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**VIDEO GAME DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT**

techJOYnT Offers Video Game Design & Development Classes

 techJOYnT’s business handle is the promotion of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) curriculum to children, with the overarching goal of technology and engineering receiving more coverage in grades K-12. To meet these ends, techJOYnT offers classes and camps in subjects such as robotics, iPhone app development, digital arts and video game development. In particular, the Video Game Design & Development course aims to get children in middle school and elementary school to use creativity and innovation.

Students use the GameMaker v8.1 program to have fun creating their own simple video games using a drag-and-drop user interface. Though it is difficult to place a purpose at face value, the path to America’s much-needed technological innovation can lay its foundations on video games. Ninety-one percent of children ages 2-17 were reported to play video games according to a 2011 survey by the NPD (National Purchase Diary) Group, and the numbers are increasing all the time.

 “I just got into graphic design, and I hope to eventually make my own role-playing games,” 13-year-old Alex Ferguson said, while testing a video game he created. “It’s really fun,

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and I love the classes.” The game, made as a class tutorial example, is a simple shooter titled, “Evil Clutches.” The player attempts to shoot bad guys and save babies to achieve the highest score possible. After learning to make and edit aspects of the game, students are rewarded with a competition, in which they are given 15 minutes to get the highest score.

 “We get to make four games: one every day.” said 8-year-old Rafah Shaik, a former student and daughter of techJOYnT founder, Ray Shaik. “At the end we get to compete for prizes, and candy.”

 “If you can make a game, it will boost your confidence because it’s a skill not many people my age have,” said 12-year-old Lester Escalante. “Then you can move on to more complicated games, and eventually you’ll be able to do anything, even outside of games.”

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