

Gaming doesn't prevent Swedish teens from having friends

[Society & Culture](#)[1]

[Society & Culture](#)[1][Computer games](#) [2][Sweden](#) [3][Forskning.no](#) [4]

Young Swedish gamers seem to do just fine with friendships, researchers have found.

Computer games can be violent, and their attraction for young people has raised concerns that they can be isolating and lead to loneliness and developmental problems in their devoted young players.

Most recently, in the aftermath of the mass shooting at a school in Parkland, Florida last month, President Donald Trump and other conservative American politicians have voiced concerns about the relationship between computer games and violence, according to the game website Polygon.

A new Swedish study addresses a related computer game controversy: whether or not gaming is associated with fewer and poorer friendships.

Swedish researchers sent questionnaires to Swedish school students between the ages of 17 and 19. The students were followed throughout the school year, so that researchers could build a picture of how their friendship networks developed. The teens were also asked about how much time they spend playing.

The researchers also interviewed ten students in depth about their gaming habits and how games fit into their social lives.

When they looked at their data, the researchers found no indication that youths who play a lot of computer games have a poorer social life compared to those who do not play. The results have just been published in the journal *Young*.

Lots of hours in front of a computer screen

Of the 115 students who responded to the survey, fully 80 per cent said they played computer games, and 43 per cent said they played daily or several times a day. More than half of the pupils in the study sample (59 per cent) were female.

The students were asked to answer questions about their gaming and other leisure time habits along with their social relationships in and out of school. They were surveyed three times through the school year, and the researchers found no connection between a lot of time spent gaming and the ability to make friends.

There was no difference between those who played a lot or those who played little. Both groups made about the same number of friends during their first year in upper secondary school.

Friendship

The researchers found that gaming on its own does not necessarily create new friendships, but that gaming

can be an important part of social situations. This is also reflected in the interviews with the students in the study.

For example, one of the female interviewees said she has talked to many other students because of their shared experiences with games. She specifically mentioned the Monkey Island series, a game series that began in 1990.

On the whole, the youths in the survey said computer games were a preferred topic for discussion. Some of the boys also commented that TV shows were rather boring to talk about since they did not involve episodes that are experienced by the players, the ways games do.

The students who were interviewed were also pretty good at limiting their gaming so that they still had time for other social activities and school work.

[Read the Norwegian version of this article at forskning.no.](#) [5]

 [Does playing computer games make teens asocial? \(Photo: Iryna Tiumentseva/Shutterstock/NTB scanpix\)](#) [6]

 [270869579.jpg](#) [7]

[Does gaming hold the key for better cooperation?](#) [8] [Gaming leads to better English](#) [9]
[Eklund, Roman: Digital Gaming and Young People's Friendships, A Mixed Methods Study of Time Use and Gaming in School. YOUNG, 2018. DOI: 10.1177 / 1103308818754990.](#) [10]

[Nancy Bazilchuk](#) [11] [based on an article by Lasse Biørnstad](#) [12]

March 21, 2018 - 06:20

This field is not in use. The footer is displayed in the mini panel called "Footer (mini panel)"

Source URL: <http://sciencenordic.com/gaming-doesn%E2%80%99t-prevent-swedish-teens-having-friends>

Links:

[1] <http://sciencenordic.com/category/section/society-culture>

[2] <http://sciencenordic.com/computer-games>

[3] <http://sciencenordic.com/category/countries/sweden>

[4] <http://sciencenordic.com/category/publisher/forskningno>

[5] <https://forskning.no/spill-skole-og-utdanning/2018/03/svenske-gamere-far-ikke-faerre-venner-enn-andre-ungdommer>

[6] <http://sciencenordic.com/sites/default/files/270869579.jpg>

[7] http://sciencenordic.com/sites/default/files/270869579_0.jpg

[8] <http://sciencenordic.com/does-gaming-hold-key-better-cooperation>

[9] <http://sciencenordic.com/gaming-leads-better-english>

[10] <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1103308818754990>

[11] <http://sciencenordic.com/content/nancy-bazilchuk>

[12] <http://sciencenordic.com/content/based-article-lasse-bi%C3%B8rnstad>