

# The Interest of Adolescents with Autism in Future Careers using Technology

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**Background:** In the US, individuals with autism have some of the poorest post-school outcomes of any disability category, with roughly half remaining unemployed six years after leaving school, according to the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2). Finding opportunities to match their skills and interests to sustainable employment is a priority. It has been reported that technology use is a preferred discretionary activity for a majority of adolescents with autism (Kuo et al., 2013; Mazurek et al., 2012). For most young people, their interests often lead to future careers.



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## RQs

- What interest do adolescents with autism have in future technology-related careers?
- Specifically, which technology areas would they like to pursue in higher education?

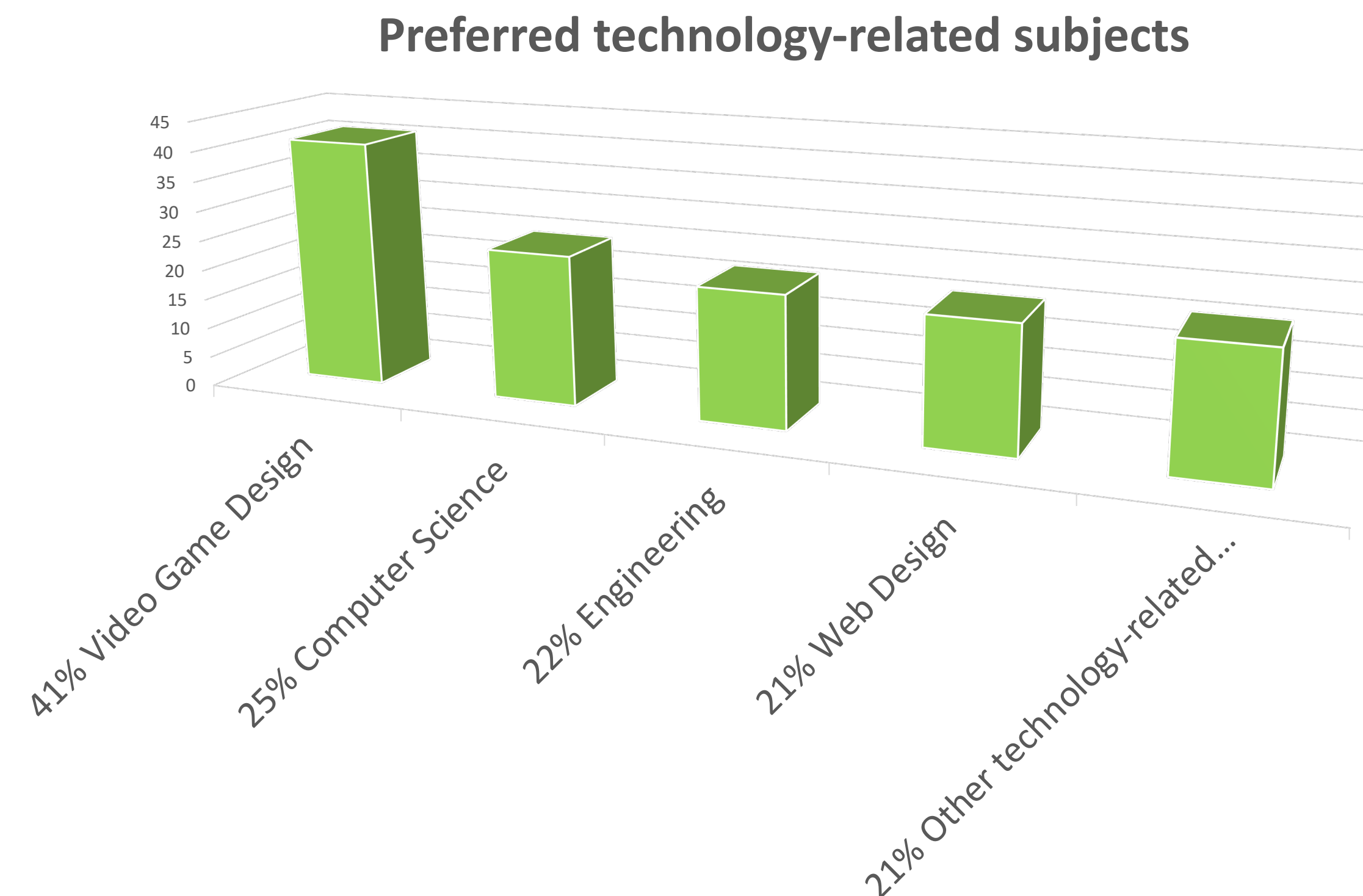
**Method:** A paper survey, using self report from 350 high school students with autism in 30 high schools spread across 3 states in the US. These questions were part of a larger study regarding technology use by high school students on the spectrum.

Demographics n=350	
Male	87%
Age	Mean 16.8/SD 1.4 Range 14-22
White	72%
IQ > 70	93%

## Future Careers

74% would like to have a job using technology

66% would like to study a technology-related subject at the university level



## Examples of other technology-related subjects

- Animation
- Digital art
- Film editing
- Music engineer
- Electrical design
- Cybersecurity
- Building computers
- 3D modeling
- Robotic engineering
- Astronomy
- Meteorology

**Conclusions:** As careers involving technology skills are in high demand, such occupations hold promise for improving the adult outcomes for students with autism.

Practitioners may want to support student interest in technology early during middle and high school to help further their realization of technology-related careers.

Researchers may want to examine the experiences of individuals with autism in technology-related careers.