

Group Cites Video Game Sex, Violence
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WASHINGTON (AP) - Graphic scenes of gunshot victims spurting blood and a jailer urinating into a prisoner's cell are included among the 10 video games that a media watchdog group warns should be avoided by kids and teens under 17.

With the holiday shopping season in full swing, the National Institute on Media and the Family presented its 12th annual video game report card Tuesday to help parents decide what games are appropriate for their children.

"There's an endless stream of new games that will never be suitable for children," said Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., who joined institute officials and other lawmakers at a news conference.

Efforts to protect children from the dangers posed by excessively violent video games have not kept pace with growth of the video game industry, the institute said.

Institute officials cited "growing complacency" among game retailers, parents and the gaming industry on video game ratings.

"Unfortunately, we're seeing some steps backwards," said institute president David Walsh.

Walsh said fewer retailers, for example, are participating in efforts to educate their customers and employers about the video game ratings.

The institute, a media watchdog group, cited figures showing that nearly half of kids between 8 and 12 have played M-rated games intended for those 17 and over.

But the industry's Entertainment Software Rating Board, which assigns game ratings, defended the effectiveness of its program.

"At a time of year when parents are looking for helpful guidance about video games, this year's report card does little more than sow unwarranted doubt about effective tools like ESRB ratings," said ESRB president Patricia Vance.

Vance said a recent Federal Trade Commission report called the ESRB rating system useful and informative for parents.

The institute showed gory scenes of sword, gun and knife violence from several video games. A scene from "Assassin's Creed" depicts an attacker plunging a knife into his victim's back several times. A jailer in "Manhunt 2" taunts his prisoner by urinating into the man's cell. A fallen victim's body is riddled with gunfire as blood spurts across the screen in "The Darkness."

The group's list of 10 "games to avoid, " all M-rated, are in the video game report card on its Web site, <http://www.mediafamily.org>, along with a list of recommended games for kids and teens.

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Parent Alert! Games to Avoid for your Children and Teens

Assassin's Creed M

Call to Duty 4 M

Conan M

The Darkness M

Jericho M

Kane & Lynch: Dead Men M

Manhunt 2 M

Resident Evil: Umbrella Chronicles M

Stranglehold M

Time Shift M