

# US residents find gaming a release according to new research

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US residents have reported a positive effect on their mental wellbeing after gaming according to a new study published by WePC.

Contrary to the stereotypical view of antisocial gamers locked in their room alone for hours on end, most people surveyed spent between 1 and 10 hours gaming per week.

The vast majority (92%) of the 524 people surveyed stated that playing video games has no negative effect on their mental health and more than a third (37 percent) say that it has a positive impact.

According to organisations such as the World Health Organisation, gamers are at increased risk of developing mental health issues such as heightened anxiety, violent behaviour, and gaming addiction[2].

But the survey found only 7.82% of people surveyed believe it negatively affects their mental health.

One respondent described gaming as “a coping mechanism for the debilitating effects of living with OCD” whilst another claimed, “it’s a way to be involved in interactive entertainment in the new socially distanced world.”

And it seems gaming has become a new form of escapism too, with 46% of respondents citing gaming as a useful distraction from the pressures of everyday life during lockdown.

Former soldier Rudi Benjamin, 51, of New York, has been a gamer since the age of eight. He suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and finds gaming helps his condition.

“When I’m at my lowest point gaming is what gets me through,” he said. “I can get quite frustrated at times and gaming helps relieve the pressure on me and my family. It’s been a big escape for me during the pandemic.”

Craig Kirkcaldy, Co-founder of WePC said: “This survey challenges the negative perceptions of gaming and remove some of the stigmas gamers face. There’s a false perception that all forms of gaming are bad for mental health, but the reality is that it only becomes an issue when excessive in nature.”

Will Blears, Co-founder added: “Like with anything, if you over-indulge then you’re bound to experience negative side effects. Over-indulgence in gaming is usually a solution to an existing problem, not the cause of the problem itself.”

In the survey, 49% of those who said it had a positive impact on their mental health spent between one- and 10-hours gaming per week.

However, in support of Craig’s claims, those who admitted to spending 41+ hours gaming per week were 69% more likely to experience negative impacts than those who gamed for 1-10 hours.

Andrew Kirkcaldy, Co-founder at WePC, added: "Gaming has received a lot of negative attention over the years, but the results of this survey don't surprise us.

"We know that gaming has many benefits, from increased cognitive skills to enhanced performance at work, but the positive impact on mental health is something we really want to bring to light."

Last year the World Health Organization (WHO) caused controversy when it officially designated video game addiction as a mental health disorder.

Gaming disorder was added to the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

The WHO said for gaming disorder to be diagnosed it must have a "significant impairment" lasting at least 12 months.

The global video game market is forecast to be worth \$164.6 billion by then end of 2020 – up from \$152 billion in 2019[3].

Many say isolation lockdown during the Covid-19 global pandemic has fuelled this increase in gaming.

A report by Ipsos[4] found individuals were driven toward playing multiplayer games in order to meet like-minded people and boost mental wellbeing.

However, a huge 79% of those surveyed by WePC in September said they were more likely to play single-player games than multiplayer games. Those regularly playing single player games were more than twice as likely to experience a positive mental health benefit.

In fact, only 3% of respondents overall answered yes to playing games to meet like-minded people.

Cognitive function is also said to be improved by gaming with 29% of respondents saying they played games to keep mentally active.

Despite the positive results, it seems there is still a long way to go before perceptions are completely transformed, even in gamers themselves.

Those respondents (53%) who believed there are negative perceptions in the media were 87% more likely to report a negative impact on their mental health compared to those who think there is no negative perception in the media (47% of respondents).

This poses the question as to whether it is, in fact, mind over matter.

The full report by WePC can be viewed here  
<https://www.wepc.com/wellbeing/gaming-and-mental-health/survey/>.

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#### Notes to Editor

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It's talented team of PC builders and content writers work hard to make sure every build, review, and how-to piece publicised is tailored to the audience.

From reviewing individual components to sharing the latest gaming and tech news, to helping people build their first or fiftieth build – WePC is about empowering the consumer.

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The survey was conducted by Survey Monkey on 22nd September 2020 to 524 US only respondents with a near equal split of male and female.