What?
Exergames refer to video games that encourage physical activity. The ever-expanding variety of exergames now range from baseball and bowling to mixed martial arts and yoga.

Why?
- Exergames are fun!
- Exergames increase physical activity in children and adolescents.
- Exergames encourage kids who might otherwise shy away from playing traditional sports to get involved in a physical activity.
- Exergames provide ways for kids to be active when going outside is not an option.

The Research
A growing body of research demonstrates that interactive videogames can equal or exceed the calorie-burning and cardiovascular benefits of regular exercise. In one recent study published in Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, researchers at Brigham Young University determined that active sports and dance games boosted energy expenditure as much or more as walking on a treadmill at 3 miles per hour.

Not only do modern video games help to burn calories, but researchers believe video games can also be used to enhance cognitive thinking. In fact, playing a physical activity or game boosts brain cells. Results show kids are more focused on tests after performing physical activities.

Exergames in 4-H
Did you know that the 4-H club on an L.A. Air Force base is currently using Exergames to teach healthy lifestyle choices and, engage program participants in physical activity? This program serves anywhere from 20-40 students at a time. Exergames can easily be incorporated in 4-H club meetings, afterschool programs, project meetings, conferences and events. Choose games like Just Dance or ExerBeat, which do not require using actual controls for participation. 4-H members love being active together!

Want to Know More?
Summaries of research, stories of successful Exergame programs, video game reviews, and much more can be found at www.exergamesunlocked.com.