

WHAT THE FUTURE: PLAY

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**+ Experts from Best Buy, Little League
International and Gamewright discuss how
play fits into our lives and how we'll grow
future generations of players and fans**

GAME CHANGERS



What shifts in the ways we play will mean for players, fans and brands

Imagine it's 2030.

"It's like riding a bike." That expression tends to mean two things — it's a thing that most of us learn how to do, and we can remember how to do even after not doing it for a while because riding a bike doesn't change. Until it does.

One of the world's leading racing cyclists fears for his sport and the future of the Tour de France because of climate change. His concern has grown as scorching temperatures have literally melted the pavement. "I wondered what I was doing there, making extreme efforts in extreme temperatures," [Guillaume Martin told Reporterre](#). "Lately, we realize that in our disordered world, it will be more and more difficult to play sports," he said. Surfers are similarly concerned and are becoming outspoken activists.

Martin is feeling the impacts from his position at the top of his sport. But what about other pro athletes? Or amateurs

who like to play pick-up hoops or soccer? Or kids? How will they adapt so they can continue to play as they want, too?

If, say, it becomes harder to have outdoor play, what does that do to the pipeline of fans? Will kids, no longer sweating it out at summer football camp because it's 116 degrees every day, still have the same connection to the sport as they do now? Would extreme weather drive us to play more sports indoors and speed growth of video games and other digital, immersive forms of entertainment? Or would reliance on digital entertainment lead to a backlash toward more analog ways of spending our leisure time?

Climate change is just one factor that will influence how we play in the future, who gets to play and where. As usual, the trends wrap around each other with circular influence.



5.27

Is how many hours a day Americans spend at leisure and play.

(Source: American Time Use Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021.)

Another key factor is the role of science and technology on how we play. There feels to be no limit to the ways we can manipulate our physiques and our genetics in the future, at least as far as the science is concerned. We've already leveraged nutrition, strength conditioning and understanding kinesiology to tone and enhance the way athletes and amateurs play.

Sports commentators watching the University of Michigan football team play this season often remarked on how the offensive line had "changed their bodies" over the off-season through [weight gains and losses](#).

Play is serious business. Its future will impact sectors spanning food, beverages, sports, streaming, toys, retail and more.

Adding advanced sciences to the mix of tools can reshape sports. The question is less what's possible and more what will fans accept and what we will ethically embrace? This issue probes these questions a bit further.

Play, of course, isn't just about kids and sports and video games. It's about adults, too. Our prior What the Future: Work issue talked about how the way we work will impact the way we live and the way we spend the rest of our time, as well. In the context of play, the future of work will potentially alter

work outings, from happy hours to team-building karaoke and pickle ball sessions to the intersection of work and play: gamification of work tasks. But work will also continue to change the hours and locations in which we play.

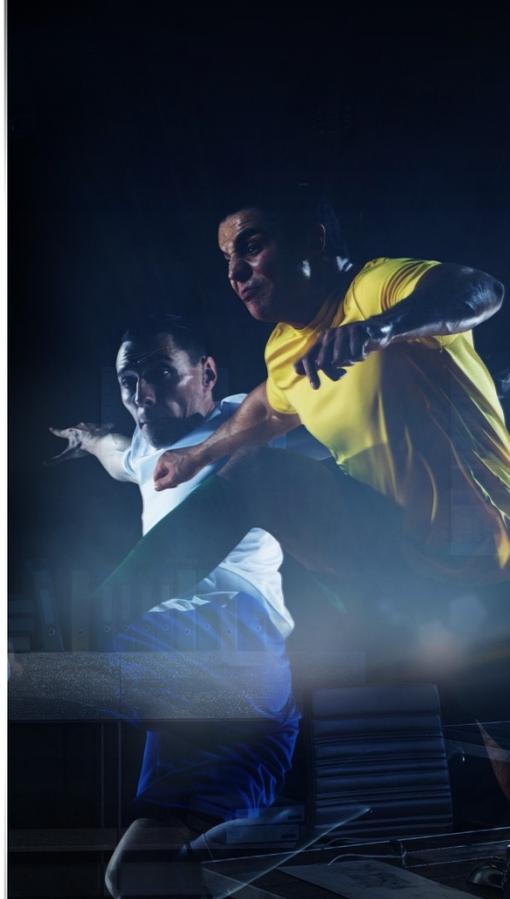
Playtime won't necessarily start after 5 p.m. It could be woven into a flexible workday. It won't necessarily start from the downtown office or the suburban cluster. It could be a central place for each team. Playtime for the post-work gathering could also be at some place virtually.

Raising these disparate questions and hypotheticals is all a means of getting us thinking because the implications are as broad and important as the ways we play. Play is serious business. Its future will impact sectors spanning food, beverage, spirits, sports, streaming, toys, retail and more.

So read on. This issue promises to be fun but written with an eye on the implications. Then, when you're done, make sure you put the issue down and get out there and play. You've earned it.



Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.



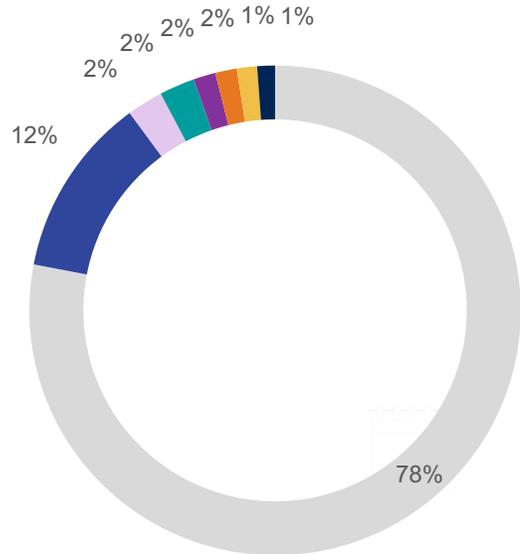
82%

of American adults play or practice a sport or game in a normal month.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

People lean pessimistic about the future of play

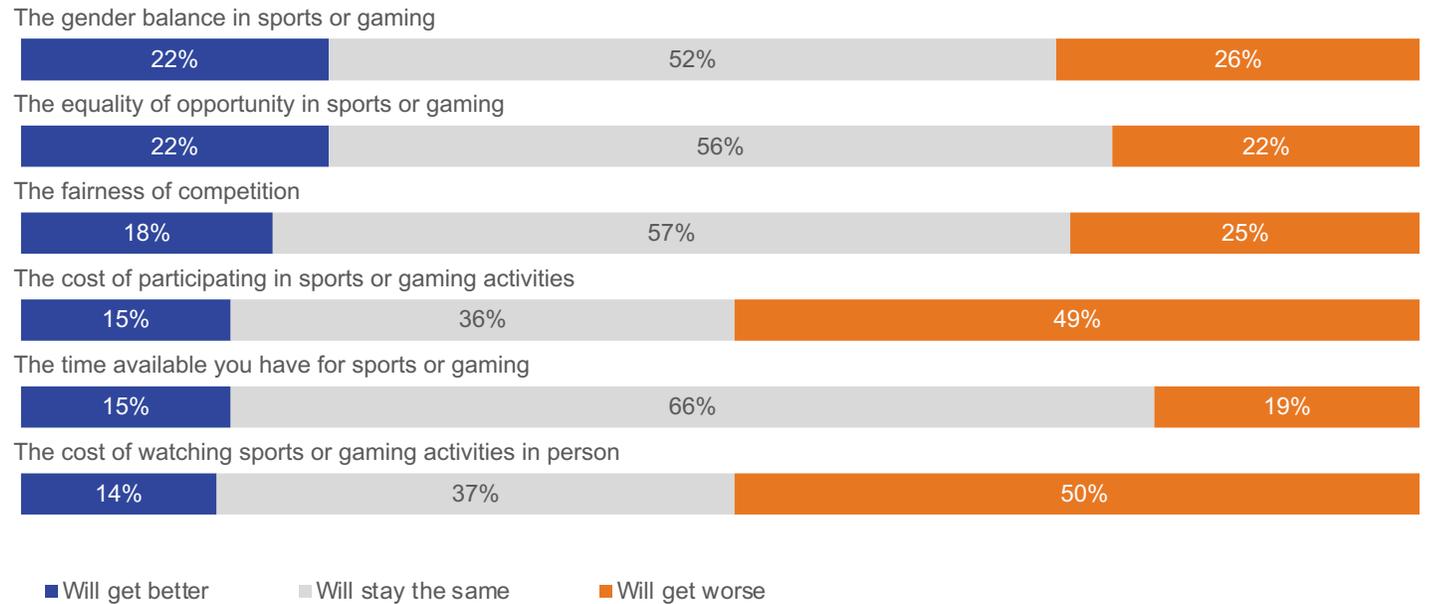
Screens dominate Americans' daily leisure hours



- Non-leisure
- Watching TV
- Socializing and communicating
- Playing games and using a computer for leisure
- Other leisure and sports activities, including travel
- Relaxing/ thinking
- Participating in sports, exercise and recreation
- Reading

People have more negative than positive outlooks on the future of play

Q. Over the next 12 months, do you think the following will get better or worse, or will things generally stay the same? (% Total)



Emerging Global trends



Where people play video games the most globally

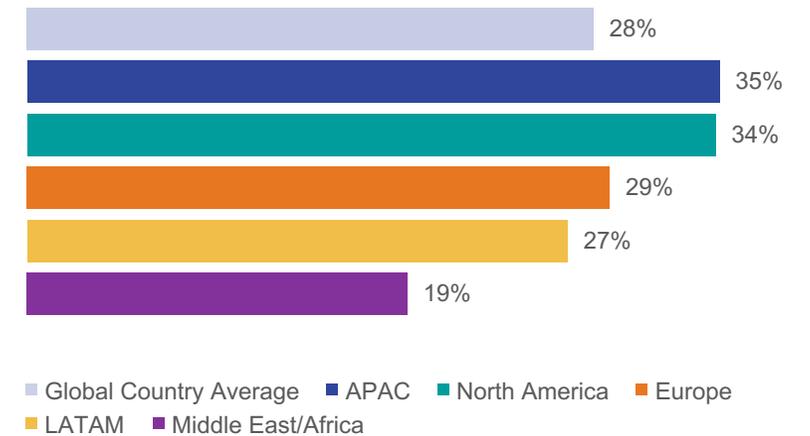
The Ipsos Global Trends 2023 study looks at how we spend our leisure time around the world across 50 markets.

