

Study: Video games can act as analgesics

A Wheeling Jesuit University student study suggests playing sports and fighting video games produces a dramatic level of pain distraction.

"Our students found these gaming distractions may be most helpful in children and young adults undergoing painful procedures or suffering from chronic pain, as these individuals comprise the largest gamer demographics," said Dr. Bryan Raudenbush, director of undergraduate research and associate professor of psychology.

In the study, undergraduate students Will Esgro, Trevor Cessna and Ricky Yahn assessed whether certain genres of video games significantly distracted participants from painful stimuli more than other genres.

"There are implications here for children, adolescents, and young adults, all of whom are the primary users of such video games. Physicians could possibly implement this in their office to aid in distraction during a painful procedure such as injection or dental work," said Raudenbush. "Video games could also be used in waiting rooms to distract patients from upcoming surgical procedures."

The students will present the results of the study April 4 during the university's Seventh Annual Student Research and Scholarship Symposium.

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