

media influences young children as well as adults. media violence shows horrible pictures and can make nightmares. computer games show real life scenes of war and fight and murder. children could likely be influenced by such images. more important than the screen pictures are the attitudes of those persons who have strong influence on the child. mother and father not fond of violence and state that openly, then children will probably not tend to be violent in real life situation. problem with tv and computer games is not only explicitly the violence itself but the high exposure of children and teenagers to media in general. very likely children become more and more aggressive if they sit indoors in front of the computer or the tv instead of leaving the house and have a good number of outdoor activities with friends and family. at certain age teenagers have less interest in spending time with their parents and prefer spending time with their peers. spending time with peers more and more come down to playing online games together. violent images occur very often on the internet and television. more important than the easy approach to violence and crime is the upbringing of children. if they learn that violence is not accepted by family friends and society they will learn to differentiate reality from "play"

During the past two decades school shootings, for example at Winnenden, have been the basis of shock and discussion in the German media. Whereas shootings at schools or public places have been known to happen more frequently for example in the United States, the last years lead to assume that these extreme violent acts have increased in number in Germany as well. Since the last shooting at a secondary school in Winnenden voices demanding censorship for violent videogames and movies have become louder.

Violence in media and computer games has been basis of intense discussions for some years. According to the public and, to a certain extent, scientific opinion, the increased number of school shootings and violence among teenagers has been triggered by the exposure of children to violence in the media and computer games. However, researchers contradict each other in their opinion on the influence of violent video games and movies. While some seem to emphasize that children become more aggressive after being exposed to violent images on screen other state that there can be no scientific evidence be found in the relationship between violence on screen and in reality. Even more so, Andrea Martinez at the University of Ottawa underlines that this "lack of consensus about media effects reflect three 'grey areas' or constraints contained in the research itself". (Freedman)

Other scholars epitomize the effect of media on children and teenagers as relevant only if children get the impression that family and friends support violence in real life situations. The lack of rules and the impression that criminal acts and violent behavior lead to acceptance and success could be seen as reasons for the confusion of media and reality. It has to be considered, though, whether just the exposure to violence, fight and death has a bad influence on a child's development or if the tendency to use more and more media in leisure time instead of following outdoor activities, has a general impact on a child's willingness to be aggressive.

In general, the discussion of the influence of violence in the media has been and will be a heatedly discussed topic. Research has not been able to state definite evidence about the impact of violent images on infantile development. However, the exposure of children and teenagers to this amount of media, violent or not, has to be seen as crucial problem when it comes to the development of children's psychology.