Video Games, Giving Life a 1Up

1. It's true. I have seen it, I have heard it, I have encountered it. The way that these violent videogames change children is horrifying and I do not take any action to change it. These kids use profanities, verbally and physically fight more and engage in some of the violent scenes of video games. Parents have the choice to change their children's ways at young ages but sometimes it may not always be effective. Most certainly, violent video games may not prove whether or not why a person may act a certain way but the percent of people making violent choices possibly increases. I am guilty of playing games rated with *M* content which in the past has decreased my effort and participation in school and even my achievements. In some cases, I have encouraged this in some kids because although it is amusing to see a five year old kid curse, it should backfire on them and it is completely wrong to watch them do so. Violent video games is strong material that affects the mind and body of a young child.

2. I was the kid who wasn't a leader but liked to follow his friends. I didn't do what I thought was right but liked to do what my friends did. What my friends told me to do, I did it. It's things like video games that are mind-boggling.

The Exposure

3. I was first involved and engrossed in video games at the age of twelve when I was in seventh grade. Call of Duty was the game you would see your friends play and it was enjoyable in a sense that I have a different perspective on today. I was that kid who would laugh when people made rude comments towards each other and my eyes would be glued to that TV until bedtime. It gradually grew worse by the time my grades started to drop, I didn't want to do my homework and my friends would tell me to stay up past the time I shouldn't have been. My mom would come in telling me to go to bed or she would take away the Xbox or my dad threatening to smash it if my grades weren't above 85. At times I would become enraged only because I had an undefinable connection with the video game. Sometimes my friends would come around during the summer to see if I'd like to go out and hangout, I rejected them just because of the stupid game. I learned that this was not a smart route because when I had no homework to hand in the next day and all my classmates did, it wasn't a good feeling.

4. As I approached eighth grade... I think I should've smashed my Xbox by then. Eighth grade was my most despised year but the most amount of time I spent playing video games. My grades were at an all time low and even my parents understood that the Xbox was the problem. I was cursing a lot more and it just made me feel good even though there was no reason. Why was it so entertaining? Might as well go out and buy a video game and see if you become attached!

5. Once I had learned my lesson and actually saw the light I improved with schoolwork; that time on Xbox had then decreased. My belligerent nature soon floated away and I began to realize that school would be more of an important factor for my future life. That black plastic box with gears had turned my mind in the wrong direction. In this case, videogames had changed my actions, luckily in

a shorter amount of time. It is that luck that brought me out of that situation before becoming a gamer nerd who sits in his basement all day long playing video games eating bags of chips and Mountain Dew who is too lazy to get up from the couch because he has become overweight with no future.

Video Game Danger

6. The use of drugs. either legal or illegal, have been used worldwide for thousands of years. Those chemicals in the drugs affect the way people act, sometimes even initiating addictions. As years go by, the more the drug takes over your life and draws you into making it an everyday habit. If used at young ages, say as a teen, it may have a hard impact on schoolwork and an anti-social nature may form. Interactions between people are decreased and isolation occurs. Not only are there psychological issues but physical is up there as well. Cancers, diseases, etc.

7. Just like drugs, video games may have the same effect. Sometimes with children, you tend to see them spend less time with their friends and see them race home from school so they can continue playing their game. Obesity, insomnia and back pains may show up because of the lack of physical activity, sleep or tendency to not sit up. Aggressiveness and violence can develop in kids who play violent video games. Although it may not be the videogame affecting the kid, it usually helps build upon their destructive behavior.

8. Violence and aggression may be a remedy for some people so they can overcome their stress or alleviate some tension. Say someone were to get really mad at someone, they don't want to walk it off because they'd rather curse their way out of it. Some may see independence within a person due to their lack of social skills, they like being alone or they have lost their friends. Basically, by having exposure to these video games, you can turn into a reckless, careless monster. That's what happened with 17 year old Daniel Petric, in 2007 when he 'raged,' a Halo term, when his parents took his Halo 3 game away from him. They had only confiscated it because he bought it without their consent although he had the right to do so. He went on a 'killing frenzy,' also another Halo reference, by shooting his parents in the head. Luckily his father survived, unfortunately his mother died when the bullet came in direct contact with her skull. It's the big things that little virtual games create. Your mind goes crazy and you can't think straight. Obviously it does not go for everyone but it is hard to say after seeing little devil spawn; especially when I'm a victim. In all retrospect, there is good for the future but not with harmful games in your life.