Globally, 28% of people say they played video games in the past week, in the survey conducted in markets comprising more than 70% of the world’s population and almost 90% of its GDP. That’s fewer than those who used social networks (61%), watched TV (58%) or listened to music (57%) but more than those who played sports (23%) or went to a concert (8%) or museum (7%).

People in the North America and Asia Pacific regions are more likely to be video game players. But given the small generational falloff between the more digitally native generations (34% of Gen Zers vs. 26% of Gen Xers), compared to just 19% of Baby Boomers, gaming is poised to be a growing way the population will spend its play time.

Who plays video games varies by region

Q. Which of the following, if any, have you done in the past week — played video games? (% Selected)

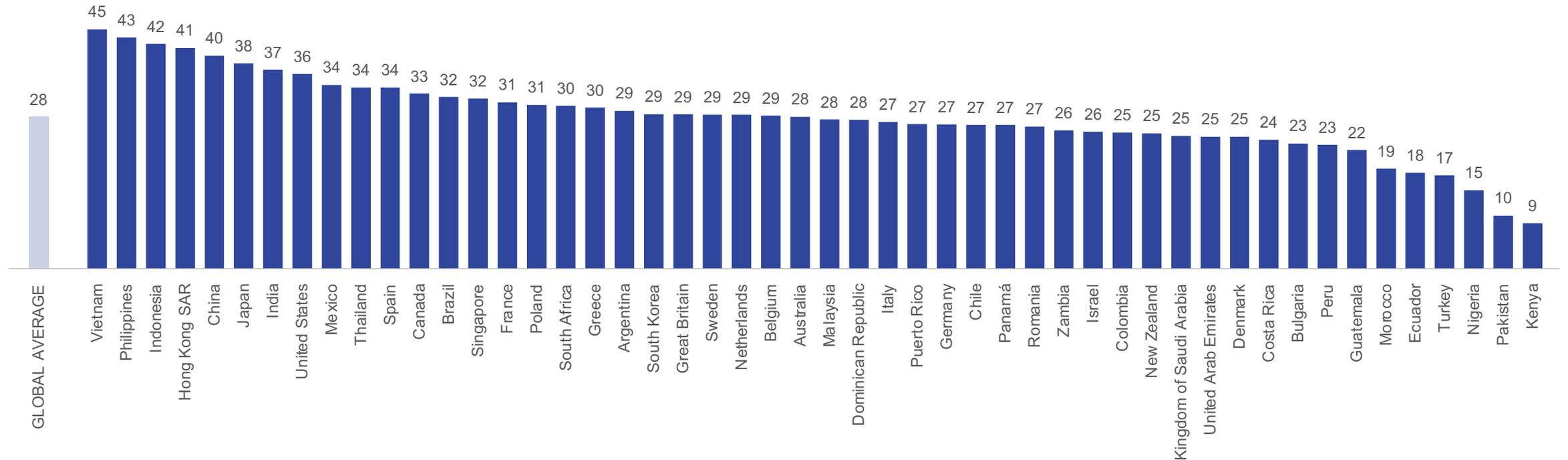


(Source: Ipsos Global Trends 2023 survey conducted Sept. 23–Nov. 14, 2022, among 48,579 adults across 50 markets. Video games include any console or handheld device, PC, smartphone or tablet.)

The markets where people play more video games

Americans are among the world’s biggest gamers

Q. Which of the following, if any, have you done in the past week — played video games (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos Global Trends 2023 survey conducted Sept. 23–Nov. 14, 2022, among 48,579 adults across 50 markets. Video games include any console or handheld device, PC, smartphone or tablet.)

Contents



1. Territory map

The future of play will be driven by forces coming from six directions. We map them out.

2. The lay of the land

We talk with a pro video gamer and experts from Best Buy, Little League International, Gamewright, and Harvard Medical School and MIT about shifts taking place in participation, training and spending, and how they will shape society and brands, and how people shop and spend in the future.

3. Tensions

Do people prefer to play in person or online? Which is better: enhanced athletes or pure? Are fans creating content about games they watch or not? The ways people lean on these choices in the future could shift how people socialize and bond and how brands support the ways they play, watch and shop.

4. Future destinations

Based on our data and interviews with experts, we plot out a potential future — a plausible port in our future journey. Then, thinking of our tensions, we consider what happens if one of them shifts. We use that as waypoint to ponder how that might send us to a different scenario, plausible port two. Then, we outline the Future Jobs to Be Done, giving you a new way to think about the future. Finally, we explore the optimism gap between what we hope to see in the future versus what we expect to see in the future.

5. Appendix

Want more? We show our work, including the full text of our expert interviews, our contributors and links to what we're reading today that has us thinking about tomorrow.

Territory: What will drive the future of play?

The future of play faces multiple inflection points, most often driven by technology. Factors from climate change and increasing emphasis on competition over fun and fairness could spawn new ways to play or kill traditional ways.





Why games will remain social even if we play apart



Jill Giefer

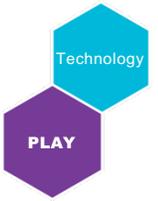
Head of enterprise research and experience measurement, Best Buy

The audience for gaming is broadening across all types of demographics as fun and games continue to play an important part in our lives. There's a tension between online gaming and screen-free play, says Best Buy's Jill Giefer. We want to limit screen time, but we also use screens to socialize and play just like we do with in-person and tabletop games. Can both forms of play continue to thrive in the future?

54%

of Gen Zers and Millennials play app or mobile games in a normal month.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults. For full results, go to future.ipsos.com.)



Giefer says what it means to be “a gamer” is shifting, and because play means many different things to different people, gamers aren’t a monolith as a segment. A retailer like Best Buy can help foster that community and help people discover new ways to play. She says the stores themselves are sometimes called an “adult playground.” For younger players, she sees an interesting trend at play in her own home.

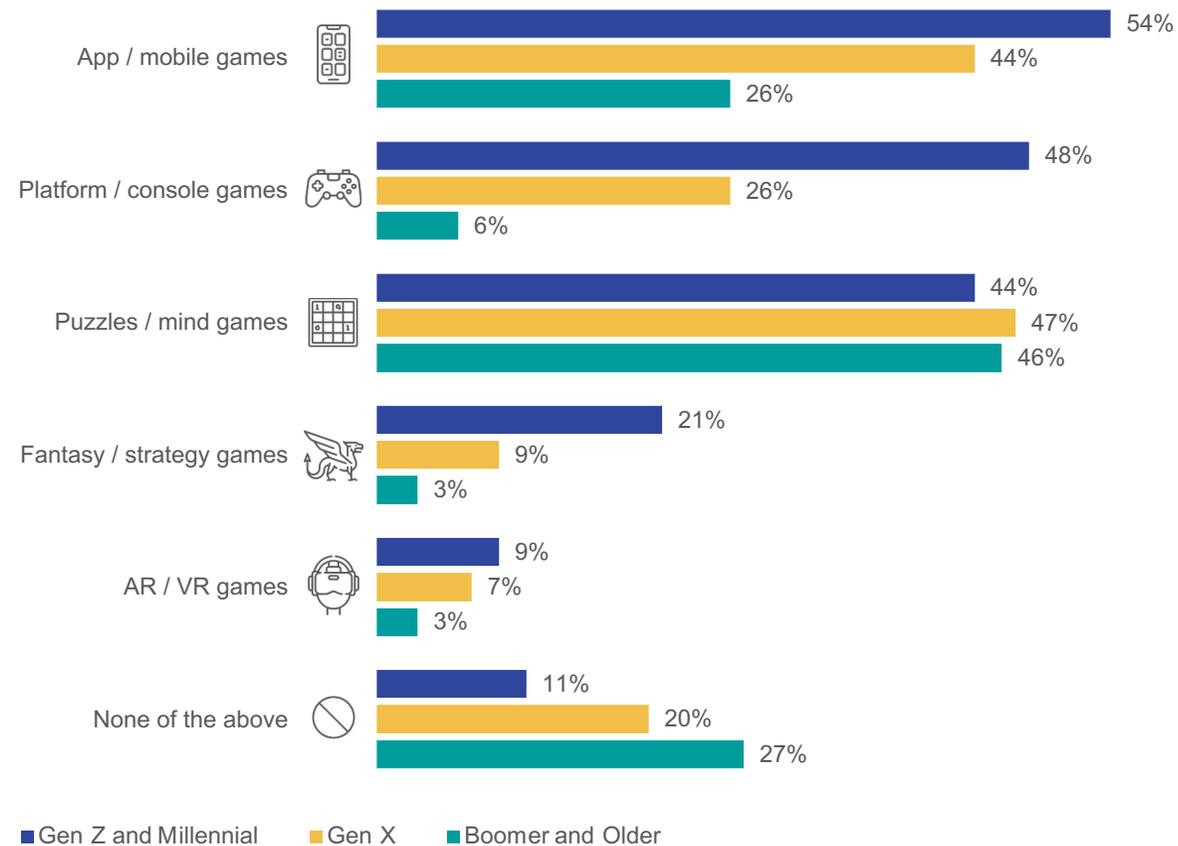
“Kids learn how to play and get better at games by streaming and watching others play. When I was a kid, you just had to keep playing or talk to someone about it. Watching someone is probably a more efficient way of getting better.”

It’s just one more way that play and gaming are evolving as social experiences, even if we are physically by ourselves.

[Read the full Q&A on page 36.](#)

Generations drive the digital divide in games

Q. Which of the following, if any, do you practice or play in a normal month? (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults. For full results, go to future.ipsos.com.)



