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Implicit learning as a design strategy for learning games: *Alert Hockey*

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Abstract

Concussion education and prevention for youth hockey players has been an issue of recent concern amongst sport medicine practitioners and hockey's administrative bodies. This article details the assessment of a sports-action hockey video game that aims to reduce the aggressive and negligent behaviours that can lead to concussions. The game, termed *Alert Hockey*, was designed to modify game playing behaviour by embedding an implicit teaching mechanism within the gameplay. In *Alert Hockey*, participants were expected to learn by simply playing to win, in contrast to playing to learn. We studied learning in an experimental simulated environment where the possibility to win the game was exaggerated as a consequence of desirable safety behaviours (positive learning group) and effectively reduced as a consequence of undesirable (negative learning group) behaviour. The positive learning group significantly improved their mean score on a composite behavioural indicator compared with no

significant change amongst control group participants. The results demonstrate that implicit learning embedded in a sports-action game can lead to changes in game-play behaviour.



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Keywords

Implicit learning; Computer games; Brain concussion

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