

FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS

THE REAL GAME PILOT PROJECT

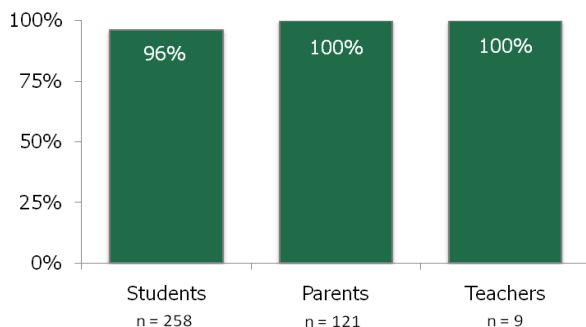
The Real Game is a computer-based program that was piloted in 13 classrooms at 10 elementary schools within the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board from March to May 2010.

The goal for utilizing The Real Game program for grade 7 and 8 students was to help them see the value in their academic studies by making connections to how it is important to their future. The program focuses less on the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" and puts more focus on planning and identifying personal strengths to help students achieve their dreams.

The Real Game is a cross-curricular program targeted at grade 7 and 8 students, organized into 5 units with 18 core activities, each with detailed lesson plans, clear learning objectives, and performance indicators.

To evaluate whether the program had positive effects on intermediate level students, feedback was obtained from 261 students and 9 teachers with an online questionnaire and 121 parents through a take home questionnaire. Positive results were reported with all three groups indicating great value in having this program as part of the curriculum. With such positive results seen with this initial project it is hoped that teachers from all elementary schools will want to participate in the upcoming school year.

TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS AGREE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR STUDENTS IN GRADE 7 & 8 TO BEGIN TO LEARN ABOUT FUTURE CAREERS AND THE WORLD OF WORK AS PART OF THEIR SCHOOL CURRICULUM!



"I'll reach for the higher stars now, since I know that I can." - SMCDSB Student on what they might now do differently because they've played The Real Game



Real Game players visit the future and return to the present with a much better appreciation for who they are and how they can realize their dreams. Students get to choose and act out adult occupations and adopt related lifestyles. During the game experience, players purchase homes and cars, create their own business cards, settle into neighborhoods and communities, budget money and time, juggle work, home and leisure responsibilities, plan business travel and vacations, deal with moral and ethical dilemmas and much more, always linking adult realities to their school subjects.

OBJECTIVES

- Learn about adult life roles in the context of students' own career and educational planning
- Helping students see the connections between school and their future life/work roles

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

1. READING
2. DOCUMENT USE
3. NUMERACY
4. WRITING
5. ORAL COMMUNICATION
6. WORKING WITH OTHERS
7. CONTINUOUS LEARNING
8. THINKING SKILLS
9. COMPUTER USE

"We feel that if there are any opportunities for real life experiences to be associated with school, children will be encouraged to stay in school and pursue further education and career choices. Great idea!" - Parent of SMCDSB Student

"...I felt, after playing the Real Game that I am going to need to get good grades and a good education so that I can become successful in everything that I do!" - SMCDSB Student

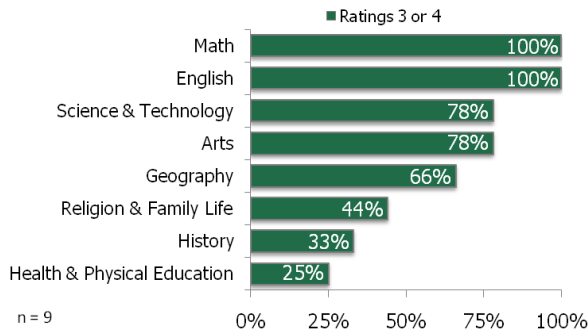
THE REAL GAME IS CROSS-CURRICULAR

HIGHLIGHTS

- All teachers were able to make curriculum connections to both Math and English
- 7 out of 9 teachers were able to make connections to Science & Technology and the Arts

"...they loved it! This was very cross-curricular." - SMCDSB Teacher

By having your students play The Real Game, how easily were you able to make curriculum connections to the following subjects?



"There are many connections to other subjects. It would be easy to take information for other subjects. One would have to be very organized to ensure they are meeting each curricular need during the appropriate time." - SMCDSB Teacher

TEACHER TRAINING AND PREPARATION

HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 out of 9 teachers found that it was easy to facilitate The Real Game with the training they received
- 8 out of 9 teachers found that the amount of prep time required for them to get their class in The Real Game reasonable
- 7 out of 9 teachers indicated that they would require about the same or less prep time to involve their class in playing The Real Game in the future

ALL TEACHERS SURVEYED SAID THAT THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THE REAL GAME TO OTHER GRADE 7 & 8 TEACHERS!

