

STREETS OF MY TOWN

A GAME THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO THE HELP THEY NEED.

Melbourne, 9th of September 2021 - The Institute of Games is proud to announce the publication of **Streets of My Town**; a social impact game that introduces local support services and connects people to them when needed.

Streets of My Town is receiving much acclaim from prominent game industry bodies. It is a finalist in the **Australian Game Developer's Awards**, featured as a selected exhibit at the **Tokyo Game Show** and featured at the upcoming **Games for Change APAC Festival**.

Since developing a pilot project for the City of Monash, The Institute of Games is now developing two new versions. One for the **South Sudanese** community living in Melbourne (in collaboration with the Centre for Multicultural Youth), and one for **indigenous** people living in Dandenong (in collaboration with Bunurong Health Service).

The problem Streets of My Town addresses

When people need help, they often don't know where to find it. Charities and not-for-profits don't usually have large marketing budgets to raise this awareness. And when people do know about these services, they still hesitate to reach out. There's a stigma associated with seeking help and people may fear being judged.

Streets of My Town aims to educate people about the services that are available in their local area. It allows players to experience what happens when you reach out for help, so you know what to expect when you reach out in real life.

Steven Dupon, Founder of the Institute of Games said: 'In times of COVID, it's extra difficult to connect to support services due to restrictions and lockdowns. Streets of My Town offers an alternative way of learning about supports. This is especially pertinent to young people given their familiarity with gaming environments.'

Ultimately Streets of My Town aims to break down the barriers of seeking help. If we can connect people to support before things get bad, the outcomes are much better for them.

About Streets of My Town gameplay

'Streets of my Town' is a quest driven adventure game about friendship and helping out. With custom-made art and narratives to suit your local town it creates an immersive experience which connects young people to real-world services in their town.

You're running late for school, meeting friends, dealing with parents and gradually all stories unfold. Everyone has their own challenges and sometimes friends need a helping hand.

Explore hand-painted, quintessentially Aussie streets full of surprises. Meet 20+ quirky locals and connect your friends to the right services. Can you help all your friends in time for the pool party? Rumour has it that Dylan J, Australia's famous hip-hop artist, will be performing his hit single...

- End of release -

About the Institute of Games

The Institute of Games is a social enterprise based in Melbourne, Australia that works to keep children safe and healthy whilst playing video games. We raise awareness about the risks of gaming, promote the positives of gaming and use game design to achieve positive impact in the world.

The Institute of Games achieves this by

- Studying the impacts, positive and negative, of gaming.
- Sharing our learnings by creating resources and delivering training and workshops.
- Creating products and programs that have a positive impact.

The goal is to educate children so they can recognize the risks of gaming and teach them ways to mitigate or avoid these risks. This will empower them to make safe decisions online.

About Steven Dupon

Steven Dupon is the Founding Director of the Institute of Games and Designer / Producer of the acclaimed social impact game Streets of My Town.

He has over 20 years of experience working with children and young people, most recently as the National Youth Empowerment Coordinator at YMCA Australia, one of the largest not-for profit organisations that focus on empowering young people to turn their inspiration into positive impact.

Steven has created many positive parenting strategies using the benefits of gaming whilst dealing with the risks of gaming. He authored The Parent's Guide to Gaming, The Parent's Workbook for Dealing with Gaming Issues and The Video Games Report. Steven also created resource packs for parents and professionals, available from www.videogames.org.au. His resources have been used by more than 500,000 people.

Steven has contributed to many media stories and enjoyed appearances on ABC, Ten news, Nine News, The Age, The Herald Sun, The Wire and more. He is a regular presenter at conferences. Some notable keynote presentations include National Conference against Bullying, Gambling Harm Conference 2018, World Urban Network and the New Zealand Youth Hui. His Workshops and Parent Seminars have been attended by over 20,000 parents.

Steven's work won the READYS award for innovation and excellence in the delivery of Youth Services in Victoria.

More information can be found on:

<https://streetsofmytown.com>

<https://instituteofgames.com>

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