN TO FULFIL MY DUTIES MORE EFFICIENTLY... SO I THINK GAMES PLAY SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN MAKING ME OPTIMISTIC AND AN ACTIVE PERSON.*

Rebecca, 32, Sydney, New South Wales.
Playing video games is more often a social rather than an isolated experience.

Only 17% of adult players play alone all the time. Adults report that playing with children in the same room is the most common social context for play with six out of ten doing so, followed by playing with children online.

A third of adults say they play video games with their partner in the same room and a quarter say they play online with them.

Other social play includes playing with friends, relatives, and siblings. Moreover, some young adults say they play with their parents.
A third of adults in this sample reported as parents of a child under the age of 18 living with them. Of these, 81% said they themselves play video games. Of the two thirds who do not have children living with them, 64% play video games. It may have once been the case that having children was a pre-requisite for adults to play video games, but these findings demonstrate that the vast majority of adults play, regardless of parental status. Still, parents are more likely to play, and for many reasons. We provided a tick list of reasons to play with children. Consistent with past studies, parents’ top reasons for playing is because they say playing video games is a fun family activity and because children often want their parents to play with them.

Parents largely reported a full range of reasons they use video games when parenting their children by indicating how much they agree with each from a list of uses. Talking about games, talking about playing online, and generally educating children top the list.
Video: What Do Games Mean to People?

The average Australian gamer has been playing for **12 years**.

**This video** illustrates what games mean to people and uncovers many fond memories associated with playing games.
Parents are also likely to report having rules for their children’s video game play.

Over many years of these studies, we have routinely observed the top three rules parents have for their children’s game play are how long they can play in a session, when during the day, during the week or during the school year they can play, and what kind of games they can play, providing clear evidence that parents hold the common concerns long-held about children’s access to media: How much they are used, what opportunity costs they present, and what they are exposed to that might present a potential harm or concern.

It is worth noting that parents are concerned about most of the potential harms of all media.

Games can be great to just have fun with, or even use for learning experiences depending on what the game is. Games have been very positive for my son in our household. It has helped him learn how to read, and even help [sic] in some social situations (thanks to Sims).

Female, 29, Queensland.

It’s fun to watch the kids learn and get their coordination better and [see their] excitement when they work it out and can do it.

Female, 33, Victoria.
### Concerning Elements by Medium for Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Movies (6,244)</th>
<th>Interactive Games (5,881)</th>
<th>Social Media (6,596)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes, Social issues</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>292</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scariness</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>269</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol use</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark tone</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo-tagging/being located</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive use</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>236</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nudity</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit card fraud</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demeaning depictions of women</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal cruelty</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug use</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying/harassment</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual predators</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: PARENTS
Potential concerns caused by elements of media content are many in the minds of parents. Parents also hold concerns that vary from medium to medium.

In this study, we asked parents on a simple three-point scale (Not at all concerned, Somewhat concerned, or Very concerned) to indicate how concerned they were with different potential harms in three media including Social Media, Interactive Games, and Movies.

We then calculated a mean for each to weight the responses and ranked the concerns across the media.

This helped us identify parents’ relative concerns about each medium. In this sample, alcohol use, dark tones, and being located by geo-tagging top the list. We believe the harms chosen reflect themes and agendas set by mainstream news reporting.

Differences by medium are modest with social media receiving the largest weighted volume of concerned responses (6,596), followed by movies (6,244), and then interactive games (5,881).

In consultation with the Australian Classification Board, we added three sources of concern reported more frequently in mainstream news media, including loot boxes, in-game purchasing and user-generated content. Loot boxes and in-game purchases top the list of parents’ concerns about games.

A few years ago, animal cruelty topped our list whereas today it sits in the middle.
The National Classification Scheme is operated by the Classification Branch of the Commonwealth’s Department of Communication and the Arts to guide consumers about the suitability of video games for them and their families based on the nature and presumed level of impact game content may have on players, particularly children.

Less than a third of parents say the classification of a game has “A lot of influence” on the games they choose for their children to play.

A quarter said classification had a “Reasonable influence”, and just under half, when combined, said it has “A little influence” or “No influence.” Curious about whether this varied depending on the age of children in the household, we found that these responses were largely uniform, regardless of age and number of children.

