

TherapyCraft in Action: 3 Case Studies from Minecraft Therapy

Intro: Why Minecraft Works in Therapy



Minecraft isn't just a video game. For many kids and teens, it's a familiar, meaningful world where they already feel competent, creative, and at home. Inside that world, they get to build, explore, and tell stories in ways that feel safe and natural.

As therapists, we know that change doesn't always happen when we sit across from a client and ask them to share. Change happens when trust is built, when defenses lower, and when kids feel *both seen and safe enough to express themselves*. **Minecraft gives us that bridge.**

And here's the best part: you don't have to be a video game expert to use it effectively. In fact, sometimes not knowing everything works in your favor. Clients light up when they get to be the teacher, guiding you through the basics and showing off what they know. That role reversal can build confidence and rapport faster than anything else. Whether you've never touched a controller or you've logged hundreds of hours, **Minecraft can become a therapeutic tool in your hands.**

Inside a single blocky world, clients can:

- Show us who they are without feeling judged.
- Externalize overwhelming feelings into metaphors they can literally see and touch.
- Practice regulation, problem-solving, and resilience in real time.
- Connect with us as collaborators, not just authority figures.

What happens in Minecraft isn't "just play." **It's therapy disguised as a familiar adventure.** And when used with intention, it can transform silence into conversation, fear into confidence, and resistance into trust.

In the following pages, you'll see three real stories of how Minecraft created breakthroughs for clients who were otherwise shut down, stuck, or unsure. These case studies show just a glimpse of what's possible when therapy meets the digital world kids already love.

Meet Your Guide



Hi, I'm Ashley Jangro, LPCC and Life Coach, therapist, educator, and the creator of TherapyCraft. My work blends counseling, coaching, and education to help kids, teens, and parents move from emotional overwhelm to steadiness and growth.

I first discovered the power of Minecraft in therapy by accident. A client who rarely spoke lit up the moment we started talking about the game. When we stepped into a Minecraft world together, her entire posture, tone, and openness shifted. She found a voice she hadn't been able to access in a traditional office setting. That moment changed how I approached therapy forever.

Since then, I've watched resistant teens build trust block by block, anxious kids create safe spaces they couldn't describe in words, and families use Minecraft to understand one another in new ways. What started as curiosity has grown into TherapyCraft, **a structured, intentional way to use Minecraft ethically and clinically with the clients who need it most.**

Whether you're a seasoned gamer or brand new to the controller, you can learn to bring Minecraft into your therapy sessions in a way that feels authentic, professional, and deeply impactful. This guide will show you what's possible.

Case Study 1: The Anxious Teen Who Found Her Voice

One of the first times I brought Minecraft into therapy, I was working with a teen who carried intense anxiety. Our sessions were quiet, often filled with long silences or whispered “I don’t know” responses. When I gently asked about her discomfort, she would sometimes cry but couldn’t put words to what she was feeling. It was clear she wanted connection, but traditional talk therapy left her feeling exposed and overwhelmed.



Everything shifted the day I noticed a video game sticker on her water bottle and asked about her favorite games. When she mentioned Minecraft, her whole demeanor changed. She sat up straighter, her voice grew stronger, and she told me about the world she and her boyfriend had been building for years. The confidence, the energy, it was like meeting a different version of her.

When I invited her to play during our sessions, I let her take the lead. She showed me how to start a world, guided me through her favorite parts of the game, and for the first time, she wasn’t just my client, she was my teacher. The game gave her permission to step into a role where she felt capable, respected, and confident.

What was most powerful, though, was how we could use the game as a rehearsal space for real life. When she faced something in Minecraft that stretched her comfort zone, an unexpected challenge, a moment of fear, a risk she wasn’t sure she could take, we paused to talk about how she might handle it. Slowly, she began to “wear” that confidence like a costume she could try on. And little by little, she carried those small successes outside the game, until they became part of her real identity.

Takeaway: Minecraft can act as a safe doorway for anxious or withdrawn teens to step into confidence, self-expression, and trust, and then carry that confidence into the real world.

Case Study 2: The Child Caught in the Middle

Another client I worked with was a young teen struggling deeply with his parents' divorce. He carried enormous tension but rarely admitted his own anger. Instead, he minimized conflict, excused everyone else's behavior, and turned the blame inward. He felt responsible for keeping the peace, but in doing so, he buried his own emotions so deeply that he couldn't even acknowledge them in session.