What players expect from immersive game platforms



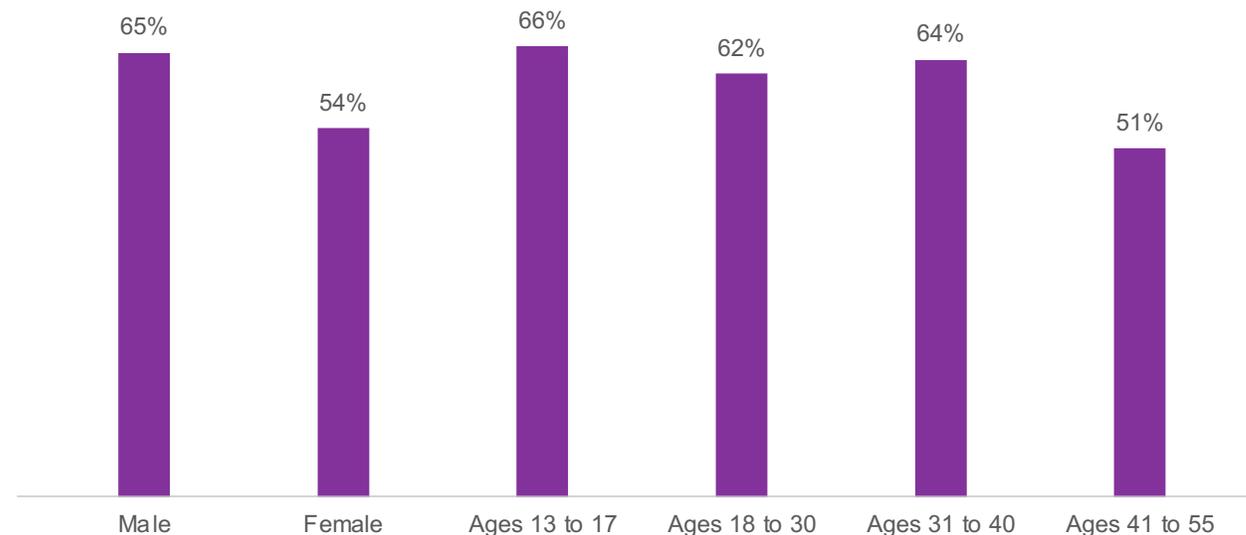
The metaverse and immersive experiences are welcome platforms for playing games, as three in five gamers in a new Ipsos survey say that playing games in a metaverse will be better than playing online today.

What gamers and game viewers most frequently mentioned as expectations for gaming in the metaverse were fun gameplay, realistic imagery and a multisensory experience, says Natalie Lacey, executive vice president of Ipsos' media and entertainment platforms. Brands should take note.

“The positive association between a metaverse and gaming offers brands the opportunity to connect with their consumers in a new way. Brands should consider their strategy and adapt to the platform, and not just copy over communications from traditional media.”

Gamers see the metaverse as a better gaming experience than online

Q. Thinking about the opportunity for these immersive experiences, do you think a metaverse will make [playing games] better or worse than the way we do things online today? (% Better)



(Source: Ipsos Immersive3E Syndicated Survey; Oct 2022; U.S. only; ages 13 to 55.)

How we'll compete (and watch) in digital play



Jeannail Carter

Pro player, Twitch ambassador

Jeannail “Cuddle_Core” Carter grew up with video games, but it wasn’t until college that she got serious about play. Today, the 28-year-old is one of the world’s best at the iconic fighting game Tekken. Carter sees the esports fandom growing, from the crowds at tournaments to her nearly 25,000 Twitch followers. But she also thinks pros and fans alike need to hold each other accountable for making newcomers feel welcome.

1/3

of Americans express their support for a sports or gaming team by following them on social media.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)





Esports fans can be fiercely loyal to their franchises — and they show their support in all sorts of ways, from wearing merch to attending tournaments. Today, nearly two-thirds of 18- to 24-year-olds say [they'd rather watch someone else play video games than watch popular television shows](#), per Ipsos research.

But for all the similarities to traditional sports, some things are new. In a livestreaming age, the lines between work and play can get blurry for multi-hyphenate “creators,” just as the lines between spectatorship and play get blurry for audiences. And when everyone can hide behind screens (and comment on everything), it can be hard to hold people accountable.

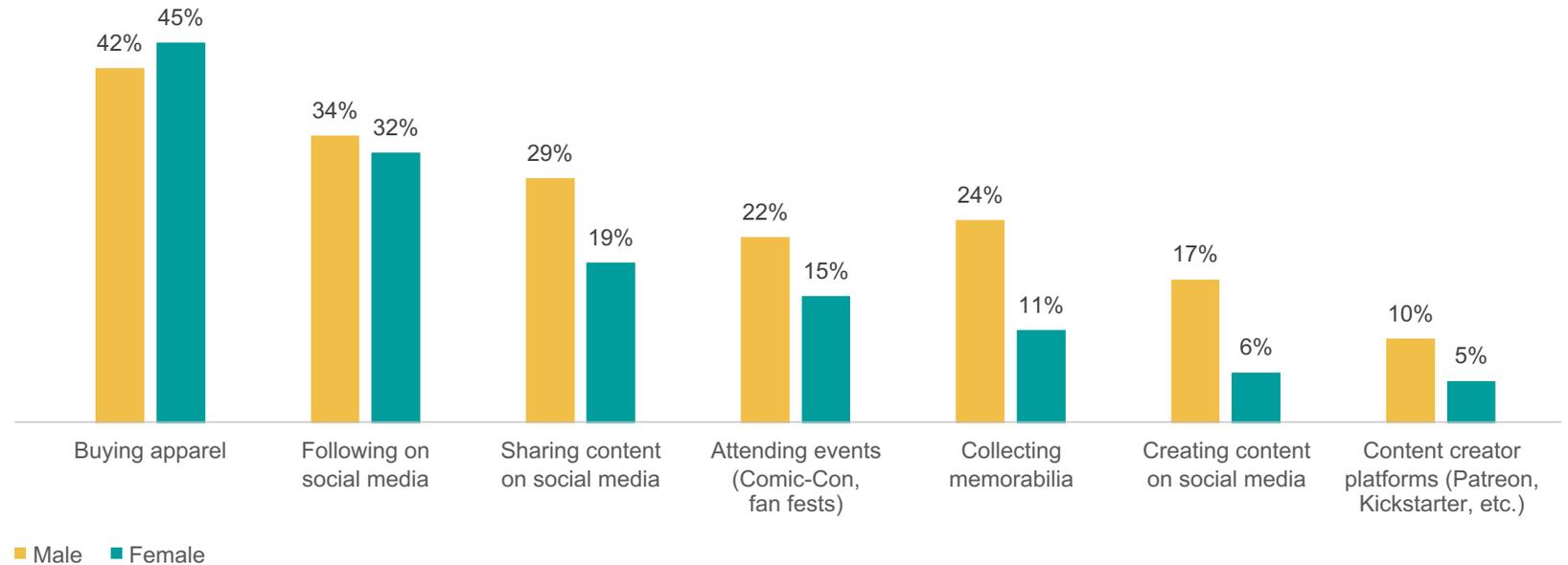
“It’s about showing what we condone as a community.”

Carter loves her sport and the culture around it. But if the esports community wants to attract a new generation of fans and players, the current generation has a responsibility to make their space a positive one, she says.

[Read the full Q&A on page 38.](#)

How sports and gaming fans show their support

Q. When you are a fan of a sports or gaming team, how do you express your support? (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Fans buy brands that support teams



The sports and gaming community as well as its fandom is increasingly diverse. Sports content is a way to reach niche audiences, as well as one of the last mass market plays left.

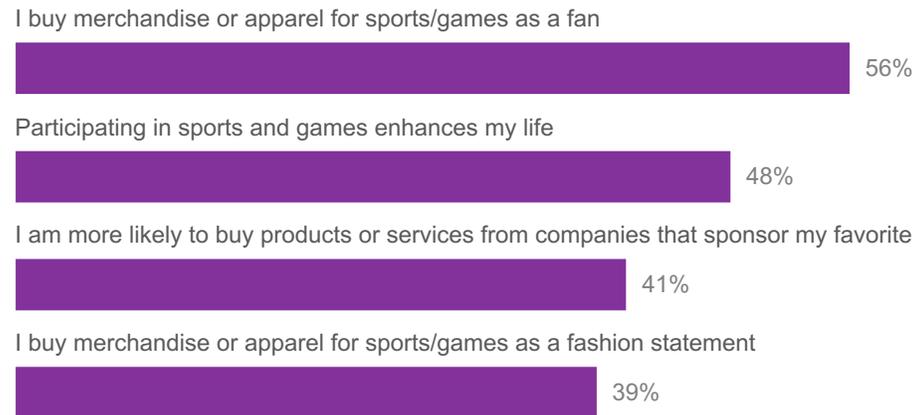
Ipsos research shows that using sports figures in context can lead to greater brand linkage. It's especially relevant that 41% of people say they are more likely to buy things from companies that support their favorite teams, says Pedr Howard, a senior vice president in Ipsos' Creative Excellence practice.

“People notice and pay attention to the brands that support their favorite teams.”

Linking your brand with a favored team can be a strategy for the win.

Where brands fit in fandom

Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (% Agree)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

How traditional sports can thrive in a changing world

PLAY

Sports



Nina Johnson-Pitt

Senior strategy executive, Little League International

Traditional youth sports like baseball and softball have seen growing competition from technology, gaming and newer sports in recent years. To address declining participation, Little League International is halfway through a five-year growth plan, which included elevating Nina Johnson-Pitt to a new position as senior strategy executive. She explains how the league is focusing on access, experience and retention to make Little League more fun and relevant for a new generation of players and fans.

72%

of U.S. parents agree that parents often take youth sports too seriously and ruin it for the kids.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 321 U.S. parents.)



One of the biggest hurdles that youth sports face is they've become increasingly competitive at earlier ages, putting the emphasis on winning rather than fun and fundamentals, says Johnson-Pitt. That's causing many future players and, therefore, fans to drop out.

“It’s still a game and when it’s not fun anymore, that’s when kids don’t want to play.”

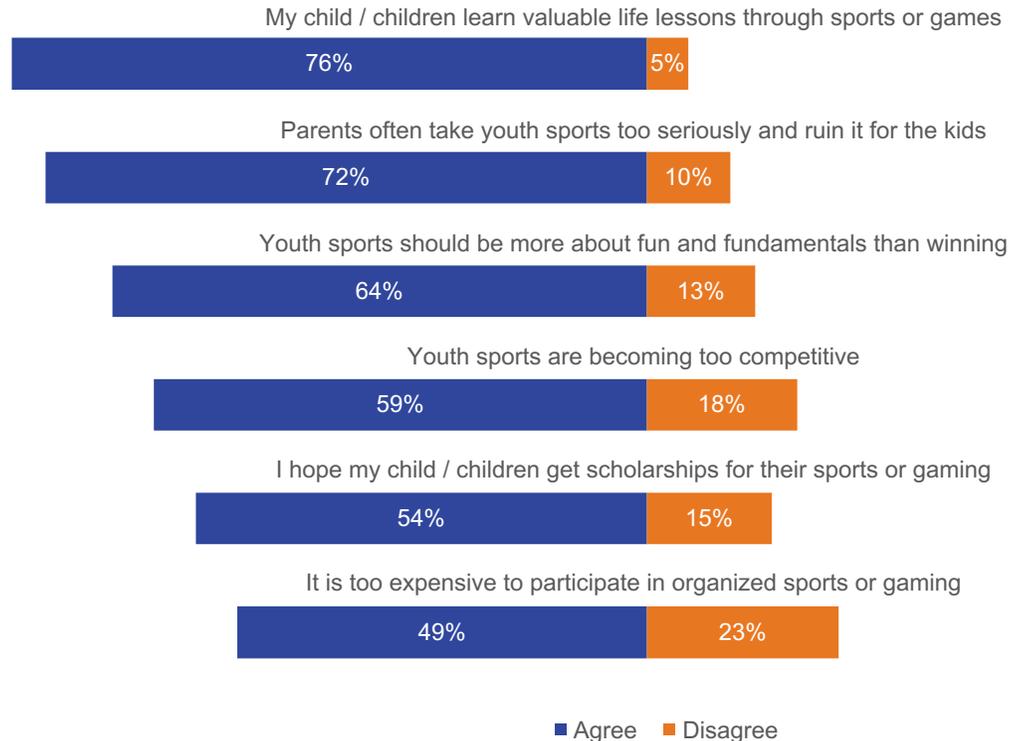
That’s also when the sport loses future players and fans. Johnson-Pitt says adults have made games more competitive too soon, partly due to well-intended aspirations for success or college scholarships. She says it’s time for a reset to focus on what’s best for the kids, rather than the adults.