[My] PARENTS BOUGHT ME A N64 AS A CHILD, IT REPRESENTS MY MOST POSITIVE MEMORIES THAT I NOW RELIVE THROUGH NINTENDO CONSOLES RELEASED IN MORE RECENT YEARS SUCH AS Wii U AND SWITCH.

Male, 25, Sydney, New South Wales.

AS A CHILD I WAS AN AVID GAMER WITH MANY GAMES TO PLAY AND MANY FRIENDS AS AN ADULT I AM PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON RAISING MY FAMILY. NOW THAT MY CHILDREN ARE ABLE TO PLAY GAME CONSOLES I AM ABLE TO INTERACT IN GAMING WITH THEM.

Male, 37, Western Australia.

NB: PARENTS
Two thirds of parents say they are either “Completely familiar” or “Mostly familiar” with classification labels used in Australia.

The remaining third report being “Vaguely familiar” or “Not familiar” with them.
Classification markings used by the Australian Classification Board include G, PG, M, MA15+ and R18+; G, PG and M are advisory classifications while MA15+ and R18+ are legally restricted classifications, meaning that it is illegal to sell, distribute, or show to children under those age designations. Adult players have different levels of confidence about what each classification label means.

They were asked whether each classification was “Clear,” “A little unclear” or “Unclear.”

Grouping the latter two responses, a fifth of adult players were unclear about the meaning of G and PG and around a quarter were unclear about the meaning of M, MA15+ and R18+.

Confidence in their knowledge of the meaning of classification markings was lower for parents, a quarter of whom said they were unclear or a little unclear about both G and PG, and less than a third unclear or a little unclear about M and MA15+.

Most confidence was expressed about R18+, with between a fifth and a quarter of parents expressing uncertainty.
There is little debate about the need to protect younger players from content, and parents in this year’s sample indicated that the need to use classification probably ends somewhere between 15 and 17 years; over a third of parents said this was the age when they felt comfortable not using classification with their children whereas over a quarter said they wouldn’t feel comfortable ceding oversight on their children until they became adults.

One in five parents said ages 12 to 14 years would be the age at which they would feel comfortable not using classification to help monitor their children’s access to content and less than this said they felt it unnecessary to use classification at younger ages.

I MYSELF HAVE NEVER REALLY BEEN MUCH OF A GAMER BUT I DO LIKE TO PLAY SOMETIMES ESPECIALLY THE FUN ONES WITH MY KIDS.

Female, 34, New South Wales.
Online app stores use age categories for their ratings.

Only one in five parents are aware of and use these with their children.

Another one in three are aware, but pay no attention to, or do not use the ratings.

Almost half of all parents said they were not aware of, and therefore did not use online store ratings.

1/2 all parents said they were not aware of, and therefore did not use online store ratings.

I MAINLY PLAY GAMES NOW SO I CAN CONNECT WITH MY CHILDREN.
Male, 48, Melbourne, Victoria.
Another way in which parents may exercise oversight of their children's gameplay is through family controls.

Use of family controls is similar across platforms ranging from over a third to under a half of parents using them with handhelds, consoles, mobile devices and PCs.

Most parents are aware of family controls with 35% saying they are at least “Vaguely familiar,” 42% saying they are “Mostly familiar,” and 12% saying they are “Completely familiar” with these tools.

This is a modest increase in familiarity compared with the 2018 sample.

CONNECTS [sic] ME WITH OTHER PLAYERS AROUND THE WORLD. MAKES ME FEEL INCLUDED IN A COMMUNITY OF PLAYERS.

Female, 35, Sydney, New South Wales.
Player: Male, 46, Health Care Worker.
Family Background: Lives in household of 6, with wife, 42. Daughter 11, son, 9 and parents.
Location: Sydney, New South Wales.
Cultural Background: Middle Eastern.
Years Playing Games: 7 years.
Types of Play: In-depth and casual play.
Typical Duration: Once every 2 wks. Casual play 10 min x 2 times per day. In-depth play 1 hour.
Access to Games: Sony PS4.
Motivations for Play: To relieve stress, relax. To pass time, relieve boredom. To connect with others. Try something new. Explore a new place virtually.

HARRY: THE CONNECTED PLAYER

THE GAMES PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MY LIFE. THE FAMILY COMES TOGETHER AND WE HAVE [A] FUN TIME.