"The Real Game helped my students understand that their parents do not have an endless amount of money. They realized that the jobs they would of liked to have required an education"

- SMCDSB Teacher

"I think the game can be a real eye-opener for the intermediates. Many found their wish list and what they can afford very interesting. They also enjoyed finding out about all the careers the other students had... This is the first year for the on line game, each year I think my program will be better and I will be able to add more and more. I think this is a good experience for the intermediates. They are more aware of the different pathways [and] the importance of each"

- SMCDSB Teacher

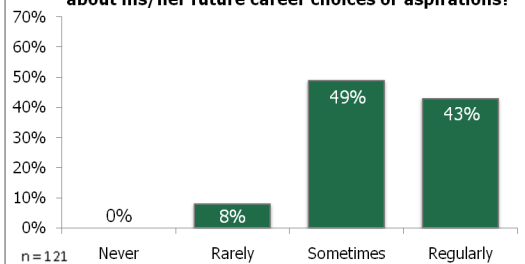
ACCORDING TO PARENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

- Most students (89%) mentioned playing the Real Game to their parents at least once
- Just over half (54%) of parents said that their child mentioned playing the Real Game a number of times to regularly
- 93% of parents surveyed indicated that they sometimes to regularly speak to their child about the work that they are doing outside of the home
- 92% of parents surveyed indicated that they sometimes to regularly have discussions with their child about their future career choices or aspirations

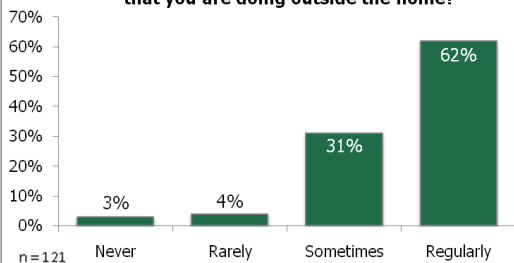
" This activity opens an avenue for dialogue about future endeavors... Feelings of fear [and] anxiety about all the responsibilities of the adult world arose as well and calmed by communication." - Parent of SMCDSB Student

How often do you have discussions with your child about his/her future career choices or aspirations?



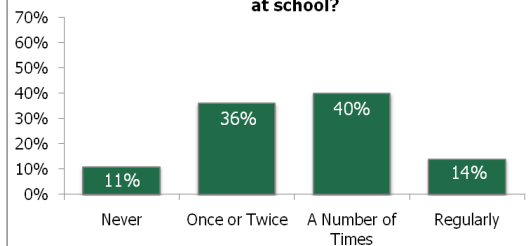
" Interesting discussions at home as a result..." - Parent of SMCDSB Student

How often do you talk with your child about work that you are doing outside the home?



" The Real Game was a great hit at our house! It was a great eye opener for my 12 year old." - Parent of SMCDSB Student

Over the past few weeks, how often did your child speak to you about playing The Real Game at school?



STUDENT/TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

HIGHLIGHTS

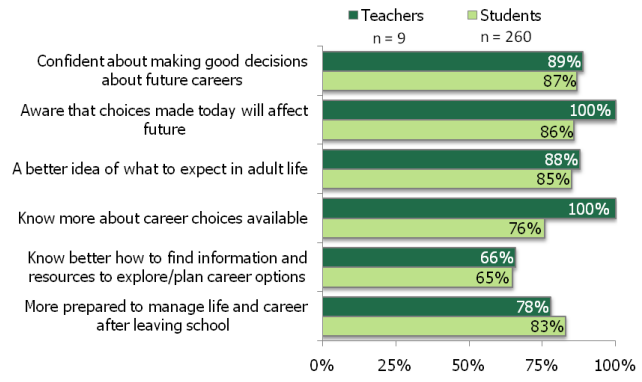
STUDENTS

- Most students (87%) agreed that they feel more confident that they can make good decisions about their future career
- 86% agreed that they see more clearly how the choices that they make today can affect their future
- 85% of students agreed that they had a better idea of what to expect in adult life

TEACHERS

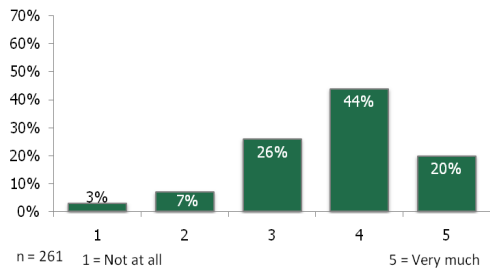
- All teachers agreed that their students were more aware that choices they make today will affect them in the future and that they know more about career options available to them
- 8 out of 9 teachers agreed that their students were more confident that they can make good decisions about their future careers
- 8 out of 9 teachers agreed that their students have a better idea of what to expect in adult life

Since I played The Real Game.../Since my students played The Real Game... (Rating 3 or 4)



ENJOYMENT AND ENTHUSIASM FOR THE REAL GAME

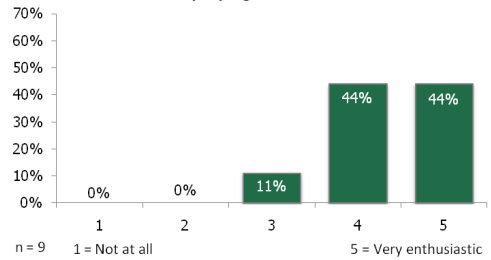
How much did you enjoy playing The Real Game?



