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SEMCON DEVELOPS NEW GAME FOR HOMEWORK ON THE GO

There are clear links between physical activity and performance at school. But how do we inspire pupils to exercise more? As part of an equal health research project being run by Malmö University, Semcon has developed a mobile app that can get pupils to do their homework while also exercising outdoors.

“Our idea was to use a fun game to transform homework – which is often done while sitting still – into something pupils do while moving around. It gets people into healthy habits while also improving school results. Involving users in the entire process has allowed us to create an innovative concept,” says Mehdi Khayyami, User Experience Specialist at Semcon.

A prototype of the homework game has been tested by pupils and teachers in Lindängen, near Malmö, but also in other locations as part of the *Hälsofrämjande innovation i samverkan* project [Cooperation on innovation to promote health], which has now come to an end. Hopefully the game will be completed and go live as soon as possible.

“It has met with a really great response. We have been able to show the potential of smart technology when it comes to really making a difference. I hope somebody will pick this up and bring it all the way to market so that everyone can benefit from the game,” says Anna Funke, Team Manager Software & Architecture at Semcon.

Customised and inspiring

There are many opportunities offered by this homework game. Teachers can easily create customised and inspiring tests and monitor the development of every pupil. It also saves time on corrections. Pupils can learn vocabulary or mathematical equations while spending time outdoors. Step counters, GPS positioning and Augmented Reality [AR] also allow homework questions to be presented in a way that encourages play while the homework is being done – and pupils can work alone or with friends.

“As I see it, there are some major benefits to be had from this type of game, which combines repetitive tasks with movement. Children nowadays do not take enough exercise, and a game of this kind could help promote their health and improve their ability to concentrate. It gets pupils interested, and they learn more when they are playing a game that they enjoy,” says Maria Simbotin, teacher

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at Lindängensskolan in Malmö, where a prototype of the game has been tested by year three and four pupils.

About the *Hälsofrämjande innovation i samverkan* project

The gap between people enjoying good health and people with poor health in society is widening. This was why the *Hälsofrämjande innovation i samverkan* project was launched. Its aim is to help improve the health of citizens in the district of Lindängen in Malmö. An innovation platform has been built using the Community Based Participatory Research [CBPR] model, which is based entirely on users themselves. People in Lindängen have played a part in all decisions so as to ensure that not only products and services are developed, but also their own empowerment, leading to greater integration.

This research project is being funded by Vinnova and is a partnership of fourteen different stakeholders in the ideas-based sector, the public sector, the business community and academia. The project began in 2016 and ended in May 2019. Hopefully a continuation project will be able to commence in the autumn. [Find out more about the project.](#)

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