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Guidelines for developing games software for children 3-7 years old.

ABSTRACT

This study sets out to provide a set of guidelines for developing software for children aged three to seven years old. The study is intended for the use of software developers in providing a single document to consult on all areas of the development process. It is also intended for the use of parents and educators who want to acquire software for children. The guidelines take into account the educational goals of parents and educators as well as health concerns and cultural and social issues. Game developers will find it useful to have a set of guidelines that sets out these concerns in one document and the intention has been to include all of the goals of these stakeholders.

A provisional set of guidelines was drawn up and a number of academics and industry professionals were then approached for feedback and the guidelines were further developed with this feedback included. The study examines the cognition level of children in this age group, categories of game, game samples, as well as existing guidelines for developers of adult games. Over the course of the study the available literature on children's educational software was studied and further questions that came up as a result were put to the academics and professionals approached for feedback and a conclusion reached on the state of children's educational software today as well as a final set of guidelines.