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### The effects of video game play on young children's aggression, fantasy, and prosocial behavior

Steven B. Silvern ... Peter A. Williamson

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#### Abstract

From the ecological perspective of human development the emergence of significant media may affect children's behavior. It has been suggested that the home computer has the potential to affect young children's behavior, but no published data currently exist to support this hypothesis. However, home computer games have features similar to television. In that vein, research on television and aggression lends itself as a paradigm for studying the effects of video games on young children's behavior. From past television research it may be hypothesized that exposure to violent video games will increase children's aggressive behavior. Twenty-eight children, age 4 to 6 years were observed in a free play setting at baseline, after watching a violent cartoon and after playing "Space Invaders". Results indicated significant differences in aggressive behavior, relative to baseline behaviors, after watching television and after playing video

games. There was no difference between the television and video game conditions. It was concluded that violent video games arouse children in much the same way as violent television cartoons.



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