If fun is the key to retaining and growing the next generation of players and fans, what will change if winning isn’t everything?

[Read the full Q&A on page 40.](#)

How parents’ attitudes shape future players and fans

Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (% Total)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 321 U.S. parents.)



How competition and business cut access to play

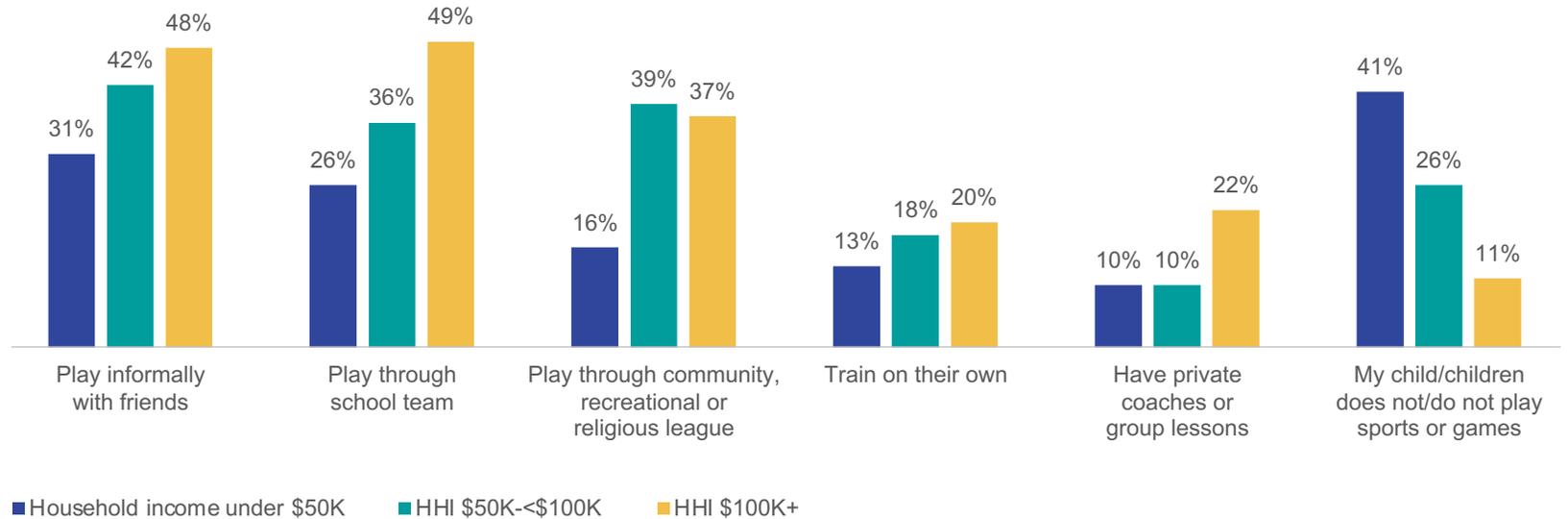
Participation in youth sports has been on the decline for much of the last decade. With the cost of some sports soaring north of \$2,000 per year and youth sports itself becoming a \$19 billion industry, it's clear why many children are on the sideline, says Johnny Sawyer, a research manager in Ipsos' Public Affairs team.

Improving access to necessary equipment and safe places to play is one solution. Another is reducing the cost, which will help alleviate a significant burden for many families and could provide more opportunity for kids from lower-income homes to compete, Sawyer suggests, adding:

“In a sports landscape that has become increasingly competitive and commercial, reducing stress and bringing the joy back for children could be the most important step in getting tomorrow’s athletes and fans back into the game today.”

How income shapes how kids play

Q. Does your child/children participate in sports or leisure gaming in any of the following settings? (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 321 U.S. parents.)

What tabletop games need to win the parents of tomorrow



Jason Schneider

Vice president, product development, Gamewright

Gamewright's jester logo adorns some of the most popular tabletop games of the last 30 years, including *Sleeping Queens* and *Sushi Go!* Gamewright Vice President of Product Development Jason Schneider says digital games lack the sensory experience like the feel of cards in your hand or the sound of a ripple shuffle. But he also thinks the rise of video games has forced tabletop developers to make better, more engaging games. How long will this symbiotic yet frenemy state hold?

91% of people with kids at home play or practice a sport or game, compared to 77% of people with no kids at home.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults. For full results, see future.ipsos.com.)



Tabletop games are enjoying a renaissance, partially because they are a cross-generation experience. Elders can easily learn a card or board game but might face a steeper learning curve with online games like Among Us. As today’s kids grow up, that could change.

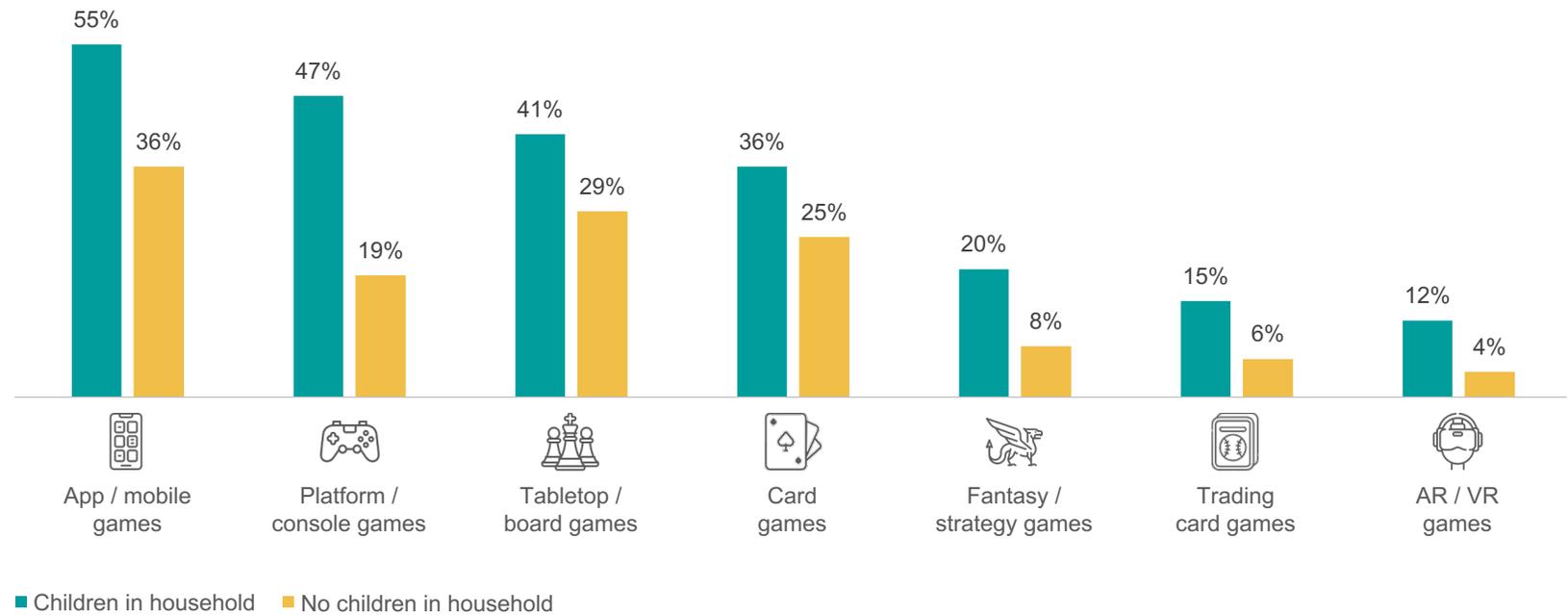
“All board game publishers should think that there’s an existential threat out there. Our kids are digital natives and as they become parents what are the traditions they’re going to be handing down to their kids? We all played Minecraft and Roblox, so that’s where they’re going to go first.”

That’s one of the reasons Schneider is looking to port his games online, too. But in the end, he thinks the board games teach soft skills like patience, and he hopes they survive so kids can keep learning, even or perhaps especially as they play.

[Read the full Q&A on page 42.](#)

How kids at home shape how adults play

Q. Which of the following, if any, do you practice or play in a normal month?



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults. For full results, see future.ipsos.com.)

How tech is changing fan experience expectations



From stadium tours to the Olympics, some of the most beloved occasions for play are mass gatherings. Connected technology is changing what fans expect from these experiences.

