



Exergames

Join the Fitness Revolution!

What?

Exergames refer to video games that encourage physical activity. The ever-expanding variety of exergames now range from baseball and bowling to mixed martial arts and yoga.

Why?

- Exergames are fun!
- Exergames increase physical activity in children and adolescents.
- Exergames encourage kids who might otherwise shy away from playing traditional sports to get involved in a physical activity.
- Exergames provide ways for kids to be active when going outside is not an option.



The Research

A growing body of research demonstrates that interactive videogames can equal or exceed the calorie-burning and cardiovascular benefits of regular exercise. In one recent study published in Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, researchers at Brigham Young University determined that active sports and dance games boosted energy expenditure as much or more as walking on a treadmill at 3 miles per hour.

Not only do modern video games help to burn calories, but researchers believe video games can also be used to enhance cognitive thinking. In fact, playing a physical activity or game boosts brain cells. Results show kids are more focused on tests after performing physical activities.

Exergames in 4-H

Did you know that the 4-H club on an L.A. Air Force base is currently using Exergames to teach healthy lifestyle choices and, engage program participants in physical activity? This program serves anywhere from 20-40 students at a time. Exergames can easily be incorporated in 4-H club meetings, afterschool programs, project meetings, conferences and events. Choose games like *Just Dance* or *ExerBeat*, which do not require using actual controls for participation. 4-H members love being active together!

Want to Know More?

Summaries of research, stories of successful Exergame programs, video game reviews, and much more can be found at www.exergamesunlocked.com.

"Instead of kids who are going to sit there watching TV or playing passive games, we would rather them get up and play active games."

Michelle Garza,
Exergames Researcher