Harry, 46, Sydney, New South Wales.
Video game cultural experience extends well beyond playing. Adult players enjoy learning about the games they play, sharing strategies and communicating about them.

They also enjoy watching others play and review games. We observed growth in game culture engagement this year compared with two years ago.

Most adult players say they read or watch walkthroughs (66%) and watch YouTube videos of gameplay (58%). Under half watch livestreams of gameplay on specialised streaming services (41%) and watch esports in which players in amateur or professional teams play competitively (41%).

Roughly a third use third party add-on services (36%), attend gaming events (31%), and esports events (30%).

NB: ADULT PLAYERS

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**SOLVING THINGS, COORDINATING WITH OTHERS TO ACHIEVE A GOAL.**

Male, 60, Adelaide, South Australia.

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**THERE IS NO POWER IN GAMES? I PROBABLY PLAY GAMES ON MY PHONE BECAUSE IT IS ALL CONNECTED TO OTHER LIVE PLAYERS PLAYING THE SAME GAME WITH THE SAME LIKES AS ME TO PLAY THIS GAME ALSO.**

Female, 37, Queensland.
The popularity of esports continues to grow as a significant part of gameplay culture and enterprise, and over the intervening two years since our last report, we see increased interest in esports among adult players.

Of the third of adult players who either watch esports online or who attend esports events, 40% follow to learn strategies that may help them improve their own gameplay, 38% follow to enhance their enjoyment of player culture, 32% enjoy watching the competitions, and 23% follow an esports team.

Generally supporting esports and watching presenters round out the reasons.

I enjoy playing FIFA games as the thrill of watching them play, it is so amazing how far things have come.

Male, 53, Brisbane, Queensland.

NB: ADULT PLAYERS
It is clear that participation in esports as a competitor further deepens engagement with play culture and provides opportunities to extend the personal satisfaction possible from play.

Of the quarter of adult players who said they have competed in esports, half do so because they enjoy the broader social aspects of the pastime. Half say they compete to be active members of the player community.

A third compete because they enjoy the challenge of pitting their skills against those of other players. Becoming a better player was less frequently indicated.

Male, 29, Adelaide, South Australia.

Playing games is a form of escapism and a way to help me have fun and relax. I appreciate the creativity and depth of meaning and story of each game and it is something I get excited about learning more of.

Female, 29, Perth, Western Australia.

I am currently playing Yugioh Duel Links, a digital version of a card game I played as a child. It has been great to rediscover the game and I have made friends online that I often talk to about the game.

Male, 29, Adelaide, South Australia.
MATI: THE COMMUNITY PLAYER

I am currently dealing with a chronic illness which makes day to day life very gruelling. Games let me escape from that and take my mind off it. Playing and chatting with people online about games I play makes me feel part of a community.

Matt, 29, Adelaide, South Australia.

Player: Male, 29, Unemployed
Family Background: Lives in household of 4 with parents and partner.
Location: Adelaide, South Australia.
Cultural Background: Australian.
Years Playing Games: 20 years.
Types of Play: In-depth play only.
Typical Duration: Everyday for 1 hour.
Access to Games: Tablet, smartphone, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch.
Motivations for Play: To have fun, to relieve boredom, to feel excitement. To connect with others, make friends.
Other Interests: Playing board, card games, musical instrument. Search Internet. Watch YouTube, TV, movies. Read books. Listen to music, podcasts.
Active participation in game culture is possible through a variety of game-related cultural production.

We found strong relationship among these activities, suggesting that while few in our sample do all these things, doing one of them is linked with doing others.

In general, one in four adult players has engaged in some combination of cultural production; they create modifications to the content of games they play, dress up as a video game character for a party or event, post videos online of their own gameplay, produce machinima or short videos as part of an animated story, participate in esports, and even make original games.

THE POWER OF GAMES IN MY LIFE ALLOWS ME TO DO THINGS I CAN’T NECESSARILY DO IN REAL LIFE, eg: GRAND THEFT AUTO. YOU CAN PLAY THE CRIM [sic], STEAL CARS ETC. AND HAVE NO REPERCUSSIONS [LIKE] IN REAL LIFE. I PREFER TO PLAY A GAME TO ESCAPE EVERY-DAY LIFE, HAVE A BIG PLACE TO RUN AROUND AND DO WHAT I FEEL LIKE, AND HAVE FUN DOING IT.