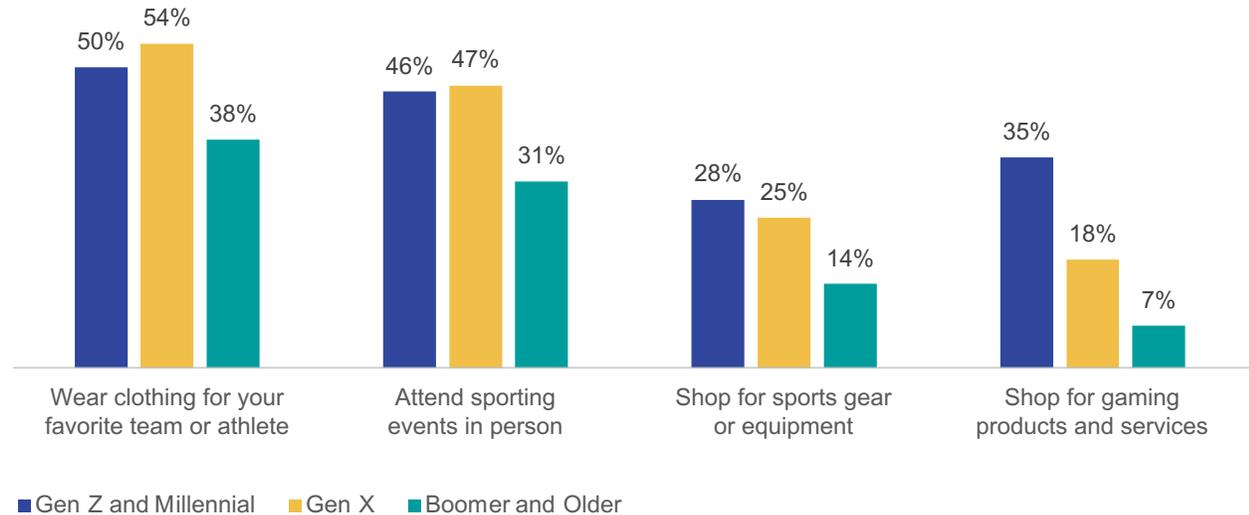
Ipsos [research confirms](#) that both physical and digital interaction points before, during and after the main event are critical moments that bring the experience to life and make it memorable, says Stephanie Bannos-Ryback, executive vice president of Ipsos' Customer Experience practice.

“It’s time to re-think how everyone from the ‘star of the show’ to supporting service providers have a more direct relationship with fans.”

Whether participating in person, at-home, or on-the-go, fans have more ways than ever to interact with the players/performers, other fans, and the event providers. Technology powers the integrated experience, leading to innovation in how we play.

Brand experiences that matter most to fans

Q. Please indicate below how you participate in sports or leisure games. (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)



How a warming planet could change the playing field

The world is on the path to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming — and if we continue to overshoot climate goals, we could find ourselves playing in a very different world. From air-conditioned stadiums to digital platforms, how will we compete and watch if we can't go outside?

Climate change threatens to transform nearly every aspect of our lives, including how and where we play.

Will professional athletes be able to compete in less habitable climates? Will your kids play in the metaverse rather than the scorching outdoors? What would that do for the pipeline of new athletes and fans?

A remarkable 83% of people agree that we are heading for environmental disaster unless we change our habits quickly, says Chris Murphy, global head of Ipsos' Market Strategy and Understanding practice.

“Events organizers are already preparing for extreme weather. Brands also need to make a plan for climate-adaptive products.”

In a worst-case future, will we need to modify our sports seasons, our rules or even our athletes?

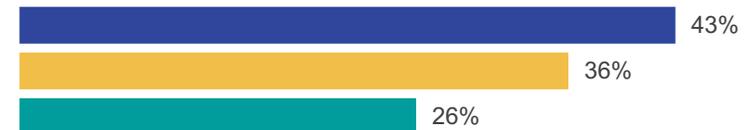
Younger adults expect climate change to affect outdoor play

Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (% Agree)

In the next five years, climate change will affect how much time I can spend outdoors



In the next five years, outdoor sports will require new equipment to continue playing due to climate change



■ Gen Z and Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer and Older

Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults



What draws the line between play and competition

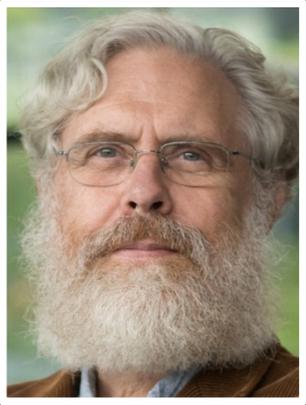


Photo by Wyss
Institute Harvard

George Church, Ph.D

Geneticist and professor at Harvard University and MIT

When it comes to competition, winning is, by definition, the point. The shift from friendly games to playing to win has motivated innovations in training, equipment and even genetic interventions. George Church is a pioneer in synthetic biology and genomics, the study of a human's complete set of DNA. He helped start the Human Genome Project and played a key role in launching CRISPR gene-editing technology. He also has launched some [50 biotech startups](#), including one aimed at boosting athletic performance.

30%

of Gen Zers and Millennials agree that allowing athletes to change their genetic makeup for better performance is fair.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)





The kinds of enhancements that people use to improve their competitive advantage is ever-shifting and began as far back as when people figured out that wearing sandals helped them win ancient marathons, says Church.

Thus began centuries of innovation from physics to nutrition to genetics to even out competition against those who were blessed with genetic advantages.

“We’re increasingly getting to the point where if we want to make an even playing field, we can.”

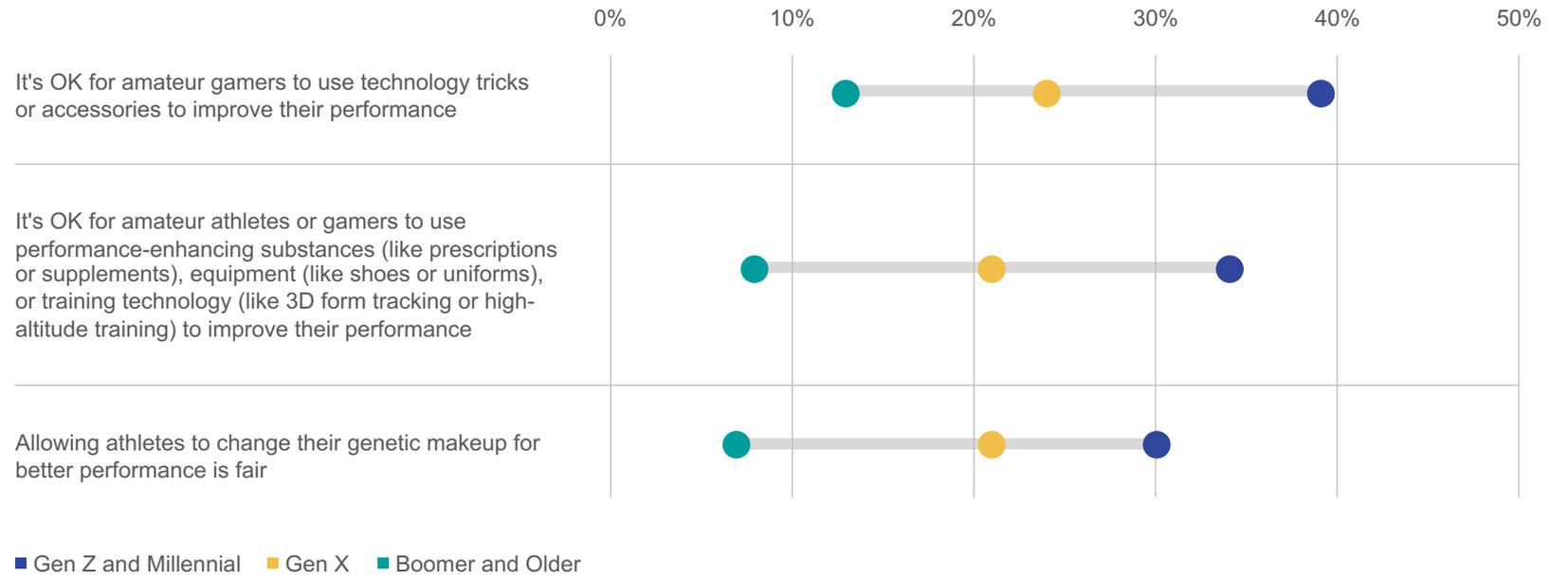
He sees no difference between doing so by training, nutrition or gene therapy as long as they’re regulated for safety, and everyone has the same access to them.

But will that take the fun out of the competition?

[Read the full Q&A on page 44.](#)

How generations view performance enhancement

Q How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (% Agree)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Five tensions that will drive change:

1. Play online or in person?

Everything competes for our time in the play economy. That creates some unnecessary tensions. In person and virtual play can coexist certainly. But if we have to pick one way to spend our time, in person wins by a wide margin. Will that hold?

Gamewright’s Jason Schneider thinks there is a time and place for each. “When there’s a large group gathering over the holidays ... there’s more surprise in a card game or board game experience because there’s a sort of novelty to it,” he says. But he is also realistic. While today there is a tension, tomorrow’s generations are already spending more time playing in online spaces. Will that be a life stage or generational shift?

Most people want to play in person

I prefer playing in virtual or online spaces

27%

73%

I prefer playing in person

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Five tensions that will drive change:

2. More social or more isolated?

Most feel that being online will lead to more isolation, which in conventional terms, it plausibly could. But it also depends on how you define “isolation” and “social.” Many of the things we do and the ways we play virtually can be quite social — allowing us to play with people we know personally and meet new people virtually. That could take the form of building relationships or quick in-game interactions. All of this is starting very young, as parents of Roblox players know quite well. “There’s a social aspect where even someone like an 8-year-old can feel like he’s connecting with someone without being together with them in person,” says Best Buy’s Jill Giefer.

Twice as many people than not say virtual play isolates

More virtual play will lead to greater social opportunities

32%

68%

More virtual play will lead to greater isolation

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Five tensions that will drive change:

3. Fan content creators or no?

Adults ages 18 to 34 are almost three times as likely to say they are content creators as part of their fandom than 55+ Americans. Even the 35- to 54-year-olds are twice as likely as their older peers to create content. "Back in the day, kids talked about wanting to be a doctor or firefighter, something like that. They're going to start saying that they want to be an esports player. It's already happening," says gaming streamer Jeannail Carter.

But will battles over inclusivity and toxicity in many online gaming communities thwart that ambition? Or will the financial challenges in many online platforms impede the future ability to monetize these audiences? Will the line between creator and player continue to erode and blur?

Few fans make content about their favorite games

I spend time making content about the games I play or am a fan of

26%

74%

I do not spend time making content about the games I play or am a fan of

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Five tensions that will drive change:

4. Safe enough vs. not

Another part of the pipeline equation for sports is what happens if parents pull their kids from the game. Anecdotally, that's already happening in sports like football and hockey in some communities. Stories of injuries and medical research continue to shed light on the dangers of head injuries especially, which could push more young players out of some of today's most popular youth sports. At the same time, fewer kids are becoming multi-sport athletes, says Little League International's Nina Johnson-Pitt. "We know that kids are picking one sport at a younger age, which may stifle some development and lead to more overuse injuries," she says. This could accelerate a future, as essayist Chuck Klosterman has posited, that includes more virtual athletes and fewer human ones. Esports might be only just the beginning.

