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Project Ideas

I am interested in creating tools that enable kids to better understand their relationship with their social and physical environment.

Kids as social scientists

Cell Phones as a tool for Kids as Social Scientists

It would be interesting to do for Social Sciences what Logo did for Math and exact sciences. There are a couple of important ideas that a lot of us have trouble internalizing, such as the fact that others think very differently than we do, or things such as "correlation does not imply causation."

The idea is creating a system that would allow kids create surveys and distribute them in their social network. The system would provide visualization of the results of the survey that would allow kids to make conclusions on the data with the help from a facilitator.

Lis Sylvan and I have started to work on this using SMS messaging as the delivery platform for the surveys.

Nutrition Tracker

A tool to enable kids to understand the relationship between their physical activity and what they eat. Not only focusing on calorie intake but also on the nutritional value of their meals and how those nutrients help them stay healthy and perform better at what they like to do.

The idea is that since people carry their cell phone all day, it is the best tool to track activties and eating patterns. Then using a web site to visualize their behavior to encourage change.

Geotagging

I have been thinking of a system that allows kids to add meaningful digital information (tags) to locations in their neighborhood. Kids could compare their personalized maps to those from their peers and from formal topics such as a map of historical events. This could also be a platform to support community activities and a relationship between themselves, others and history.

Technically speaking this system would allow kids to create the tags using their cell phones. The generation of maps would be using the Google Maps API.

Problems: After Erik Blankship presented his mapping project I started to wonder if my project really has an important application. Why using phones? Does mobility really gives added value? What if most kids don't have phones? Why doing this project if there are a lot of other people working with GIS systems especially since Google Maps was unveiled.