Male, 39, Sydney, New South Wales.
The popularity of cultural production and participation among adult players demonstrates *the power of games to add to community, creativity, and to transform*.

We presented adults in all households, regardless of whether they play video games, with an inventory of ways in which games might *help people live well* and asked them to agree or disagree with each on a three-point scale.

The vast majority validated the view that games have the power to help people live well, starting with over three-quarters saying games may contribute to general and digital knowledge, improve mental health, and add to specialist knowledge.

**Two-thirds** said games may *expand work skills, cultural knowledge, life skills, life satisfaction*, and *quality of life*.

**Over half** said games may *improve physical health, physical fitness, and social relationships*. Half said games may even have the power to promote a healthy diet.

### Games Potential for Living Well (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General knowledge</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital knowledge</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist knowledge</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work skills</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural knowledge</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life skills</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of life</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical fitness</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relationships</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: All adults, player and non player*
Adults players and non-players generally believe video games have the potential to deliver health and fitness benefits with more than three-fourths saying games can improve thinking skills, physical dexterity, and emotional wellbeing.

At least two-thirds said game play may reduce anxiety and improve social wellbeing.

Over half said games could improve balance, physical fitness, and be used to help manage pain.

All adult participants estimated the degree to which video games may help with ageing well. At least four-fifths said games can increase mental stimulation and fight dementia.

Three-fourths said games could encourage open-mindedness, improve life satisfaction and promote optimism in ageing.

Two-thirds said games may help older adults maintain social connections and add purpose to life. Half said games may increase mobility and less than half said they may help reduce arthritis.
LOTTIE: THE RETIRED PLAYER

[THE] GAMES I PLAY ARE A WAY OF TAKING MY MIND OFF THE PRESSURES OF DAY TO DAY LIVING AND TO KEEP MY MIND ACTIVE. IT’S LIKE DOING CROSSWORDS AND KEEPING UP WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROCESS AND KEEPS A LINE OF COMMUNICATION OPEN WITH MY GRANDCHILDREN.

Lottie, 83, Victoria.

Player: Female, 83.
Retired Customer Service Officer.

Family Background: Lives alone.
Location: Victoria.
Cultural Background: Australian, British.
Years Playing Games: 5 years.
Types of Play: In-depth play.
Typical Duration: Every other day for 1/2 hour.

Access to Games: Computer, tablet.

Motivations for Play: Keep mind active. To relax, relieve stress.

Games are often made specifically for the education market. However, educators identify some mainstream entertainment games such as *Minecraft, Assassin’s Creed, and Civilization V* to improve the learning experiences of their students.

Adult players were asked to evaluate the potential of games to benefit education in terms of student support, school support, and learning areas. In all cases, a majority of adult players said they believed games may serve these purposes.

Of prominence were the use of games to motivate students and inspire them to be creative.

Games were seen as beneficial for teaching students in general, and in *Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)* subjects in particular.
Video: How Have Games Improved Your Life?

In this video, players share their stories of how games have added to, and improved their lives.

(6:01 minutes)
Parents were asked whether and how their children had used video games at school.

Over half said their children had used them as part of their curriculum and classroom learning, about a quarter said their children had used video games for co-curricular or “after school” activities at school, and a quarter said their children had been part of making video games as part of their formal education.

“GUITAR HERO CHALLENGED ME MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY, CREATED A SENSE OF FULFILLMENT AS I NEVER LEARNED HOW TO PLAY AN INSTRUMENT, AND HELPED ME CONNECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE. IT ALSO EXPOSED ME TO NEW MUSIC I LOVE.”

Female, 28, Perth, Western Australia.
Around a third of adult players said they have used games in the workplace for induction and orientation, new knowledge and skills.

They have used video games designed to deliver new knowledge (36%), for health and safety training (31%), to learn workplace rules (30%), to learn new software or tool use (29%), or to learn new skills of some kind (29%). This is consistent with findings we made in DA18.