Changing the Children

9. After watching a child become a horrid living disaster, you would believe there is no hope for the future. It most likely isn't true. There is always that specific way you can climb out of the hole you dug. It may not be easy, just like an addiction to a drug. You may just have to strive for what you think is the right thing to do or possibly even help another to get out of the predicament. Violent video games are no laughing matter because of the sick and twisted material it may portray to

children of all ages. The rating *M* means ages 17+, but some parents just let that fly right over their heads. Now someone who were to enter Gamestop cannot buy an *M* rated game if under the age of 17 but if their parent wants to do so than they can. That's basically one of very little issues to how a kid gets his/her hands on the video game (Yes, girls play video games as well.) The other way is if you buy it without you parents knowing, as mentioned before, which can become an issue as well. There should be more ways to restrict the younger generations from violent video games but it's not easy because the CIA isn't going to barge through the door to inspect and take away a video game. It doesn't work like that! Although Xbox has given the ability to set family timers or not allow specific content on the console, it isn't even an oftenly used application because parents seem to care less and less. I myself find the app to be useless in a sense.

10. Now if you look at the graph you notice that the average video game playing age is 35. This is a normal parenting age. By then, a lot of adults allow their child to play a video game because they do it themselves. Almost 50% on the chart has a teen, possibly even younger, playing a video game. This is crucial because now we have a bunch of younger kids possibly switching reality with the virtual world.

11. We can seek change only if we try to stop these kids in their tracks. Son, Daughter, Niece, Nephew, Younger Brother, Sister, whoever it is, do not expose them to video games before the 'legal limit.'
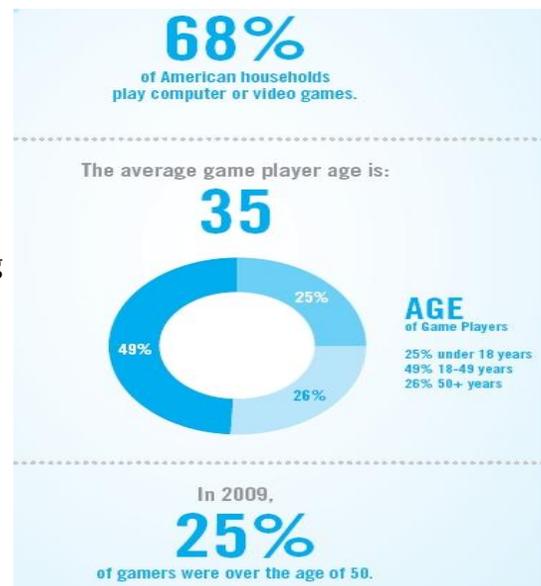
The Good, the Better and the Best

12. Although violent video games offer so many negative impacts on the human body and mind, it also offers some helpful and useful tips or school related work that may expand the mind. Violent video games, such as Call of Duty, has nothing to offer when playing multiplayer running around killing enemies. Opposed to playing the campaign in which you may learn war related material from the past including WWII, the Cold War and Modern Warfare. Some of the content that the video game holds may be irrelevant to actual warfare because it is trying to support a strong storyline but historical bits and pieces eventually come out of it. One aspect that a video game contains is a wide ranged vocabulary. In past experiences, I have come across words in video games that may not have stood out to me or I didn't understand but I come across the word again sometime in school and I have that sudden urge to look it up because I have seen it before. Just because it is a video game doesn't mean they leave all the correct English Language out, but sometimes with strong language, sexual or drug themes they may change the characters speech to make for a more realistic game. That's where real world situations come in and taking action in the virtual world could possibly

prepare you for the real one. Lastly, video games have the opposite effect of human interaction. Multiplayer and online games were created to form bonds between the gaming community people. A person is supposed to meet another, next thing you know they send friend requests and play with each other. This encourages the interactions of two people so if someone is actually lonely and has no one to play with, their solution lies right there.

What Happens Next?

13. At this point, it is all a matter of opinion. It is whether or not you feel like changing your child's life, your own life or your best bud's life. Those who feel the need to encourage videogame usage should not be denied but should think twice. You could be putting someone in harm's way but in a different perspective. It is more so a psychological issue where you're turning the mind of a child in the wrong direction. Physical would be more health related problems opposed to getting physically hurt through fighting or getting hit by a bus. Basically don't allow a young child as mentioned before, son, daughter, brother, sister, niece or nephew get a violent video game until you feel they can actually control themselves.