



Global Kids®

Online Leadership Program



Overview

Global Kids, Inc. is a nationally recognized leader in using digital media to promote global awareness and youth civic engagement. Global Kids' Online Leadership Program (OLP) integrates a youth development approach and international and public policy issues into youth media programs that build digital literacy, foster substantive online dialogues, develop resources for educators, and promote civic participation.

Since it was launched in 2000, the OLP has built strong collaborative relationships with Microsoft, PBS's *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, the game-design company Gamelab, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, UNICEF, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Time Warner, the Surdna Foundation, Google Grants, the Center for Children and Technology, Youth Venture, the Microsoft Corporation, and Linden Labs, among others.

Global Kids has presented the work of the OLP to the United Nations; WNET-Thirteen; the Spencer and MacArthur foundations; the National Education and Computing Conference; the Game Developers Conference; the Games For Change Conference; the Serious Games Conference; The University of Wisconsin's Games Learning & Society Conference; MIT; the Microsoft World Wide School of the Future Summit; the Margaret Meade Film Festival; U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Parsons School of Design; among others.

Currently, the OLP is accomplishing its goals through initiatives within four areas:

Virtual Worlds: After extensive research, in 2006 Global Kids became the first organization to conduct public programs within the virtual world of Teen Second Life. Since then, GK has become a world leader in leveraging virtual worlds for education, working with such partners as the MacArthur Foundation, UNICEF, the International Criminal Court, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. In person and online, teens use Second Life to address issues like child soldiers and medical racism by making animated movies, building games, creating social enterprises, and participating in interactive workshops. In addition, GK is part of the MacArthur Foundation's year-long explorations of philanthropy in virtual worlds which, among other things, has included coordination of public events, live video streaming, the introduction of content from MacArthur program areas into Teen Second Life, and the creation of best practice reports.

Digital Media Initiative (DMI): Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the DMI is a series of interrelated programs designed to encourage and support teenagers to think critically about the role of digital media in their lives, promote their constructive use of new media forms, and document their experiences. Within the program, Global Kids uses online dialogues, virtual worlds, machinima, essay contests, podcasts, blogs, and other venues to gather valuable feedback and views from young people about their relationship with emerging media. These youth voices are being used by the MacArthur Foundation to inform its new Digital Media and Learning Initiative.

Gaming: Global Kids is a pioneer in the field of socially conscious online games. Through the Microsoft-funded Playing 4 Keeps program, young people in Brooklyn gain the skills necessary to build challenging online games about world issues. Working with professional game designers, they developed *Ayiti: The Cost of Life* (theCostofLife.org), which has educated more than 1,000,000 players about the obstacles to education faced by children in developing countries and *CONSENT!* about medical racism in U.S. prisons. In addition, Global Kids played a founding role in Games For Change, which brings together non-profits and their partners to explore the use of digital games to advance organizational mission and societal change.

Dialogues: Global Kids' online dialogues use the unique Youth Circles approach to create an intimate, respectful space for substantive conversations among young people. Our Newz Crew program (NewzCrew.org), which combined GK's methodology at Canarsie High School, Brooklyn with the award winning content of PBS's *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, has been highly evaluated and engaged over ten thousand youth worldwide in discussions about current events. GK has also used this approach in youth-focused dialogues following the September 11th attacks, and in collaborative projects with the New York City Council and the Motorola Corporation. In 2007, Global Kids launched a Youth Circle through which young people exchanged their opinions and stories about the role of digital media in their lives.

Social Networks: Global Kids' International Justice Center in Second Life provides a hub for raising awareness and increasing engagement around the International Criminal Court and its activities. A new partnership with TakingITglobal and the Asia Society is creating a web site for international teens passionate about consuming, creating and thinking critically about digital media

About Global Kids, Inc.

Founded in 1989, Global Kids' mission is to transform urban youth into successful students and global and community leaders by engaging them in socially dynamic, content-rich learning experiences. Through leadership development and academic enrichment, Global Kids' New York City-based programs use interactive and experiential methods to educate youth about critical international and public policy issues and provide them with opportunities for civic and global engagement. Global Kids reaches over 17,000 youth and educators in person and millions online annually. Each year, more than 85% of the youth in Global Kids' leadership programs graduate from high school and attend college.

For more on the Online Leadership Program, please visit olp.globalkids.org or contact Global Kids at 212-226-0130 or info@globalkids.org.