**Using Games at Work (%)**

- New knowledge: 36%
- Health and safety: 31%
- Workplace rules: 30%
- New software or tool: 29%
- New skills: 29%

NB: ADULT PLAYERS

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“IT IS SOMETHING THAT I REALLY ENJOY. I LOVE MOTOR RACING AND VIRTUALLY RACING IS NOT DANGEROUS OR EXPENSIVE. SO GAMING ALLOWS ME TO HAVE A SIMILAR OR SIMULATED EXPERIENCE THAT WOULD BE DANGEROUS OR NOT POSSIBLE IN REAL LIFE.”

Male, 46, Melbourne, Victoria.

“GAMES HAVE A POWER IN MY LIFE THAT IS SIMILAR TO BOOKS - IT TRANSPORTS ME TO ANOTHER LIFE, AND GIVES ME ACCESS TO IDEAS, EXPERIENCES AND VISUALS THAT I NORMALLY WOULDN’T HAVE. I VIVIDLY REMEMBER THE DAY THAT MY MUM BOUGHT A PS1 FOR MY SISTER AND I, AND PLAYING THOSE GAMES WAS SOMETHING I OBSESSED ABOUT. WE WERE VERY COMPETITIVE, BUT IT ALSO BROUGHT US TOGETHER, WITH SHARED EXPERIENCES. TODAY, GAMES ARE A WAY FOR ME TO ESCAPE THE STRESSES OF MY LIFE AND ALSO TO COME TOGETHER WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY. REGARDLESS OF WHAT’S HAPPENING, GAMES CAN MAKE YOU LAUGH, LEARN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE AND MAKE GREAT MEMORIES.”

Female, 25, New South Wales.
**GERI: THE INSPIRED PLAYER**

**Player:** Female, 18, Student.

**Family Background:** Lives in household of 5 with parents, sister, 13, brother, 9.

**Location:** Sydney, New South Wales.

**Cultural Background:** Australian.

**Years Playing:** 5 years.

**Games:** In-depth play and casual play.

**Types of Play:** Everyday. Casual play 4 x day, 10 minutes. In-depth play 2 hours.

**Access to Games:** Computer, tablet, Sony PS4, Nintendo handheld.

**Motivations for Play:** To have fun, pass time. Feel accomplishment, achievement. To do things not possible in the real world. Fulfil a fantasy.

**Other Interests:** Shop. Make things for hobby, craft. Attend art gallery, museum, theatre, ballet. Play musical instrument. Search Internet. Watch YouTube, movies. Read books, magazines. Listen to music.

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I FIND GAMES MORE EMOTIONALLY POWERFUL THAN OTHER MEDIUMS BECAUSE OF THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE YOUR ACTIONS - THIS LEADS TO HIGHER ENGAGEMENT FOR ME AND AS SUCH I GENERALLY ENJOY GAMES MORE THAN OTHER MEDIUMS.

Geri, 18, New South Wales.
Australian developers are growing in number and the number of Australians who work in the industry is expanding too. As games become increasingly popular and ever more diverse and complex, there are many ways in which game developers can monetise their creative products.

After direct sales and subscriptions, developers use in-game purchases to support their diverse modern economy business models. In-game purchases are popular because players can readily identify reasons for making a purchase that has a direct benefit to gameplay for them or for their family or friends for whom they are making the purchase.

Two-thirds of adult players have made in-game purchases for themselves at one time or another and over half have made in-game purchases for another person, usually a child. Of those who have made in-game purchases, half have done so in order to unlock a timed trial game to continue playing.

A third have made in-game purchases to unlock new content. About a quarter have done so to support a game, personalise gameplay or speed up gameplay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Making In-game Purchases</th>
<th>% for Self</th>
<th>% for Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue playing</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlock new content</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support a game</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalise gameplay</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed up gameplay</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid ads or spam</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make gameplay more enjoyable</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain advantage over others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable multiplayer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POWER OF ECONOMICS

Avoid ads or spam
Make gameplay more enjoyable
Gain advantage over others
Enable multiplayer
Between an eighth and a tenth use in-game purchases to get weapons or accessory advantages to better compete or to enable multiplayer mode.

We have observed widespread use of games. In this iteration of the research, we measured participant demographics in addition to age, gender, and household size. We were particularly interested in the cultural and linguistic diversity of players and non-players, which we measured using standard ABS classifications. Our sample had players and non-players from all 21 ABS classifications in remarkably equal proportion - meaning the cultural make-up of adult game players in Australia is as diverse as the Australian population itself.

