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**A Halo Habit?**  
**Study Suggests Some Youth Addicted to Gaming**

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**What's Happening:**

Most kids enjoy playing video games, and some joke about how “addictive” a certain game might be. As it turns out, they might not be far from the truth. About 8.5 percent of children and teens are “addicted” to video games, according to a study recently published in the journal *Psychological Science*.

Researchers asked youth ages of 8 to 18 how video games affect their lives and looked for 11 telltales signs of addiction, such as:

- Lying to family and friends about how much they play;
- Becoming restless if they can't play; and
- Skipping homework to play games.

If youth were found to exhibit more than half of these signs of addictions, the test classified them as “addicted.”

“What we mean by pathological use is that something someone is doing -- in this case, playing video games -- is damaging to their functioning,” said researcher Douglas Gentile, an assistant professor of psychology at Iowa State University, in a press release. “It’s not simply doing it a lot. It has to harm functioning in multiple ways.”

Some scientists caution that the organization behind the study, The National Institute on Media and the Family, has some biases and that further research is needed.

Dr. Douglas Gentile, lead researcher, also acknowledged the study revealed more questions than answers. Gaming “addiction” might actually be just a symptom of other issues, such as depression.

**Talk About It:**

Do you think it’s possible to be addicted to video games? Do you know people who you suspect might be addicted to video games? Is it possible you might be?

Even if gaming “addiction” is rare or even non-existent, is it possible to play video games too much? How much is too much?

While this study suggests playing games too much can be bad, other studies also have shown that some games actually can help those who play them. Many improve hand-to-eye coordination, and a few may improve how people learn. What other benefits might come from playing video games?

**What the Bible Says:**

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice” (Phil. 4:8-9).

“Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

“Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray” (Prov. 10:17).