More people think youth contact sports are safer than not

Youth contact sports are safe enough

60%

40%

Youth contact sports are too unsafe

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Five tensions that will drive change:

5. Enhanced vs. pure performance

This tension is surprisingly close already. One could make the argument that Barry Bonds was just using science to make his swings harder, which fans mostly enjoyed watching in the moment, but then felt it was cheating enough that he's been denied entry into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. But if 40% of Americans already are open to ways to enhance athletic performance without bickering about fairness, perhaps whole new ways of competing are plausible. "I think as long as [performance augmentation methods] are safe, effective and accessible to people somewhat independent of money, that's probably going to meet a lot of the ethical standards," said Harvard and MIT's George Church.

A minority believe performance enhancement improves games

Enhancing an athlete's performance through science and technology makes games better

40%

60%

Enhancing an athlete's performance through science and technology makes games less real

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Nov. 14-15, 2022, among 1,115 U.S. adults.)

Plausible port one:



The world heats up and we go in or warm to new ideas to adapt

It's 2035. Much of California and the Pacific Northwest have burned. Want a swimming pool in Arizona? You'll need a license. But good luck. They are prohibitively expensive. Climate change is happening all around us. Playing sports outside in this climate is increasingly difficult. Outdoor stadia are becoming relics. Rainouts make spring scheduling impossible. The lack of rain during the rest of the year likewise impacts the idea of having a grass field. But we adapt.

In this world, more activities move indoors and online, for starters. For games that still happen outside, we have new cooling jerseys and other equipment for athletes and fans, alike. SPF 50 sunscreen won't cut it anymore. Most people currently think that enhancing an athlete's performance through science and technology makes games less real. In this future it's inevitable. Yet, people push back, and fandom falls off.

Parents ration outdoor time the way they try to ration screentime today because they don't want their kids to melt. Kids play more indoors, virtually. Parents try to encourage offline play, but it's a challenge. For most kids, this means that playing outdoor sports like baseball and soccer is out of reach. But a new set of genetic and synthetic tools allow for some children to be "adapted" to climate changes' impacts. The first such kids are playing T-ball and youth leagues in 2035. These kids are essentially scouted before their birth and fantasy players are collecting stats on their performance from this age.

In this world, virtual gaming and the metaverse flourish, providing limitless options for entertainment and play. So do, perhaps antithetically, board and card games. People play, watch each other and their favorite streamers, and socialize in virtual spaces.

Waypoints

Now imagine people become more comfortable with enhancing humans through science and technology.

We're not too far from a future where athletes can be made more climate resilient. What will play look like then? Will these enhanced humans lead to new levels of competition that we find extra compelling? Will it just be a matter of being able to keep the level of play similar to what it is now as the world around us changes? How will that impact our fandom? And the way we spend our play time ourselves? Will there be consumer-level versions of the pick-up basketball players and the after-work softball leagues?



Plausible port two:



We embrace tech adaptations and shift into a new world

It's 2035. We've become accustomed to seeing genetically modified athletes or donning new gear to keep cool and safe while playing outdoors. And it means we can keep enjoying all the things we enjoy today. They're just ... different.

Many of the trends are the same. We're still living in a world with more play happening indoors, but the need to knock down Chicago's historic Wrigley Field, and move soccer pitches under domes is slightly less urgent. People were already spending more of their play time on video games and esports. Those growth curves continued but didn't accelerate. Tabletop games start to lose some of their pandemic-era, nostalgia-driven luster in the marketplace.

In this world, hybrid work and hybrid play start to coincide as our time indoors and in-office merge. Many work tasks have become gamified as Gen Z's influence grows in the workforce, having had "play" embedded in their educations since birth, with tools like Gimkit and Quizlet. Employers have adapted and created ways for them to accomplish their tasks but still feel like they're playing.

Exasperated parents still tell their kids to "Take it outside!" Softball, soccer and other summer camps limit their outdoors time but haven't phased it out entirely. But there are equity issues because taking historically outdoor games indoors is not cheap. Access to training is rationed to those who can most afford it, and many of the things we consider play today will take on a more functional role for the folks who can participate. The rest of us watch, and interact via streaming and content creation, which becomes the new definition of "active participation."

Future Jobs to Be Done

The traditional “Jobs to Be Done” framework focuses on the tasks and outcomes that people are trying to accomplish and why they hire products and services to help them achieve that outcome. We don’t buy a video game; we hire one for entertainment or socializing. We don’t buy a hockey jersey; we hire it for supporting our team and sharing our fandom.

Ipsos takes this theory forward with *future* Jobs to Be Done (fJTBD). We envision powerful and plausible future scenarios through strategic foresight. These scenarios help us define the circumstances in which people may find themselves, like in the metaverse. What will their new needs be? Then we use fJTBD to tie these scenarios to actions that organizations can take today and tomorrow to help people meet those future needs.

While many needs are enduring and do not change over time (e.g., weather protection), the context of that job (e.g., extreme heat or cold) will change that job space and the potential solutions and alternatives. Because of this, we often create fJTBD clusters that are higher-order and needs-driven. Within each, we can envision more granular fJTBD to illuminate opportunity spaces to meet human needs in new ways.

Trevor Sudano is a senior engagement manager with Ipsos Strategy3.



Potential Future Jobs to Be Done related to play

1

Help me to enhance my game

Some want it “au naturel,” and some want it enhanced. It’s the tension currently at play with a lot of fitness solutions. Do I want organic whey isolate or the latest probiotic for endurance? Either way, we seek the best performance.

Potential fJTBD:

- Help me increase my stats naturally
- Help me temporarily increase my tolerance for heat extremes

Imagine a world where ... performance-enhancing solutions go beyond the field, to the boardroom, or the classroom. Maybe they’ll just be temporary, for that special occasion.

2

Help me transition from offline to online and back

If one thing is certain, it’s that hybrid is here to stay. But the switching is where the tension lies. Making sure everything is everywhere all at once can get complicated fast, but maybe it doesn’t have to?

Potential fJTBD:

- Help me to pick up right where I left off no matter the location, device or account
- Help others to join me at any point in my game – IRL or digitally

Imagine a world where ... anyone with a non-traditional or flexible schedule reaps the benefits of dynamic pricing by securing goods when they’re at their least expensive.

3

Help me make my to-do list fun

Why not gamify everything? Well, behavioral economics tells us that gamifying bad behaviors (gambling, anyone?) is very effective. But what about gamifying good behaviors or just the mundane?

Potential fJTBD:

- Help me make learning sports fundamentals more fun for my kids so they master them
- Help me motivate myself to do a marathon spring cleaning

Imagine a world where ... you enter a goal into a program or AI, and it instantly creates an experiential game to motivate you to reach it.

Future Optimism Gaps

We largely agree, when asked, on a common vision for the future of play.

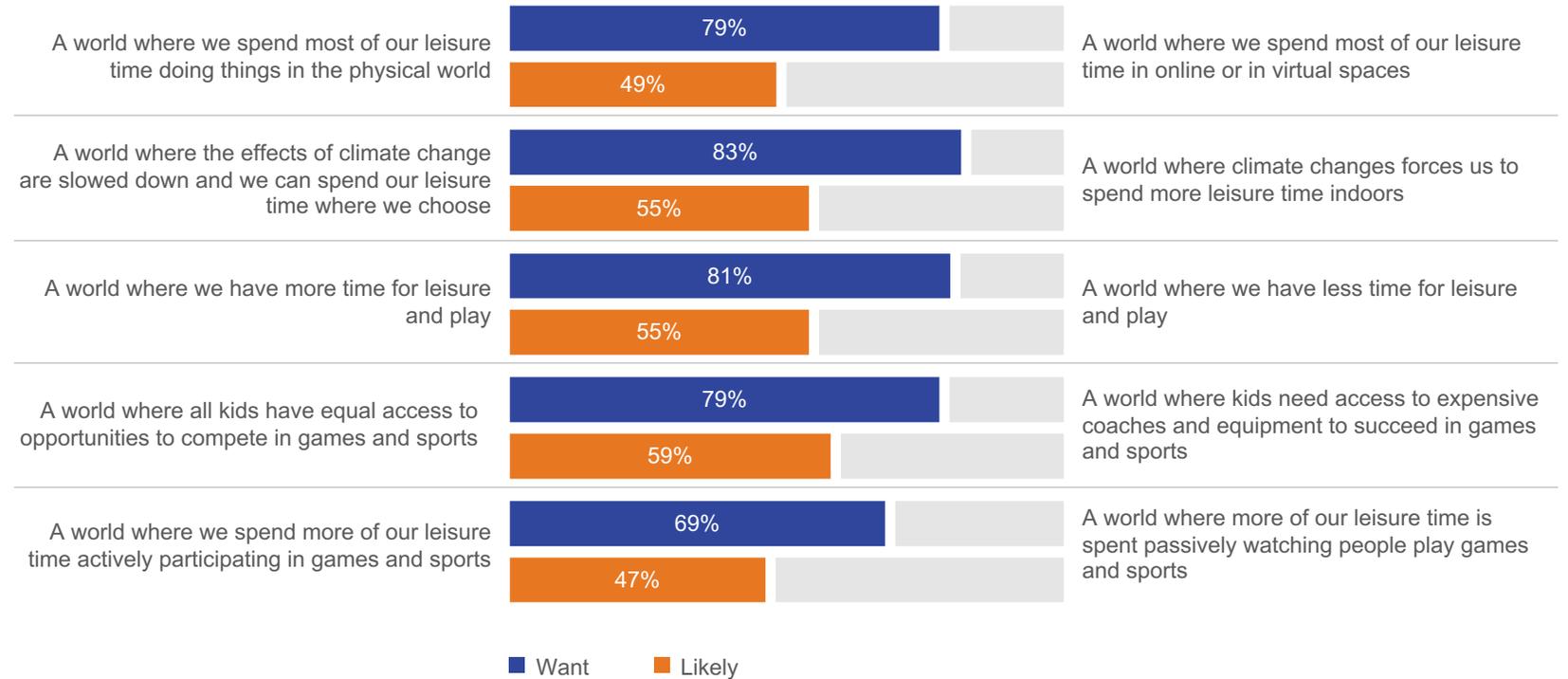
We want a world where we spend time playing in the physical world, where climate change doesn't impede that, where our kids have equal access to compete in sports.

We want to spend more time playing, and we want to do that ourselves, actively, rather than to watch others play.

But there's a gap between this future we want and the future we expect. What roles are there to help close that gap and get us to the futures we agree on?

The gap between the future we want and the future we expect

Q. For each of the following future scenarios, select the one that [you most want/seems most likely] to happen. (% Total)



Appendix

In this section,
we show our work
and our workers

1. Full Q&As
2. Signals
3. Contributors



Why games will remain social even if we play apart



Jill Giefer

Head of enterprise research and experience measurement, Best Buy

The audience for gaming is broadening across all types of demographics as fun and games continue to play an important part in our lives. There's a tension between online gaming and screen-free play, says Best Buy's Jill Giefer. We want to limit screen time, but we also use screens to socialize and play just like we do with in-person and tabletop games. Can both forms of play continue to thrive in the future?

