

SAMPLE PROPOSAL

Obesity has recently been termed an epidemic in the United States. However we are now seeing children facing obesity-related issues such as heart disease, high cholesterol and diabetes. Childhood obesity affects a child and a family's quality of life, and may result in substantial health-related resources and additional health-related costs. During my childhood, I didn't have the electronic devices that children today have. Instead of playing video games and watching television, I would play outside with my brother and sister, partaking in what is now seen as vitally important exercise for healthy children. Initiatives like NFL Play 60 and NBA Fit have radio and television commercials instructing kids to increase their mobility by playing games outside. While many factors affect a child's disposition for becoming obese, what role does modern technology play? How does technology affect childhood obesity? My cousin plays his video games every chance he gets; you can't even talk to him while he's playing because he's so zoned in on his game. Last November he weighed 80 pounds. In December he got a Playstation 3 for Christmas, and this November he weighed 102! Are his video games to blame? Although I plan to look at technology in various forms, my main focus will be video and electronic gaming.

Interestingly, Wii and X-box have recently come out with motion-censored games that incorporate minimal to rigorous mobility depending on the game. The idea is to provide gamers with a more interactive experience with a game instead of just sitting on the couch. But do these games provide the exercise and movement needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle? Is it possible to develop technology that also helps children fight obesity? Also, although technology may be potentially responsible for childhood obesity, what are technology's benefits?

Reading List:

Primary Sources:

"Fact Sheet No. 311: Obesity and Overweight," World Health Organization (WHO), September 2006. (institutional report)

Nintendo Wii website and fitness games such as "Sports," "Resort" and "Wii Fit." (primary observations and game reviews)

Microsoft and Sony press releases about motion gaming via their website. (product website)

Hope M. Cummings and Elizabeth A. Vandewater "Relation of Adolescent Video Game Play to Time Spent in Other Activities," *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, July 2007. (medical report)

Secondary Sources:

Susan Levine and Rob Stein "Obesity Threatens a Generation," *Washington Post*, May 17, 2008.

Barry Popkin *The World Is Fat: The Fads, Trends, Policies, and Products That Are Fattening the Human Race*. New York: Penguin, 2009. (book)

Aaron Levin "Video Games, Not TV, Linked to Obesity in Kids," *Center for the Advancement of Health*, March 17, 2004. (journal article)

Meryl Davids Landau "Nine Reasons to Let Your Kids Play Video Games," *Redbook*, July 2006.

Mikael Blaisdell "All the Right MUVES: The Use of Computer Simulations That Appeal to Students' Love of Video Games Has Shown Compelling Educational Benefits," *THE Journal (Technological Horizons in Education)*, September 2006. (journal article)