

Got Game: A Guide for Parents

Got Game by John C. Beck and Mitchell Wade (Harvard Business School Press) shows how growing up with video games has profoundly shaped the attitudes and abilities of a new generation. Parents should take heed and see how games are changing their kids—for the better.

Video games are now almost universal. Four-fifths of people under 34 and virtually everyone under 18 have experience with video games.

Games are replacing television as a defining



experience, and they teach some positive lessons. Modern video games encourage engagement, not passivity. They require many different mental and social skills. They allow players to nurture people and pets, build or destroy societies, and discover a lot about themselves. Just as learning about music improves math skills and coordination, games also train kids to think better. Here are just a few of the ways we found games

can help your kids succeed down the road.

How games are changing gamers

- Gamers are *better at handling risk* and uncertainty, and believe taking measured risks is the best way to get ahead.
- Gamers are *more creative* and have *better problem solving habits*.
- Gamers are *more sociable* and have a greater need for human relationships.
- Gamers think of themselves as *experts* and want to tackle problems head-on.
- Gamers *aren't discouraged by failure* and believe each setback is just a chance to try again.
- Gamers are *more flexible* about change
- Gamers are better at seeing problems in a *deeper perspective*.
- Gamers are great at *learning in informal ways*.
- Gamers are *more globally oriented* and outward-looking.
- Gamers are *more confident* and have a *more positive outlook* on life.

What games teach gamers

- *Be a hero.* The star's role is the best way to succeed or get satisfaction.
- *Be an expert.* Get really, really good so you can perform at your peak early and often.
- *Failure isn't the end of the world.* Crashing and burning isn't so bad, and persistence pays off in the end.
- *Everything is possible.* You're capable of amazing things—you can defeat hundreds of bad guys single-handed or beat the best NBA team ever.
- *Trial-and-error is almost always best.* The only way to advance in most games is to try new things and see if they work.
- *Practice makes perfect.* Practice at something long enough, and you'll be ready for whatever comes your way in real life.
- *Go global.* Bond with people who share your experience, not necessarily your national or cultural background.