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Getting Smart Releases Report Showing Connection Between Social and Emotional Learning and Minecraft

Study finds gaming can improve student SEL outcomes when supported by educators.

June 23, 2017 - A new report, [*How Minecraft Supports Social and Emotional Learning in K-12 Education*](#), published by Getting Smart investigates the connection between classroom use of *Minecraft* and the social and emotional learning (SEL) outcomes of K-12 students. Through interviews, a global survey and several case studies, the report provides an overview of SEL, insights on gaming in education and advice from educators on supporting a SEL program within a school.

Based on the responses gathered from a diverse group of educators representing 11 countries across four continents, the report is a deeper dive into the ways educators are incorporating gaming into their lessons via [*Minecraft: Education Edition*](#) to support their students' SEL growth. Survey findings include:

- Nearly all teachers surveyed (**97.7%**) cited “**problem solving**” as the top SEL **skill** that their students learn from classroom *Minecraft* lessons and extracurricular participation in the game. Other top skills cultivated include **creativity (95.5%)**, **critical thinking (93.3%)** and **collaboration (91.1%)**.
- The majority of teachers also felt that their students' **decision-making (88.8%)** and **communication (86.6%) abilities** were positively impacted by the time they spent playing *Minecraft*, whether working in small groups or individually.
- Just over half (**51.1%**) believe that *Minecraft* also enables students to build **empathy skills**. (This could be due to interactions with classmates, as well as with characters within the game.)

The report features interviews with Dr. Michelle Zimmerman, [Renton Prep Christian School](#); Rody Boonchouy, [Buck Institute for Education](#); and Jeff Gearhart, [Brinnon School District](#). It also includes several school case studies providing an inside view of how gaming is supporting student SEL outcomes at [Renton Prep Christian School](#),

[International School](#) in the Bellevue School District and [Bryant Montessori](#) from Tacoma Public Schools.

“It is clear from our research that Minecraft creates opportunities for transformational learning experiences,” says Caroline Vander Ark, Getting Smart COO. “However, we also found that the most critical component to connecting gaming and student SEL outcomes is the teacher. The educators we visited and spoke with were transparent about learning objectives, promoted student agency and independence and acted as learning guides.”

The Minecraft Education Team has a variety of workshops on site at ISTE 2017 June 25-28 in San Antonio if you want to learn more. If you're #NotAtISTE this year, there will be live streaming content for educators around the globe. Visit this site to learn more: <https://education.minecraft.net/events/iste>.

To learn more, download the report, [*How Minecraft Supports Social and Emotional Learning in K–12 Education*](#).

About Getting Smart

As a mission-driven organization [Getting Smart®](#) is passionate about accelerating and amplifying innovations in teaching and learning. Getting Smart Services designs customized partnerships to amplify and extend the work of those dedicated to impacting the way the world learns. Through our advocacy, advisory and coaching services, we work with impact-oriented partners to invent the future of learning. Our innovations in learning blog, [GettingSmart.com](#) is a community of learners and contributors that cover important events, trends, products and publications across K-12, early, post-secondary education and lifelong learning opportunities.