

Game Design Studio

Video Transcript

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Susan Rivers, Executive Director, iThrive Games: There's a growing body of scientific evidence that the social and emotional skills that our young children and our teens have are critical for life success, for thriving as adults.

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Gabrielle Rappolt-Schlichtmann, Executive Director, EdTogether: We know that emotion is *the* driver in learning and in life. It's the thing on which we base all of our relationships, how we orient to the world.

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Susan Rivers: We wanted to create an opportunity for teens to develop their social and emotional skills in a fun and meaningful way, and also tap into some other critical skills that are useful for them to develop, like STEM skills.

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Gabrielle Rappolt-Schlichtmann: In Game Design Studio, we're really working to fully engage teens in playing games, analyzing games, and making games.

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Susan Rivers: One of the challenges with all of the amazing STEM programming that's happening is it goes right to the computer programming without really thinking about or having empathy for the player of the game. In Game Design Studio, we are working with teens to develop empathy for their players, take the perspective of the player of the game, and evaluate what are the emotions that the game is creating in the player.

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Gabrielle Rappolt-Schlichtmann: So we had students engage in playing well-known games like Sorry!, explore their own feeling states, and then think about the game mechanics—the way the game was designed—and then think about how they might change those mechanics to change the player feeling experience. And then they did that.



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Nahkira, teen participant: I put what I thought, how I felt, into the game, and I knew that players would feel the same way I felt since I designed the game.

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Alex, teen participant: Game Design's definitely given me confidence in what I think I can do, but it also helped me think about how I could build off of other people's ideas in order to reach one progressive goal.

[02:06]

Donata Martin, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club: This program has really helped them to be able to talk about who they are, express themselves. And being able to do that will only help them in life.

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Jon Blodgett, Teen Center Director, Boys & Girls Club: Other teens are asking about Game Design, that means their peers are telling them positive things. So, through word of mouth, the program is cool because they say it's cool.

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Alex: There's a lot of things that are just incredible about it. Game Design helped me to understand myself more and how I felt, and how I thought my friends would feel and if we could work together to find a solution to the games.

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Susan Rivers: What we want to do is take the voices that we're hearing and the experiences that we're learning about and amplify those voices and those experiences into the games that we're creating, thereby making those games available to thousands and thousands of more teens across the nation and maybe even across the globe.

