Agreement and Discrepancy in Parent and Child Reports of Children's Video Game Use

Medina Jimenez, O., Quezada, J., Haas, M., Lakusta, L., Yang, Y.
Montclair State University

NSF#2222247

Introduction

- **Objective**
  - To examine whether parents' reports of their child's video game usage align with the children's self-reports
- **Background**
  - ***Increase in Gaming:*** Since 2020 gaming time for children ages 0-8 has increase by 65% (Common Sense Media, 2025)
  - ***Absorption:*** Children may lose awareness of their surrounds and passage of time, due to fully committing to videogames (Funk et al.,2006)
  - ***Developing Time Perception:*** By ages 7-8 children judge duration based on "mental effort" (Dorit-Volet, 2024)
  - ***Screen time and Parental worry:*** 55% of parents express concern regarding their child being addicted to their screens (Lurie Children's, 2025)
  - ***Moral Panic:*** Negative perception parents have towards video games causes overestimation in their child's gaming duration and blames such gaming for poor academic and social outcomes (Franzò et al., 2025)
- **Research Question**
  - Do parents understand their child's video game patterns?
  - Do children tend to underestimate their gaming time while parents overestimate it?
- **Hypothesis**
  - Parents will overestimate their child's gaming time, while children will underestimate their own time

Methodology

- **Participants:**
  - 135 neurotypical children aged 6-10 & 135 parents
- **Procedures:**
  - **Overall questionnaires:** These questionnaires are part of a study conducted by the Wayfinding Lab at Montclair State University that examines the development of wayfinding knowledge in children aged 6–10.
  - **Parent Questionnaire:** One parent filled out a questionnaire about their child's demographics and video games usage that was sent in an email
  - **Child Questionnaire:** Research assistants asked each child participant a few questions about their video game usage using the Video Game Child Questionnaire
- **Measures:**
  - ***Analyzed Questions from Questionnaire:***
    - ***Parent:*** "How often does your child play video games?"
    - **Child**: "How often do you play?"

Figure 1: Parent Questionnaire

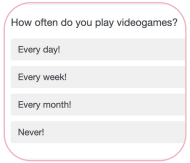

Figure 2: Child Questionnaire

Results

- Children reported lower gaming frequency (M=1.93, SD= .935) compared to parents, who reported a higher gaming frequency for their child (M=2.20, SD= .968)
- A paired sample t-test showed a significant mean difference (M=0.269, p<0.01), supporting the claim that parents report higher gaming frequency than children report for themselves
- A Spearman correlation analysis showed significant, strong positive correlation (r = .598, p < .01)
- Results suggests that parent and child reports of gaming frequency were generally consistent and higher parent-reported gaming frequency was associated with higher child-reported gaming frequency

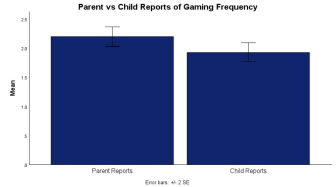

Figure 3: Mean Differences in Gaming Frequency

Parent and Child Reports of Gaming Frequency: Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Variable	M	SD	1	2
1. Parent Reports	2.20	0.97		.598**
2. Child Reports	1.93	0.94	.598**	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Figure 4: Correlation Table

Discussion

- **Summary of Findings**
  - ***Hypothesis supported:*** By mean difference, showing parents frequently overestimate and children underestimate
  - ***Relative Agreement:*** Strong positive correlations (r = .598) suggest parents generally aware of their child's relative gaming patterns
- **Interpretations**
  - ***Child Flow State:*** Childrens lower reports suggests how absorptions (deep engagement) leads to underestimate game time
  - ***Parental Vigilance:*** Higher parental reports suggest implications of "moral panic" or anxiety regarding screen time
- **Implications and Future Directions**
  - ***Data Accuracy:*** Note that when relaying for "objective" game time both have subjective bias
  - ***Future Research:*** Implementing a tracking software to take account of "true" play time

