



Age Appropriate Games

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MindJam appreciates the concerns raised regarding the age appropriateness of video games for young people, and we understand the importance of fostering a safe and nurturing environment for students. However, we believe it's crucial to engage in a nuanced discussion about the role of digital media in young people's lives, particularly concerning video games, and the potential benefits they offer when approached responsibly.

Here, we aim to address the concerns raised and provide insights into why sheltering or blocking young people from certain digital realities might not be the most effective approach, while ensuring robust safeguarding measures are in place:

1. **Parental Responsibility and Individual Agency:** It's vital to acknowledge that the responsibility for determining the suitability of video games lies primarily with the parents or guardians of the young person. Every child is unique, and what may be appropriate for one might not be for another. Rather than imposing blanket restrictions, it's more productive to empower parents to make informed decisions based on their understanding of their child's maturity level and individual needs.
2. **Guidance and Mentorship:** At MindJam, we recognise the potential of video games as a platform for learning and social interaction. By engaging with young people through online gaming and digital game design, we provide them with mentorship and guidance to navigate the social complexities presented in older age-rated games. Our mentors are trained to recognise and address safeguarding concerns sensitively and effectively, ensuring the well-being of the young people under our care.

3. **Understanding Digital Realities:** In today's interconnected world, young people are frequently exposed to various forms of media, including television, movies, and the internet, where themes of violence, sexuality, and explicit language are prevalent. Where MindJam would not select games that were age inappropriate, if a young person and their parent / carer have requested a mentor to play a specific game, then as long as it does not raise any concerns to the Mentor, MindJam will support this. MindJam believes in fostering open dialogue and providing mentorship allows young people to develop the discernment needed to engage with digital media responsibly.
4. **Educational Opportunities:** Video games, when used appropriately, offer valuable educational opportunities, from improving cognitive skills to fostering creativity and problem-solving abilities. By integrating gaming into educational settings, we can harness its potential to enhance learning outcomes and engage students in meaningful ways.

In conclusion, while we acknowledge the concerns surrounding age ratings and content appropriateness in video games, we advocate for a balanced approach that prioritises parental/guardian involvement, mentorship, and education, with robust safeguarding measures in place. By empowering young people to engage with digital media responsibly and providing them with the necessary support and guidance, we can help them navigate the complexities of the digital world while ensuring their safety and well-being.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss these issues and explore how MindJam can support your efforts in promoting responsible gaming and digital literacy among students while maintaining a safe environment.

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