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Bringing You A "Library 2.0" Perspective, by Michael Casey

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Gaming Night: Not What You're Thinking

Gaming. The name alone conjures images of excited teens huddled around overheated Xbox consoles. Librarians for some time now have been trying to get these teens into the library in the hope that those same teens may return on other occasions to use our other services. But teens and gaming are controversial subjects in some quarters of librarianship (hopefully those numbers are declining), and the idea of setting aside time and money for such events is often a difficult sell for the forward thinking librarian.

On my flight from Atlanta to Washington for CIL2006 I came across an article in the March/April edition of MIT's [Technology Review](#) titled ***Brain Trainer: How to conquer cognitive decline, one game at a time***. The article, written by Emily Singer, looks at the work of Michael Merzenich, a neuroscientist and cofounder of Posit Science.

Merzenich created a software program that attempts to slow the rate of cognitive decline in seniors through computer-based games. Initial results are encouraging and Merzenich hopes to begin testing the software on middle-aged victims of Alzheimers.

Now imagine going to your library decision makers and saying that you want to have regular gaming days – dedicated times where a select group of individuals can come into the library and use our computers to play games. But this time you're not going to say "teens". This time the gaming is for your older customers, and the payoff is far more than simple pleasure. This time your goal is cognitive skill enhancement.

Suddenly, gaming takes on an all new meaning.

[Library 2.0](#)

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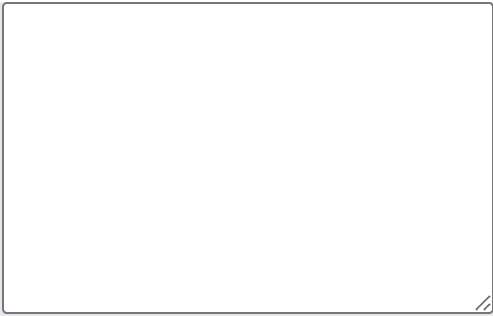
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