Matt Carmichael: In-person games became more popular during the pandemic. What have you seen post lockdown in trends about play?

Jill Giefer: After every aspect of work and leisure was forced online during the lockdown, we've seen consumers desire more analog experiences and look for ways to disconnect and reinforce their digital boundaries. At the same time, play in the digital world connects people and can build a community even as things are opening and getting to a new normal. So regardless of where play takes place, if that is online or physical or if it's individual or with a group, it serves a lot of different needs for people.

Carmichael: Like what?

Jill Giefer: Play can serve as an escape from life, a way to express yourself creatively. It can be a skill or hobby to keep improving or challenge yourself. And it can meet those different needs at different times depending on what the individual's context is.

Carmichael: Ipsos is tracking nostalgia as a trend living on past the pandemic. Are you seeing that?

Jill Giefer: Definitely. Part of what we're seeing is effort related to reducing screen time where consumers are turning to the past for other entertainment mediums and looking for ways to be creative or find stimulating activities that improve their mental health. We've seen data around Gen Z consumers, in particular, looking for lower- or no-tech type of vintage products and games.

Carmichael: And there's a bit of a confluence of digital and physical experiences.

Jill Giefer: In the pandemic, there was a tension for people who were sick of being online all day for work or school but also using tech to connect to people. There's a tension, but also a blending of the two. People are getting enhanced experiences for physical products and physical experiences by using and leveraging tech.

Carmichael: How is the gaming audience changing?

Giefer: We're seeing a much larger, broader, more diverse audience. If you think of who a video "gamer" is, they're really not a monolith. There's been increased accessibility because you can be a gamer through your phone or a wearable that doesn't necessarily require a computer or a TV. As gamers are spanning across demographic segments, including age, income, race, anyone who games can be a gamer. So, there's much more inclusivity in the community.

Carmichael: What are some of the motivations for gamers?

Giefer: The most intense gamers really like to game for fantasy, to escape and have a sense of adventure. They're not necessarily in it for more of the social aspects but like to be seen as an expert and give out their advice to others. Then there's a group who's focused on challenges, so they really like the sense of accomplishment of winning and have that more social need that they get fulfilled through gaming. Then there's times when it's just about having fun or relaxing. Finally, it really does fill a need for connecting.

Carmichael: I learn a lot from my children in how they play. What are you learning from kids?

Giefer: Kids learn how to play and get better at games by streaming and watching others play. When I was a kid, you just had to keep playing or talk to someone about it. Watching someone is probably a more efficient way of getting better.

Carmichael: And the social aspect as well.

Giefer: They can play together while not being together, inviting their friends in to participate in a game through a code. So, there's a social aspect where even someone like an 8-year-old can feel like he's connecting with someone without being together with them in person.

Carmichael: How does retail fit into the play community?

Giefer: We hear from customers that Best Buy stores are like an adult playground where they come to try before you buy and get a chance to touch and feel products, try them out, including some video games, and can talk to our associates. We're also seeing experiential retail, in general, as a form of play or entertainment at the very least.

Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.

“As gamers are spanning across demographic segments, including age, income, race, anyone who games can be a gamer. So, there’s much more inclusivity in the community.”

How we'll compete (and watch) in digital play



Jeannail Carter

Pro player and Twitch ambassador

Jeannail “Cuddle_Core” Carter grew up with video games, but it wasn’t until college that she got serious about play. Today, the 28-year-old is one of the world’s best at the iconic fighting game Tekken. Carter sees the esports fandom growing, from the crowds at tournaments to her nearly 25,000 Twitch followers. But she also thinks pros and fans alike need to hold each other accountable for making newcomers feel welcome.

Christopher Good: What makes someone watch a Twitch stream instead of playing a game?

Jeannail Carter: I think there are a lot of things. Personality. Energy. Technique. Skill, aesthetic, how much the viewer gets to interact — it depends on the person and what they’re looking for. People come into my stream because it’s a good time. I can be funny when I want to be, but I have a lot of knowledge about the game — they ask me [something], I’ll give them an answer. Regardless of what I play, competitive or not, I give a lot of emotion and energy. I’m very expressive when I want to play this stuff, because it’s what I love.

Good: How is building a fan base in esports different from building a fan base as a professional athlete?

Carter: I don’t think there’s much of a difference. If you’re a popular player or streamer or an athlete, eyes are on you. What you do is magnified times 10 — good, bad and in between. But one big difference is that people

don’t always understand what we do. This could probably be said for traditional sports, because people don’t understand what athletes go through in training. But you see all that physically. All you see when you see me sit down is that I’m sitting down. I think that’s the biggest thing, that lack of knowledge about what pro players do to prepare and grind it out.

Good: What responsibilities do you think streamers and players have to their audiences?

Carter: When newer players come into a space, their first interactions are the ones that will leave the biggest impression on them. So, it’s important that we be as welcoming as we can. If we can be these resources and provide knowledge for new players, it’ll make even more people want to come and join. That’s a huge responsibility. I also think there has to be more accountability; more rules put in place, so that if somebody says something or something happens to someone, they know who they can come to.



Good: Right now, a big part of making money in esports is fandom, from audience donations to merchandising. How does that impact the culture?

Carter: The following is a huge part of making it as a player. Now, not everybody is going to be competitive. That's totally fine. But how you market yourself determines discoverability and determines finances. I think merch really helps the culture, too, because people wear this stuff all the time. Maybe it's something catchy, something your game has that's unique, or some meme. The fighting game community has tons of sayings or phrases you see on shirts, even on shot glasses — just funny things that connect to your brand and people's experiences.

Good: Unlike traditional sports, fans of esports can comment directly on their favorite players, and the lines between entertainment and competition can get blurry. Are attitudes changing?

Carter: That's an ongoing thing. In gaming competitions, the biggest advice is: "Don't look at the Twitch chat," right? When there are 200,000 people watching a tournament, there's going to be some unsavory things in the chat. And it doesn't matter whether players see it or not, that's not the point. It's about showing what we condone as a community. When comments are really good, you're like, "Wow, that

makes me feel good." But while you could see 80,000 positive comments, you see one negative one and it ruins your day. Still, attitudes towards it are changing, which means new people feel more comfortable coming into these spaces. It's changing slowly. There are more new faces.

Good: Doing what you love can also make it hard to separate work and life. Does the competitive gaming and streaming culture need any changes around work-life balance?

Carter: I see a lot of discussions about work-life balance for streamers and pro players. You're self-employed in some ways, you're your own boss, you don't punch in and punch out. You make your own schedule. But you find yourself working a lot more than you think. You might have a team owner, but they're not telling you, "Hey, don't play." That's on you.

I've had to create this massive separation between the two, because nobody else is telling you how to do it. In a space where there's no defined path or blueprint, you grind so hard. I think people are getting better at changing that, but the path is new, so it's still trial and error.

Christopher Good is a staff writer for What the Future.

“When newer players come into a space, their first interactions are the ones that will leave the biggest impression on them. So, it’s important that we be as welcoming as we can.”

How traditional sports can thrive in a changing world



Nina Johnson-Pitt

Senior strategy executive, Little League International

Traditional youth sports like baseball and softball have seen growing competition from technology, gaming and newer sports in recent years. To address declining participation, Little League International is halfway through a five-year growth plan, which included elevating Nina Johnson-Pitt to a new position as senior strategy executive. She explains how the league is focusing on access, experience and retention to make Little League more fun and relevant for a new generation of players and fans.

Kate MacArthur: With other activities competing for kids' time, how can we keep traditional sports relevant for the future?

Nina Johnson-Pitt: We need to make parents understand the value of having their kids participate in Little League. Then, parents are looking for ways to get their kids active and involved at younger ages. Currently, Little League starts for 4-year-olds. We're looking at ways we can offer a program even younger, so 3-year-olds. Is there a program that's engaging, where you have smaller groups of kids where you're teaching them developmentally appropriate skills? We also know from some of our research and data where kids are leaving the program. We've piloted in the last couple of years some ways to speed up and make the game move a little more. For example, you start with the runner on second, so there's always a runner on base, so that keeps players more engaged. Once they do that, they want to come back the next year where they learn more about the actual game.

MacArthur: As a kid, I couldn't play baseball because I was a girl. Now, we're still discussing who can play based on gender. Where would you like to see that go?

Johnson-Pitt: We were wrong in the '70s, and we've been working hard since then to be better. We have a plan with tactical items in place to address the discrepancy. Our goal is by 2032 — so in 10 years — we have equal opportunities for females at all levels of our program. Oftentimes we'll hear about when a league unfortunately told a girl she had to play softball and couldn't play baseball. We have to do a better job of ensuring that volunteers at all levels of our program are trained and well-versed in our vision and values. It's going to start with that, and we intend to benchmark where we are. The next step is to put together an advisory group that is keenly focused on the initiatives that we're embarking on, and that they're holding us accountable to ensure we're doing what we said we were going to do.

MacArthur: How else are you working to build equity?

Johnson-Pitt: Thanks to the support of our partners such as T-Mobile and the T-Mobile Little League Call Up Grant, we can help offset participation fees so parents can apply directly for a grant. But there are other factors than that play into it. So yes, you paid the registration fee, but do you have someone to take you to practice and games? Oftentimes lower income families don't have as flexible schedules, so that makes such a challenge. We can continue to pick out some of these issues, but if the entire youth sports society doesn't change, it's going to be an uphill battle.

MacArthur: How could youth sports improve this?

Johnson-Pitt: The easy answer is they need to be more accessible and less costly, and that would allow us to start to close that income gap. Of course, as parents, we want the best opportunity for our kids. We want to set them on a path where they will succeed. And there's really no regulation in travel sports right now. You'll see a lot of elite and gold diamond, gold platinum teams. Little League is not-for-profit, but oftentimes, travel sports and those tournaments are for-profit. Parents will buy into that because they don't want to get left behind. As long as that keeps happening, as long as that gap where the wealthy kids continue to have better equipment, better playing opportunities, everything is better,

then you have less available for lower-income families. Their opportunities may cease to exist. Oftentimes, when the travel programs take the better players, they also take the coaches. So, we have to continue to provide that supplemental support for families that need it. A lot of leaders in the industry are going to have to put our heads together to figure out the best way to address it.