Agreement and Discrepancy in Parent and Child Reports of Children's Video Game Use

Medina Jimenez, O., Quezada, J., Haas, M., Lakusta, L., Yang, Y.
Montclair State University

NSF#2222247

Introduction

- **Objective**
  - To examine whether parents' reports of their child's video game usage align with the children's self-reports
- **Background**
  - ***Increase in Gaming:*** Since 2020 gaming time for children ages 0-8 has increase by 65% (Common Sense Media, 2025)
  - ***Absorption:*** Children may lose awareness of their surrounds and passage of time, due to fully committing to videogames (Funk et al.,2006)
  - ***Developing Time Perception:*** By ages 7-8 children judge duration based on "mental effort" (Dorit-Volet, 2024)
  - ***Screen time and Parental worry:*** 55% of parents express concern regarding their child being addicted to their screens (Lurie Children's, 2025)
  - ***Moral Panic:*** Negative perception parents have towards video games causes overestimation in their child's gaming duration and blames such gaming for poor academic and social outcomes (Franzò et al., 2025)
- **Research Question**
  - Do parents understand their child's video game patterns?
  - Do children tend to underestimate their gaming time while parents overestimate it?
- **Hypothesis**
  - Parents will overestimate their child's gaming time, while children will underestimate their own time

Methodology

- **Participants:**
  - 135 neurotypical children aged 6-10 & 135 parents
- **Procedures:**
  - **Overall questionnaires:** These questionnaires are part of a study conducted by the Wayfinding Lab at Montclair State University that examines the development of wayfinding knowledge in children aged 6–10.
  - **Parent Questionnaire:** One parent filled out a questionnaire about their child's demographics and video games usage that was sent in an email
  - **Child Questionnaire:** Research assistants asked each child participant a few questions about their video game usage using the Video Game Child Questionnaire
- **Measures:**
- ***Analyzed Questions from Questionnaire:***
  - ***Parent:*** "How often does your child play video games?"
  - **Child**: "How often do you play?"

Figure 1: Parent Questionnaire

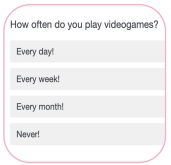

Figure 2: Child Questionnaire

Results

- Children reported lower gaming frequency (M=1.93, SD= .935) compared to parents, who reported a higher gaming frequency for their child (M=2.20, SD= .968)
- A paired sample t-test showed a significant mean difference (M=0.269, p<0.01), supporting the claim that parents report higher gaming frequency than children report for themselves
- A Spearman correlation analysis showed significant, strong positive correlation (r = .598, p < .01)
- Results suggests that parent and child reports of gaming frequency were generally consistent and higher parent-reported gaming frequency was associated with higher child-reported gaming frequency

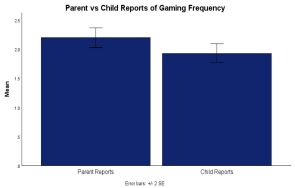

Figure 3: Mean Differences in Gaming Frequency

Parent and Child Reports of Gaming Frequency: Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Variable	M	SD	1	2
1. Parent Reports	2.20	0.97		.598**
2. Child Reports	1.93	0.94	.598**	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Figure 4: Correlation Table

Discussion

- **Summary of Findings**
  - ***Hypothesis supported:*** By mean difference, showing parents frequently overestimate and children underestimate
  - ***Relative Agreement:*** Strong positive correlations (r = .598) suggest parents generally aware of their child's relative gaming patterns
- **Interpretations**
  - ***Child Flow State:*** Childrens lower reports suggests how absorptions (deep engagement) leads to underestimate game time
  - ***Parental Vigilance:*** Higher parental reports suggest implications of "moral panic" or anxiety regarding screen time
- **Implications and Future Directions**
  - ***Data Accuracy:*** Note that when relaying for "objective" game time both have subjective bias
  - ***Future Research:*** Implementing a tracking software to take account of "true" play time