



ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 22, 2004

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NEW STUDY SHOWS PARENTS OVERWHELMINGLY AGREE WITH VIDEO GAME RATINGS;

ESRB Ratings Found to be "Highly Accurate"

(NEW YORK)—A study released today found that the vast majority of American parents agree with the ratings assigned to computer and video games by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). The study, conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, found that parents agree with ESRB ratings 83% of the time.

"The study released today asked parents if they agree with ESRB ratings after seeing the actual games themselves, and the results are simple and clear. As Peter D. Hart Research concluded, 'Parents find computer and video game ratings to be highly accurate, '" said Patricia E. Vance, president of the ESRB. "The results are especially noteworthy and credible because unlike academic studies that rely on the personal opinions of the researchers, this one gets to the heart of the matter by gathering information directly from those people for whom ratings matter the most - parents."

The study showed 401 randomly selected parents a compilation of video footage from 80 popular computer and video games rated within the prior twelve months. Respondents were asked to assign the ESRB rating they felt was most appropriate and then were told what rating the ESRB actually assigned the game. Parents were asked to describe the ESRB rating as "about right," "too strict," or "too lenient." Interviews were conducted at shopping malls in ten different regions of the United States, in order to ensure geographic diversity reflected in the results.

Parents said that the ratings were "about right" 83% of the time, and furthermore 5% of the time, parents thought ESRB had been "too strict". What makes this study unique is its scope across major rating categories and its inclusion of consumer feedback, focusing on parents who depend on the ratings to help them determine which games are appropriate for their families.

ESRB ratings have two parts: **rating symbols** suggest age appropriateness for the game, and **content descriptors** indicate elements in a game that may have

triggered a particular rating and/or may be of interest or concern. ESRB rating symbols include, EC (Early Childhood), E (Everyone), T (Teen), M (Mature), and AO (Adults Only). ESRB currently uses more than thirty standardized content descriptors for depictions involving violence, suggestive or sexual content, language, and controlled substances, to mention a few.

“Previous studies show that parents are involved in the purchase or rental of games almost 90% of the time, that 92% of parents say they monitor the content of the titles their children play, and that more than three-quarters of parents plan to use the ratings when they shop for games this holiday season”, said Vance. “As confirmed by the study just completed, the ESRB rating system is an extremely effective tool for the millions of consumers who rely on it as they shop for entertainment software for their families.”

Consumers can learn more about the ESRB rating system and conduct customized ratings searches by visiting the ESRB website, www.ESRB.org.

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About Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is a non-profit, self-regulatory body established in 1994 by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA). ESRB independently applies and enforces ratings, advertising guidelines, and online privacy principles adopted by the industry.