

## Video game playing and literacy during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020

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In 2019, we conducted a survey of 4,626 young people aged 11 to 16 to explore young people's literacy-related interactions both within, and in relation to, video games<sup>1</sup>.

Given the suddenly changed environment we found ourselves in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were keen to capture any possible changes to young people's behaviours around video game playing and literacy during lockdown. To find out more, between May and early June 2020 we conducted a survey of 3,817 young people aged 11 to 18 and a survey of 826 parents of young people in this age group.

### Young people spent more time playing video games during lockdown than before

- 45.3% of parents said their child spent more time playing video games during lockdown than before lockdown. 40.9% of parents said their children played the same amount of video games before and during lockdown and 13.7% said they played less during lockdown.

### Around half of young people chatted with friends and/or family as part of playing a video game during lockdown

- 55.6% of parents said their child had chatted with family and/or friends as part of playing a video game during lockdown.
- When young people were asked the same question, 51.7% said they had done so.
- Interestingly, boys were nearly twice as likely as girls (70.5% vs. 39.7%) to chat with friends and/or family as part of playing a video game during lockdown; while the same was true for younger game players, with 54.8% of those aged 11 to 14, 45.2% of those aged 14 to 16 and 31.5% of those ages 16 to 18 agreeing.

### Communicating with friends and family through video game playing in lockdown helped to support young people's mental wellbeing

- 59.6% of parents believe that communicating with friends and family through video game playing during lockdown has been helpful for their child's mental wellbeing.

For more information, visit [literacytrust.org.uk/videogames](https://literacytrust.org.uk/videogames)

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<sup>1</sup> National Literacy Trust (2020) *Video game playing and literacy: a survey of young people aged 11 to 16*