Inside Minecraft, everything changed. The game gave him a language he didn't have in real life. He was able to talk about his father as similar to a "creeper," with angry outbursts that were explosive and unpredictable. Protective figures were like iron golems, strong but sometimes damaging when they lashed out. Endermen, mysterious and powerful, reminded him of people who wanted connection but didn't know how to ask for it. These metaphors gave him permission to talk about hard dynamics in a way that felt safe, because it wasn't about his parents, it was about the game.

Through these conversations, he started to build tools he could use in both worlds. Just like armor protects you from creeper explosions, he began practicing skills like naming his feelings, letting himself experience anger without guilt, and using breathwork to calm down before reacting. Each metaphor opened new insight, that protecting yourself doesn't mean rejecting someone, and that giving space can sometimes restore safety.

Minecraft became a safe container for emotions that once felt unbearable. Over time, he stopped seeing anger as dangerous and began recognizing it as information, something to notice, express, and work through.

Takeaway: Minecraft provides natural metaphors that make it safer for kids to discuss painful dynamics and practice emotional tools they might otherwise avoid.



Case Study 3: The Resistant Teen Who Learned to Trust

Some clients enter therapy with walls so high it feels impossible to reach them. One young teen I worked with had shut down after a painful experience with an authority figure. Humiliated and misunderstood, he decided that adults couldn't be trusted. By the time he arrived in therapy, he was guarded, skeptical, and resistant to even trying.



When his parent suggested therapy inside Minecraft, he was suddenly open to the idea of therapy. Regardless, our first session together was nearly silent. I moved through the motions of starting a new world: gathering wood, building a basic shelter, preparing for nightfall. Slowly, he began to notice how I played. I wasn't fumbling through, I knew the game, and he respected that. For a boy who didn't think much of adults, it mattered that I could hold my own in a space he valued. **I wasn't just another grown-up who "didn't get it."**

What sealed the connection, though, was how I used that knowledge. I never hoarded resources or acted like the expert. When I mined diamonds, I shared them. When he hesitated to take what I offered, explaining that he was used to playing with people who got mad when he borrowed things, I reassured him that as teammates, we could look out for each other. He began to see that I could be skilled and knowledgeable, but also generous and collaborative.

The biggest breakthrough came when I got myself into trouble in a cave. Surrounded by mobs, I needed backup, and he rushed in to save me. **He felt capable and needed in front of someone he already respected.** In that moment, we weren't therapist and client, adult and teen. We were teammates. That respect, combined with trust, opened the door to real conversation.

With time, Minecraft became the bridge that allowed him to process his pain and rehearse new ways of navigating trust, authority, and courage. He even grew willing to try in-person school again, something his parents had been hoping for but couldn't reach on their own.

Takeaway: For resistant or mistrustful kids, Minecraft creates a space where adults can earn respect and build trust at the same time, turning therapist and client into teammates on the same side.

 *Therapist Note: You don't have to be a skilled gamer for this to work. Many clients feel empowered when they get to "teach" their therapist. Respect is built through authenticity, curiosity, and collaboration, not perfection.* 

Why These Stories Matter

These three stories may be different, anxiety, family conflict, resistance, but they all point to the same truth: Minecraft is more than a game. **It's a therapeutic space where clients feel safe enough to express what they can't always say in words.**

For one teen, it became the place where she could finally find her voice.

For another, it gave him metaphors and “armor” to face emotions he had buried for years.

For a resistant client, it built trust block by block until real conversations could happen.

That's the power of TherapyCraft. It turns silence into dialogue, frustration into problem-solving, and mistrust into teamwork. And because Minecraft is already deeply meaningful to so many kids and teens, it bypasses resistance in a way that traditional therapy sometimes can't.

But here's the important part: while these stories show the potential, they don't show the process. To bring Minecraft into therapy safely, ethically, and with confidence, you need more than inspiration. You need clear, HIPAA-aware systems, step-by-step setup instructions, and ready-to-use tools that let you focus on your client, not the tech.

That's exactly why I created the Complete TherapyCraft System.

Inspired by These Stories? Here's What Comes Next.

By now, you've seen what's possible when therapy moves into a world kids already love. But you may also be wondering:

- How do I actually set this up?
- What about HIPAA compliance?
- What needs to go in my disclosure forms?
- How do I explain this to parents so they see it as real therapy, not just screen time?
- How much should I charge, and how do I talk about it on my website?

These are the questions that turn a good idea into a professional service. And while Minecraft itself is powerful, using it inside therapy requires structure, clarity, and safeguards.

That's why I created the Complete TherapyCraft System, so you don't have to piece it together on your own.