It is important, therefore, to understand which character representations in games need more attention, according to adults who play video games.

At the top of the list 69% said games need to portray a greater range of sexual orientations and LGBTQI communities, 68% said games need to do a better job of presenting a range of people with disabilities, and 65% said games needed to pay more attention to a wider range of cultural diversity and age diversity. Wider nationality, gender, race, and linguistic diversity were called for by just over 60% and more religious diversity by just over 50%.
All adult participants including players and non-players were asked how important they felt the video games industry was for the Australian economy.

Nearly three-quarters said making video games in Australia would add value to the national economy and they said it was an important industry to support through policy.

Twenty percent of participants had any knowledge of computer programming, however, 16% said they or another household member had discussed plans to work in the industry or already work in it, with 13% saying they or another household member plan to or are currently studying for a career in the field.

At the time of the survey, 6% said they or someone in their household intend to learn game or game-related programming.
The Australian video game retail industry is booming. Total sales reached $4 billion in 2018, made up of substantial growth in digital sales and steady sales of physical game products including hardware and software. These results are exclusive of general use devices such as PCs, smartphones and tablet computers.
GAMES HELP ME TO EXPAND MY LIFE, TO FIND INTEREST AND ADVENTURE IN THE SAFETY OF MY LIVING ROOM. THEY MAKE ME THINK CRITICALLY, PLAN, STRATEGISE, AND HELP ME LEARN FROM MISTAKES. ALSO, I HAVE A CHRONIC INJURY, THAT PREVENTS ME FROM PARTICIPATING IN OTHER EXCITING HOBBIES SUCH AS MANY SPORTS, BUT I CAN FIND MY OWN ENJOYMENT THROUGH GAMES. I EVEN DO MY WEEKLY PHYSIO EXERCISES IN FRONT OF THE TV WHILE PLAYING A GAME. THIS NOT ONLY KEEPS ME ENTERTAINED, BUT MOTIVATES ME TO DO THESE EXERCISES. GAMES HELP ME AVOID FEELING DOWN ABOUT WHAT I AM MISSING OUT ON, AND INSTEAD FEEL EXCITED FOR WHAT I CAN DO.

Female, 20, Perth, Western Australia.

THEY LET ME RELAX, ESCAPE, TAKE ME PLACES I OTHERWISE CAN’T GO, THEY HELP ME SPEND TIME WITH MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY, LET ME ACHIEVE THINGS, DO THINGS, EXPLORE THINGS.

Male, 29, Sydney, New South Wales.

I STARTED DOING GAMES AFTER MY STROKE TO IMPROVE MEMORY, I STILL DO IT TO STAY ACTIVE MENTALLY.

Female, 68, Perth, Western Australia.

PLAY GAMES TO FILL IN TIME, KEEP MY MIND GOING, LEVELING UP MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD.

Female, 29, New South Wales.

GAMES ARE JUST A HEALTHY PART OF MY EVERYDAY ROUTINE.

Male, 53, Western Australia.
PHIL: THE ACHIEVING PLAYER

Player: Male, 61. Retired.
Family Background: Lives in household of 2 with wife, 69. Victoria.
Location: Australian.
Cultural Background: 30 years.
Years Playing Games: In-depth and casual play.
Types of Play: Everyday other day. Casual play 2 x day, 10 minutes. In-depth play 1/2 hour.

Access to Games: Computer, smartphone, older console.
Motivations for Play: To have fun, relax/ relieve stress. To be challenged. To connect with others. To do things not possible in real life. To keep mind active.

CHALLENGING, TO CHALLENGE AND BE CHALLENGED. I MAINLY PLAY SCRABBLE AT THE MOMENT AND BECAUSE IT'S ONLINE I CAN PLAY WITH ANY OF MY FRIENDS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. FOR THE GAMES I PLAY AT HOME IT IS MORE FOR HEALTH AND FITNESS AND MENTAL BALANCE WHICH IS THE Wii AND I DO THIS WITH MY WIFE. IT'S SOMETHING WE CAN DO TOGETHER IN OUR HOME WITHOUT GYM MEMBERSHIPS, JUDGEMENT OF OUR LEVELS OR ABILITIES. IT IS MORE RELAXING YET STILL CHALLENGING AND EASIER TO BE YOURSELF WHICH CREATES GREATER ACHIEVEMENT.

