

# Letters

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The Guardian, Wednesday 22 October 2003

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## **Sitting ducks**

Although the two major causes of child obesity - poor diet and physical inertia - were noted by Anna Coote (Think tank, October 15), it is worth pointing out that physical inertia may be due to the sedentary nature of childhood pursuits such as watching television, surfing the internet and playing computer games.

It appears that "screenagers" are particularly susceptible to obesity. Research in Japan and France has found that obesity in children is correlated with long periods of playing video games.

In Britain, research has shown an inverse relationship between physical activity and playing video games - but only in schoolgirls. Childhood obesity is an important issue

and all contributory factors should be examined more thoroughly.

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