

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES TAKEN FROM THE AIDS.GOV BLOG

# VIDEO & COMPUTER GAMES

## What are video and computer games?

Video and computer games are interactive games you play on game devices (such as Nintendo's Wii, Xbox, and Playstation), and computers. There are single player games, social (or multiplayer) games, and massively-multiplayer online games (MMO), where large numbers of participants play together over the Internet.

## Why would I play a video or computer game?

Unlike movies or television, video and computer game players become part of the action and determine what happens. Players learn by doing, and, in multiplayer and MMO games, by teaching others. Historically, most video games have focused on entertainment, but there are more and more educational games.

## Who plays video or computer games?

- 65% of American households play computer or video games,
- The average game player is 35 years old and has been playing games for 13 years,
- 40% of all game players are women. Women over the age of 18 represent a significantly greater portion of the game-playing population (33%) than boys age 17 or younger (18%), and
- 63% of parents believe games are a positive part of their children's lives.<sup>1</sup>

## How are people using video or computer games to respond to HIV?

- To address stigma around HIV/AIDS,
- To deliver HIV/AIDS information,
- To raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and spark discussion, and
- To encourage safe behavior through in-game rewards and goals.

## What technology do I need to play video or computer games?



You need a computer, video game-playing device (for video games), and an Internet connection (for online games) to play video or computer games.

## Where can I learn more about video and computer games?

Examples of resources addressing educational video and computer games:

- Games for Change: [www.gamesforchange.org](http://www.gamesforchange.org) 
- Games for Health: [www.gamesforhealth.org](http://www.gamesforhealth.org) 

Examples of video and computer games addressing HIV/AIDS include:

- The Kaiser Family Foundation and MTVU's "Pos or Not" game: [www.posornot.com](http://www.posornot.com) 
- National Institute on Drug Abuse's "HIV/AIDS Maze": [www.teens.drugabuse.gov/havefun/hiv\\_Quiz.asp](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov/havefun/hiv_Quiz.asp)
- Unicef's "Voices for Youth" HIV/AIDS Game: [www.unicef.org/voy/explore/aids/explore\\_1360.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/aids/explore_1360.html) 

<sup>1</sup> The Entertainment Software Association (ESA), "Industry Facts." Available at: <http://www.theesa.com/facts/index.asp>. Accessed on 9/30/08.