

"Casual" Video Game Play Encouraged by Parents, Grandparents

Over 50 Million Adults Play Family-Friendly Video Games with Their Children, Grandchildren; 92% View The Games as Bonding Source, ALL Agree Casual Games Offer Benefits for Kids Beyond Entertainment

Seattle, Washington - August 28, 2007 - PR Newswire - PopCap Games, the leading developer and publisher of casual games, today unveiled the results of the largest survey of players of "casual" computer/video games ever conducted. Among the nearly 7,500 adult respondents who took part in the survey, nearly a third (31%) indicated they had children or grandchildren under 18 who played these family-friendly puzzle, word and simple action games in their home. And of these 2,298 "family gamers," 80% said they played casual games with their children or grandchildren. Conservative estimates peg the casual games market as being more than 200 million people in size, meaning more than 50 million casual game players are "family gamers" who enjoy experiencing the games in the company of younger family members.

Leading survey firm Information Solutions Group contacted 7,487 consumers and identified 2,298 as "family gamers." Of those identified as family gamers, 79% were female and 95% were age 30 or older, figures that closely reflect the overall casual gamer audience. As many as 44% of survey respondents identified themselves as mothers of children who play casual games, and 36% indicated they were grandmothers. On the male side of the equation, 16% and 6% of respondents identified themselves as fathers and grandfathers, respectively.

Time Well Spent: Bonding, Education and More: Among adult "family gamers," 92% overall (and 95% of grandparents in particular) said that they felt the games provided an opportunity to "bond with, or better relate to" their children or grandchildren. And fully 70% of respondents said they see casual games as providing valuable educational benefits. On a related note, only 28% of adult family gamers indicated they allowed their children or grandchildren to play "hardcore" video games - with fathers and grandfathers being significantly more inclined to allow the playing of such games than mothers and grandmothers (37% vs. 25%).

"Casual games span generations and genders in ways that traditional 'hardcore' video games never have," noted Dr. Carl Arinoldo, a Stony Brook, New York-based psychologist of 25 years, expert on parent-child relationships and author of the new book *Essentials of Smart Parenting*. "This universal appeal, and the 'G-rated' content of the games, makes them a great activity in which the whole family can participate, with each generation enjoying the games in different ways while also enjoying the interaction with other family members."

The average age of the children referenced by parents or grandparents who took the survey was 10.2 years old, with 65% being age 9 or older and 94% age 5 or older. Among the children with whom adults said they play the games, more than half (53%) were boys - suggesting that games with aggressive, violent and/or explicit content are not the only ones that appeal to young males, despite long-standing perceptions to the contrary. Additional survey data pertaining to specific casual game play among children under 18 will be presented in a separate press release soon.

Cooperative Versus Competitive Play: Among adult purchasers of casual games who have one or more children or grandchildren who play the games in their home, 94% said that at least part of their game-play interaction with their children or grandchildren was cooperative in nature - working together to solve puzzles, complete levels and so forth. In addition, 52% said the game-play with their kids or grandkids was typically a combination of competitive and cooperative play. Almost half (48%) of respondents indicated they had multiple children or grandchildren who played the games in their home. Of those respondents, 88% described the game-play interaction between the children as at least partly cooperative, while 12% characterized that interaction as strictly competitive. "The casual games seem to promote more of a cooperative 'let's work on this together' type of atmosphere, as opposed to an aggressive, interpersonal competitive environment," observed Dr. Arinoldo.

Benefits of Play: Many of the adults surveyed attributed a wide spectrum of mental benefits to children playing casual games. Nearly half (47%) of respondents observed an increase in their child's level of interest and/or understanding in spelling, reading, vocabulary, and/or history as a result of casual game play. Mothers and grandmothers (49% each) observed these benefits more often than fathers (41%) and grandfathers (38%). Further, these benefits were observed far more frequently in children between the ages of 5 and 12 (about 51.5% of the time) than in children age 13 to 17 (39% of the time). In keeping with these observations, 66% of parents and grandparents of children who play casual games said they would welcome the use of such games in their children's or grandchildren's schools.

Great-grandmother Cheryl Yetter of Paskenta, California plays PopCap's word puzzle game Bookworm (TM) with her 12-year old granddaughter and finds that both bonding and educational opportunities are plentiful. "She loves the game, and when she spends the night, it's great fun to play together," says Yetter, 64. "Considering she doesn't really like to read, Bookworm has been a valuable tool, as she's learned a lot of new words and enjoys looking up some of the odd ones in the dictionary."

Interestingly, while parents and grandparents alike saw benefits such as such as hand-eye coordination, learning and mental workouts for their children or grandchildren, parents were considerably more likely to perceive a reduction in stress levels among their children than grandparents were. 23% of parents vs. just 6% of grandparents noticed a correlation between children playing the games and becoming more relaxed. More than one in ten (11%) survey respondents also said that they purchase casual games for, and/or play casual games with, a child with a physical or cognitive disability. The most common benefits cited for children with disabilities were: skill-building, hand-eye coordination improvement, positive reinforcement, stronger concentration and increased confidence.

Frequency of Play: Nearly one quarter (24%) of those surveyed said their children or grandchildren play casual games daily, with 71% indicating child/grandchild game-play at least once a week. Nearly all (96%) of respondents said they limited children's' game-playing sessions to two hours or less. (Likewise, only 18% indicated that their children or grandchildren played the games more than 9 hours per week.) Weekends (55%) and "after school on weekdays" (43%) were cited as the most popular times for kids to play casual games, with 32% also enjoying the games at night before going to bed.

Survey Methodology: This international research was conducted by Information Solutions Group, www.infosolutionsgroup.com on behalf of PopCap Games. The results are based on online surveys completed by 2,298 respondents randomly selected between June 15 and June 29, 2007. The audience consisted of 1,645 United States and 653 international PopCap.com Website visitors; 483 were men and 1,815 were women. In theory, in 19 cases out of 20, the results will differ by no more than 2.0 percentage points from what would have been obtained by seeking out and polling all PopCap.com users age 18 and over. Smaller subgroups reflect larger margins of sampling error. Other sources of error, such as variations in the order of questions or the wording within the questionnaire, may also contribute to different results.

About PopCap: PopCap Games, www.popcap.com is the leading multi-platform provider of "casual games" — fun, easy-to-learn, captivating computer games that appeal to everyone from age 6 to 106. Based in Seattle, Washington, PopCap was founded in 2000 and has a worldwide staff of over 120 people in Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Vancouver, B.C. and Dublin. Its games have been downloaded more than 350 million times by consumers worldwide, and its flagship title, Bejeweled®, has sold more than 10 million units across all platforms. Constantly acclaimed by consumers and critics, PopCap® games are played on the Web, desktop computers, myriad mobile devices (cell phones, smartphones, PDAs, Pocket PCs, iPod and more), popular game consoles (such as Xbox), and in-flight entertainment systems. PopCap is the only casual games developer with leading market share across all major sales channels, including Web portals, retail stores, mobile operators and developers, and game device manufacturers.