

# Game on Mom and Dad: Researchers call on parents to discuss their video game use

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UniSA researchers are undertaking a major study to better understand how and why parents play video games, and they're calling on Australian moms and dads to share their gaming experiences.

More than 3 billion people around the world play video games on their smartphone, console or computer, with the Australian [video game](#) industry now worth over \$220 million, doubling in value since 2016.

While those numbers are good news for the gaming business, they also indicate the extent to which gaming has become a mainstream, cross-generational pastime—the average age of video game players is now 35, with almost half identifying as female.

Given those figures, it's clear that gaming is as much a pursuit for moms and dads as it is for the kids, and researchers at the University of South Australia are currently working to better understand how [parents](#) engage with video games and how their experiences might be enhanced.

UniSA communication and media expert Dr. Fae Heaselgrave is leading a study exploring how parents balance caring duties with their gaming interests, what the [mental health](#) and well-being benefits of gaming are for parents, and how this niche group of gamers can be better serviced by the games industry.

As part of the research, Dr. Heaselgrave's team is [inviting parents to participate in an online survey](#) to share details of their gaming activities.

"Anecdotally, we know video games can be an important leisure activity for many parents, but parental responsibilities and [time constraints](#) may mean parents engage with gaming in different ways from other groups of gamers," Dr. Heaselgrave says.

"As parents are rarely represented as members of the gaming community, our current study aims to challenge this status quo and shape industry practices around inclusive game design by highlighting the specific needs and practices of parents who play video games."

Dr. Heaselgrave says the research will also explore differences in gaming between mothers and fathers, to understand more about the opportunities and challenges each parent faces in relation to gameplay.

"The issues we're exploring might be technical factors such as game content and design, as well as [social issues](#) relating to stereotypes and expectations about parental roles and societal perceptions of gender in relation to gaming and technology, but we expect gaming will have a positive impact on parenting too.

"We're also really interested in all levels of gameplay, from the person who occasionally plays a mobile game on the train to work, to the hardcore enthusiasts who devote significant time to gaming."

[The survey, titled Play and Pause: Exploring the video game-playing practices of parents in Australia](#), will be open until the end of October and provides a perfect opportunity for parents who game to voice their experiences and to identify what they want and need from the industry, and society, to better support their gameplay experiences.

Play and Pause can be found on Twitter at [twtpplayandpause](#).

Provided by University of South Australia

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