MacArthur: How do you manage the balance of fun and competition so fun will still be relevant for the future?

Johnson-Pitt: It's still a game and when it's not fun anymore, that's when kids don't want to play. Everything has to start with fun; from there, as kids both physically and mentally develop to get to a point where they can understand competition. That's part of development. But what has happened and where we're failing is we've gotten competitive younger and younger. The most ridiculous travel [league] I've ever seen is 8-year-old coach-pitch travel.

Unfortunately, we as adults have decided that we needed to interject ourselves and make things more competitive sooner than they need to be. It goes back to us leaders in the industry saying we have to have a reset and do what's best for the kids here and not what's best for the adults.

Kate MacArthur is deputy editor of What the Future.

“We were wrong in the '70s, and we've been working hard since then to be better. We have a plan with tactical items in place to address the discrepancy. Our goal is by 2032 — so in 10 years — we have equal opportunities for females at all levels of our program.”

What tabletop games need to win the parents of tomorrow



Jason Schneider

Vice president, product development, Gamewright

Gamewright's jester logo adorns some of the most popular tabletop games of the last 30 years, including *Sleeping Queens* and *Sushi Go!* Gamewright Vice President of Product Development Jason Schneider says digital games lack the sensory experience, like the feel of cards in your hand or the sound of a ripple shuffle. But he also thinks the rise of video games has forced tabletop developers to make better, more engaging games. How long will this symbiotic yet frenemy state hold?

Matt Carmichael: What makes a game popular with kids and parents, and is that changing?

Jason Schneider: The point of a game is to bring people together over some kind of shared experience. A kid may be getting something out of the experience that's wholly different than the parent, but ultimately, it's a sense of engagement.

Carmichael: Is that different in the digital world?

Schneider: You're forced to use your imagination more. The strongest thing about board games and card games is the soft skills you learn, namely eye contact and listening and watching and reacting to the movements that are going on around the table versus watching some minute motions that someone may be making on a joystick or on a tablet.

Carmichael: What's different for kids learning through a physical game vs. a screen-based game?

Schneider: You could learn any educational curriculum through a screen-based game or a physical based game, right? Board games and card games can really excel at the ability to spend time in the same space with other people and learn about some of the social emotional needs of that particular moment. To learn patience, you're waiting to take your turn.

Carmichael: Ipsos data shows that supporting local and small businesses are big, purpose-driven reasons people buy stuff. Do you feel that?

Schneider: The board game industry is growing so fast, it's harder and harder for brands to stand out and matter to the consumer. I compare it to the book industry. There are obviously major publishers, but there are lots of upstarts, and it's easy to get your own book published. But is it title-driven or is it brand-driven? Gamewright was at the right place at the right time. We were able to build this brand up over decades to get a following.

Carmichael: So how do games get discovered?

Schneider: The barrier of entry for making a board game today is pretty much a credit card or Kickstarter campaign. It's not like starting up a car company or a space company, right? You're able to come up with an idea, and there's tons of them out there. How do you, the consumer, curate that down? Your local toy store staff is a great example of someone who can say, "Well, this is what I like." And that's where sometimes brands can come into effect. The Gamewright brand has been around for 30 years. We've built a reputation.

Carmichael: During the pandemic, board games seemed to have a bit of a renaissance. Did you feel that?

Schneider: There was a big tug on nostalgia for games. Whether it was adults being able to slow down and recognize, "I miss playing this game that I played when I was 10 years old, and I'd love to play it with my 10-year-old." Or whether it was just the collective familiarity of the legacy games that have been in people's homes for generations.

Carmichael: Will nostalgia shift to digital as these kids who were raised on video games age?

Schneider: All board game publishers should think that there's an existential threat out there. Our kids are digital natives, and as they become parents what are the traditions they're going to be handing down to their kids? "We all played Minecraft and Roblox," so that's where they're going to go first.

Carmichael: What other impacts do you feel from competition with digital products?

Schneider: Board games have become a lot more interesting because of the digital world. Not because we can compete with them, but because we're competing against them, and we've got to do our best to engage someone who spends the whatever it is, \$20 or \$30 on a physical game.

Carmichael: Is there a way to translate some of your games into a digital world?

Schneider: Just yesterday I was working with some developers porting Sushi Go, one of our best-selling games, to a digital version. It's doable. It's not the same. It was really great that we could play remotely, but I missed holding cards in my hand.

Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.

“Our kids are digital natives, and as they become parents what are the traditions they’re going to be handing down to their kids? ‘We all played Minecraft and Roblox,’ so that’s where they’re going to go first.”

What draws the line between play and competition



Photo by Wyss Institute Harvard

George Church, Ph.D

Geneticist and professor at Harvard University and MIT

When it comes to competition, winning is, by definition, the point. The shift from friendly games to playing to win has motivated innovations in training, equipment and even genetic interventions. George Church is a pioneer in synthetic biology and genomics, the study of a human's complete set of DNA. He helped start the Human Genome Project and played a key role in launching CRISPR gene-editing technology. He also has launched some 50 biotech startups, including one aimed at boosting athletic performance.

Kate MacArthur: How would you describe sports genomics to somebody like my grandmother?

George Church: Just as you can enhance your performance with shoes and golf clubs and racing cars, you can enhance your performance with the food that you eat, the drugs that you take to maintain normal performance, and the drugs you might take that would enhance your performance. Some of those drugs level the playing field, because there are people who are born with performance-enhancing abilities just because of the genetic lottery. We're increasingly getting to the point where if we want to make an even playing field, we can.

MacArthur: How do sports genomics fit into the myriad projects that you are involved in?

Church: [Jonathan Scheiman](#), who started FitBiomics as a postdoc[toral researcher] in my lab looked at athletes at various points in their training to see what microorganisms they had to see if any were



overrepresented in the athletes. He [found some, like Veillonella](#), that turned lactic acid, which is mildly toxic and that comes after long exertion, into propionic acid, which is mildly enhancing. So that becomes a potentially performance-enhancing probiotic.

MacArthur: Where does nutritional performance enhancement fit as a priority for the future?

Church: The future keeps changing. The original marathon was run barefoot. And it wasn't long before people were wearing sandals, which at first seemed like there was not an advantage. But then it became clear it was an advantage. And we developed better javelins and discus, and it basically was a showplace for your technology. Same thing goes for nutrition. For a while you could call it cheating, like when you train at a high altitude so that gives you higher red blood cell counts. To a certain extent, what is cheating and what is in the rules keeps changing. and it's completely up to us.

MacArthur: Are you talking about blood doping?

Church: As an alternative to going to high altitude or being born genetically with a high red blood cell count, you can use things like erythropoietin, which is a natural compound that's absolutely molecularly identical to what's in the body of someone who genetically has high levels of red blood cells. And it's hard to detect because it's natural. Are you considered doping because you were born with it or because you took it? It's hard to enforce, and if you get decades of experience that it's safe and it's fairer to have a simple erythropoietin injection than to go to high altitude or hypobaric chambers or those sort of things that are considered more natural, eventually the rules change.

MacArthur: If everyone can modify tech or methods to boost their performance, where's the fun in that?

Church: There still is the skill that you need to put one foot in front of the other without falling over.

MacArthur: Do you think we'll see gene editing for performance in the future?

Church: There is almost no difference between training in a high altitude, taking erythropoietin as a protein and taking erythropoietin as a gene, because the gene makes the

protein, the high altitude makes the protein, they all end up where you make more red blood cells. But as long as you're regulating it the same way that the FDA regulates drugs in general, and physician ethics has guidelines, it's more to regulate it for safety rather than to regulate it for some arbitrary rule. I think that's where we're headed.

MacArthur: What would you like to see happen in the future of athletic performance enhancement?

Church: It's what will happen, not so much what I want to happen. It is likely that our biotechnologies are getting better exponentially. As we get more comfortable with things like gene therapy, it will spread. A perfect example of how comfortable you are with gene therapy is we barely even accept the notion that the top five vaccines for COVID-19 were gene therapy formulations. That is going to be seen as a big shift towards gene therapy. And by the way, it brought the perceived price down, so that the price of gene therapies were in the range of \$2.5 million dollars a dose for rare diseases. But for common use like pandemics or aging reversal or possibly sports, where billions of people can use it, now it's \$2 a dose. So that's getting to be more affordable than going and training for three months in the Himalayas.

Kate MacArthur is deputy editor of What the Future.

“To a certain extent, what is cheating and what is in the rules keeps changing, and it’s completely up to us.”

Signals

What we're reading today that has us thinking about tomorrow

Dungeons & Dragons is on a roll: D&D Direct went viral, and Hasbro bought D&D Beyond for almost \$150M via [Marketwatch](#). The fantasy role-playing game that's nearly a character on hit Netflix show "Stranger Things" is getting the star treatment.

Pro sports leagues are chasing gen z where it plays via the [New York Times](#). Here's what sports marketers are doing to win back a lost generation and save the future of fandom.

From bad refs to brain-eating amoebas: How climate change is reshaping warm-weather sports via [Grid](#). Roasting temperatures, rising seas and weather extremes are changing outdoor sports for weekend warriors to the pros.

Gene doping: The next 'big issue' in world athletics via [Genetic Literacy Project](#). Some day in the future, gene manipulation for athletes could be as accepted as the latest enhanced running shoes. How much of a problem is that?

'Magic: The Gathering' angers fans with 30th anniversary collectible cards via [WBUR](#). For the 30th anniversary of the trading card game, Hasbro is launching a special edition of the game. But fans and investors are up in arms over the strategy.

The shifting needs of global mobile gamers in 2022 via [Ipsos](#). This report from Ipsos and Google shares how game developers can respond to changes in order to achieve stronger gamer immersion by refocusing on what truly matters to gamers during this time of "new life" adjustment.

Climate change is another worry for prospective parents via [Ipsos](#). This ABC News-Ipsos poll finds that a quarter of American 18- to 45-year-olds have climate change-related doubts about having children.

With children frequently online, many parents implement internet safety measures via [Ipsos](#). This survey from the Child Mind Institute, supported by Morgan Stanley with data collected by Ipsos, finds that according to parents, 21% of children ages 9 to 15 stream videos, and 20% play video games for more than six hours a day.

Show me the money: affluent fans and the economics of sports via [Ipsos](#). Affluent Americans spend over \$20 billion annually on admission fees to sporting event, sports equipment, souvenirs, and other sports related expenses. They account for \$6 out of every \$10 spent on game tickets.

Scanning for signals is a type of research that is foundational to foresight work. These signals were collected by the staff of What the Future and the Ipsos Trends Network.

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GAME CHANGERS

