

Engaged Citizenship | EMPATHY

THE WALKING DEAD: PARENT IMPACT GUIDE

Ages 14+ | 1+ Hours

“All we do is think about how a person is going to experience a moment any second of a game, but I don’t actually think about people playing it.”

-- Sean Vanaman, Walking Dead episode writer, *The Walking Dead*


ABOUT THE WALKING DEAD

The Walking Dead puts the player in the shoes of Lee Everett, a man recently arrested for murder. Lee's life is turned upside down when he gets in a car crash and discovers that dead people have started to come alive. With the world entering a zombie apocalypse, Lee must do what he can to survive. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/LHH6v9>

THEME FOR THIS GUIDE: Empathy

In *The Walking Dead*, the player is thrust into the world of Lee Everett, a man accused of murdering his wife's lover. On the way to the station, the police car Lee is in is forced off the side of the road only to crash into a ditch. Lee wakes up to find the officer dead and now he must find help. Though the game's story takes place in a zombie apocalypse, the game's main focus is empathy, which is the ability to not only understand the feelings of another but to also feel with them on a deeper level. With this game's character development, the player can immerse themselves in the emotions and hard decisions that Lee Everett must make in order to survive. Who you empathize with is up to you, and the characters will remember it forever.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	Challenge your child to play <i>The Walking Dead</i> and think about how the game allows you to practice the emotional skill of empathy. How does empathy apply to our daily lives? What exactly makes up empathy, and why is it important to empathize with others? What kinds of outcomes does having empathy provide? Use this guide and the Player Impact Guide to become familiar with <i>The Walking Dead</i> .
DISCUSS THE GAME	<p>... <i>the gameplay</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which characters do you relate to or care about more than the others. Why? [+1] • Lee is in an extreme situation at the start of the game, that didn’t paint him in a good light. Did you become more empathetic to him as time progressed? [+2] • What did you learn about other characters? Did what you learned affect the intense decisions you had to make? [+3] <p>... <i>the game’s impact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn about empathy? What is empathy to you? [+1] • Is it easier to connect with some people over others and why? [+2] • Was it hard to make empathetic decisions towards characters you did not understand? Why is it important to practice this emotional skill? [+3]
INTERACT WITH THE GAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your child pick two game achievements and describe how they were earned and what they mean. [+1] • Have your child setup two challenges, and watch as they complete them. [+2] • Play the game yourself, and complete the "Game Basics" section of the player Impact Guide. [+2] • Solve one challenge that your child sets up for you to complete with their help. [+2]
SHARE THE GAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post a positive reflection on the CGI Facebook page: http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact [+2] • Engage in conversations with other parents about your experience using the guide and playing the game. [+2] • Host a “Game Slam” event, using these and other challenge questions you create. [+3]

Family Challenge: Play *The Walking Dead* with your child. Try to get through an episode together and afterwards make a video about which characters you empathized with the most with and why. Post it to YouTube, and share the link on the Center for Games & Impact Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact>.