Phil, 61, Victoria.
I BELIEVE GAMING AND GAMES ARE AN ESCAPE FROM REALITY, JUST TO BE SOMETHING OR SOMEONE OR SOMEWHERE ELSE FOR A MOMENT, TO BE A SUPER HERO, SOMEONE EXCITING, SOMEONE TO SAVE THE WORLD AND EXPLORE NEW PLACES. SOUNDS CORNY BUT THAT’S ABOUT IT. PLUS IT’S NICE TO SIT DOWN AND EXPLORE DIFFERENT WORLDS WITH MY SON AND DAUGHTER TOO, JUST FOR A LAUGH OR A RACE.

Male, 48, Queensland.

I TEND TO PLAY EDUCATIONAL GAMES OR THINKING GAMES LIKE SCRABBLE, SOLITARE, MAHJONG, DOMINOES, CANDY CRUSH, THINKING TO KEEP MY MIND ACTIVE, AND PASS THE TIME.

Female, 39, New South Wales.

GAMES RELAX ME FROM DAY TO DAY WORK STRESS.

Male, 17, Victoria.

THEY ARE A FUN WAY TO JOIN IN WITH MY FAMILY...THEY ARE ALL MUCH BETTER THAN ME AND UNDERSTAND IT BETTER THAN ME.. EVEN THOUGH I DON’T REALLY LIKE IT MUCH I JOIN IN TO HAVE FUN WITH THEM.

Female, 40, Sydney, New South Wales.

I LIKE TO CHALLENGE MYSELF AND TO BE REWARDED IT IS VERY FULFILLING

Female, 72, Victoria.
Digital Australia 2020 (DA20) is an empirical study about digital games in Australian households with a focus on demographics, behaviours and attitudes.

In this report, the words computer games, video games, digital games, and interactive games are used interchangeably to refer to the broad class of interactive, digital entertainment.

A game household was one that had in it any device for playing a video game, including personal computers, smart phones, dedicated home consoles, tablet computers, and handheld game devices.

A player was a person who indicated they play computer or video games, simply “yes” or “no” on any device including a PC, console, handheld, social network, mobile phone or tablet computer.

Questions in the survey included open-ended, short response, list selection, dichotomous response (such as Yes/No or Selected/Not selected), ranking (1-10), three-, four- and five-point Likert items (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, for example).

These created over 400 measurement points.

Questions were grouped according to theme including:

- Household demographics,
- Household media environment,
- Media access to game devices, internet access and purchasing,
- Video gameplay preferences and routines,
- Motivations for playing video games and social relationships that result,
- Parental engagement with video games,
- Engagement with game culture including esports,
- Games related to education, work, health and ageing,
- Classification and ratings, and
- Attitudes and issues related to video games and policy.
Data reported here come from 1,210 Australian households and 3,228 individuals of all ages in those households.

Participants were drawn randomly from the Nielsen Your Voice Panel in February 2019. The Nielsen Company provided the research team at Bond University with raw data from the survey for statistical analysis at the University. The data were analysed by report authors using the SPSS Versions 24 and 25.

Results are calculated for three parts of households including responses to the survey by one adult member of the household (1,208 households) and of those, the adults who themselves play video games and another person in the home whose game habits they know (1,476 people), then all people in those households (3,228 people).

For clarity throughout this report, we refer to these in turn as households, adult players, key players, all household members, then all video game players among them.

The quality and size of the sample was high.

For the purposes of including results for all members of a given household, the Vars-to-Cases procedure was used to create individual records for all persons in a household identified by the participants in the study.

Data reduction procedures included reducing the range for some questions to simplify presentation of responses. Some measures were combined into indices where obtaining a frequency or mean across a combination of measures simplified the presentation of findings.

Missing values were eliminated from analysis on a per-question basis unless multiple measures were examined conjointly. For these, the case-wise deletion method was applied.

Statistical weighting was applied for accurate comparisons where data from this study are compared with previous studies and new questions in this study required sum-total weighs.

Statistical procedures included simple descriptive statistics such as frequencies, cross-tabulations, means, correlations, and tests of significance such as Chi-square and One-way ANOVA. The margin of error is ±2.7% for the national sample comparing households and all household members, ±3.3% for adult players, ±2.5% for key players, and ±2.3% for all players.