← 90% of Students indicated that they enjoyed playing The Real Game

9 out of 9 teachers indicated that their students were enthusiastic about playing the Real Game →

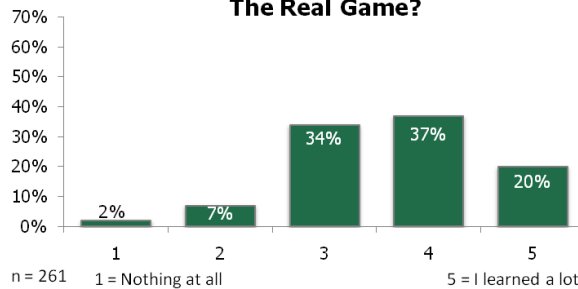
How enthusiastic would you say your students were about playing The Real Game?



LEARN ABOUT SKILLS AND ATTITUDES PLAYING THE REAL GAME

"...you need to pay attention in school, and try your hardest to get the best marks because then you'll get a better job...I also learned that it's stressful for my parents to be paying bills, buying food, clothes. So now I'm more appreciative" - SMCDSB Student

How much would you say you learned about skills and attitudes from playing The Real Game?



"The Real Game taught me that if you want things then your gonna have to work hard for it. And to have things you want you will need to have a good job. To have a good job you need to be smart in the subjects it relates to" - SMCDSB Student

"I learned to respect your job no matter what" - SMCDSB Student

ALMOST ALL STUDENTS (91%) SURVEYED AGREED THAT THEY LEARNED ABOUT SKILLS AND ATTITUDES FROM PLAYING THE REAL GAME

"Try harder in life an still take my time to smell the roses" - SMCDSB Student

"...there is lots of things that I would like to experience now that I know that anything is possible and I completely thank The Real Game" - SMCDSB Student

"The Real Game makes you want to do better in school because if you don't it really affects your future and the type of job you get" - SMCDSB Student

STUDENTS COMMENT ON THE REAL GAME

THINKING ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES YOU PLAYED IN THE REAL GAME, WHICH ACTIVITIES DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST?

"I enjoyed creating my wish list and learning how expensive things can be. I also enjoyed hitting bumps along the road because it shows how hard it can be to be an adult!"

"I enjoyed learning about other jobs and occupations that others experience in real life. It was interesting to know that someone is actually living that kind of life."

"I enjoyed making my wish list because I learned that life isn't cheap and what you want and what you can actually afford are two different things."

"I enjoyed budgeting because it showed me how much my life was going to cost."

WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU LEARNED FROM PLAYING THE REAL GAME?

"A good pay is good but you need to like the job not just for the money."

"...if I want a good job then I have to do good in school"

"Not to give up on your dreams..."

"That you can't afford everything you want and that your parents pay a lot to hold their family together."

"...even without the best job, you can still finance well so that you can live a good life."

"...when you become an adult you don't have much time for fun, but when you do you should enjoy it."

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU MIGHT NOW DO DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE YOU'VE PLAYED THE REAL GAME?

"...strive to do my best in everything just to make sure that I don't close any doors for the future."

"...be more involved in social activities in high school because they look for those on applications for jobs."

"I will try to develop good people skills."

"Research about career choices."

"Take the right classes in high school instead of just the easy A's."

"I will try really hard in school and make sure that I go to college or university."

"Yes, care more about my future."

OVER HALF (62%) OF THE STUDENTS AGREED THAT PLAYING THE REAL GAME MADE THEM THINK ABOUT TRYING HARDER IN SCHOOL...HERE'S WHY

"It made me realize that trying hard in school and working hard you can get to where you want to go in life."

"...I know that how I do in school now will affect how good of a job I will be able to have in the future and if I don't do well, it will close up many career paths that I could have chosen if I did well."

"...the more education you get the better job you get but it isn't important if you go to university, college, or trade school."

"Because when I'm older and I want to get a job my education will follow me everywhere I go."

MOST STUDENTS (84%) SURVEYED SAID THAT THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THE REAL GAME TO OTHER STUDENTS THEIR AGE!

PARENTS COMMENT ON THE REAL GAME

"This game is very good for the kids because it's helping them to think about their future, you should continue having this game."

"The Real Game in my opinion is very beneficial for children because it prepares them for the future as well as the real world. It helps determine how much goes into being an adult and living on their own and how jobs help them fulfill their basic and essential needs. It also helps to teach them how to properly budget their money."

"I want my daughter to be excited about growing up and using her gifts & hopefully not be overwhelmed with the financial responsibilities. I hope she is passionate about the life God has for her."

"I think that it is good for students to have an appreciation of the many expenses involved in day to day life. Also to see a wide variety of career choices, life style choices"

"We think it was an amazing and valuable exercise."

WANT TO GET YOUR CLASS INVOLVED?

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