

Exergaming' is good for kids

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Kids and video games might not be all that bad, says a new study. That is, if they're the right kind of video games.

Games that require players to physically move and interact, such as Dance Dance Revolution and Nintendo Wii's Boxing, can lead to "a high level of energy expenditure," according to a study released online today in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

Researchers at Brigham Young University in Salt Lake City and the University of Massachusetts in Boston tested six active video games with 39 boys and girls. Playing these so-called "exergames" for 10 minutes produced a workout that, depending on the game, nearly equaled or greatly exceeded that produced by spending an equal amount of time walking three miles an hour on a treadmill. What's more, overweight kids and those at-risk of becoming overweight enjoyed exergaming more than children who weren't overweight.

The study seems to match what Consumer Reports previously found: that the latest video-game systems such as Microsoft Kinect and Sony Move are intuitive enough that consumers of nearly any age or game-playing experience can enjoy. (See our video-game system buying advice for help on determining which video game console may be right for your needs.)

Still, the researchers note that while exergaming might be a positive tool for helping kids stay more active, video games aren't a quick fix for curing childhood obesity. Further studies examining how exergaming directly compares to other physical activities need to be done, say other researchers.

In an hour, a 100-pound person walking at 3 mph will burn 223 calories. Here are how many calories a person of the same weight will burn playing five active video games:

- Wii Boxing: 191
- Dance Dance Revolution: 245
- Cybex Trazer: 268
- Light space: 291
- Xavix: 318
- Sportwall: 323

<http://health.yahoo.net/articles/parenting/exergaming-good-kids>