For less than the cost of a single TherapyCraft session, you'll have everything you need to confidently offer Minecraft therapy in a way that's ethical, creative, and clinically sound.

The Complete TherapyCraft System

Everything you need to bring Minecraft into therapy, without months of trial and error.

You've seen how powerful Minecraft can be in therapy. But if you've ever thought about using it yourself, you've probably hit a wall of questions like:

-  Do I buy Java, Bedrock, or the Educational version?
-  Should I use Creative or Survival mode, and what's the difference?
-  Which privacy settings keep me HIPAA-compliant?
-  How do I explain this to parents without it sounding like "just screen time"?

Those choices alone stop most therapists in their tracks. But you don't have to figure it all out yourself.

I've already done the testing, troubleshooting, and refining. And now you can have my entire setup, complete with screenshots and video walkthroughs, so you don't waste hours researching or months experimenting.

With this system, you can be set up and ready to use Minecraft in therapy in a single afternoon.

What's Inside the TherapyCraft System

1. Step-by-Step Technical Setup

- Exactly what to purchase (and what not to waste money on)
- The right game version for therapy (explained clearly)
- Survival vs. Creative mode: when to use each in sessions
- Privacy settings and protocols for HIPAA awareness
- Troubleshooting guide for common tech snags (No more trial and error, just follow the steps.)

2. Editable Forms & Disclosures

- HIPAA-compliant Minecraft Therapy Consent Clause
- Parent Tech Add-On for intake + expectations
- Supervisor/Agency Advocacy Letter
- Ready-to-use disclosure language so you're legally protected

3. Parent & Family Communication Templates

- Welcome Email + Setup Instructions for parents
- Text reminders + troubleshooting messages
- Parent FAQ that explains Minecraft therapy clearly
- Optional Parent Session Summary template

4. Therapist Session Tools

- Session planning templates (editable + printable)
- Creative vs. Survival Mode quick-reference sheet
- Therapist setup checklist (never forget a step)
- Pro tips for smooth sessions and happy clients

5. Clinical Treatment Roadmaps

- Editable treatment plans for Anxiety, Depression, ADHD, PTSD, Adjustment Disorder, Autism
- 12–24 week phase-based roadmaps (safety, exploration, challenge, growth)
- Sample goals and interventions written for you
- Progress note language to make documentation easier

6. Marketing & Outreach Kit

- Psychology Today profile add-on language
- Website copy for your service page
- Referral one-pager for schools & pediatricians
- Social media announcement post template
- Email scripts for introducing the service to current families

7. Clinical Application Training

- Real examples from my own sessions (what works, what doesn't)
- How Minecraft aligns with CBT, ACT, and Play Therapy
- Crisis management strategies for virtual play
- Documentation best practices



Total Value: \$1,600+

Your Investment: Just \$59.99

Imagine if you didn't have to:

- ✗ Spend weeks researching which Minecraft version to buy
- ✗ Guess whether to use Creative or Survival for your clients
- ✗ Write your own consents, roadmaps, or parent handouts from scratch
- ✗ Wonder if your setup was private or HIPAA-compliant

With the Complete TherapyCraft System, it's all done for you. You'll skip the confusion, save hours of work, and be ready to run your first Minecraft session in an afternoon.

👉 Get Instant Access Today

For less than the cost of a single session, you'll have a complete professional system you can use for years to come.

Find Your Calm. Reclaim Your Power.

A message from Ashley Jangro, LPCC & Life Coach

My hope is that these stories each gives you a glimpse into what's possible when therapy meets the worlds kids already love.

TherapyCraft grew from my belief that emotional mastery is a superpower, and that when we meet clients where they feel capable and safe, we unlock a whole new level of connection. Minecraft just happens to be one of the most effective tools I've found to do that.

Whether you're a seasoned gamer or a therapist who's never touched a controller, you can bring this into your practice. With the right systems, it's not only possible, it's simple, ethical, and effective.

If you're ready to take the next step, I'd love for you to explore the **Complete TherapyCraft System**. It includes everything you need to set up Minecraft with HIPAA-awareness, run confident sessions, and market your new service to families who are already searching for help.

Let's keep changing what's possible in therapy, one block at a time.



About Ashley Jangro

Therapist | Life Coach | Educator
Founder of *Steady Within Counseling* & Creator of
TherapyCraft

Ashley blends counseling, coaching, and education to help kids, teens, and parents regulate emotions, strengthen resilience, and move toward steady, values-driven lives. She has spoken on national stages, developed therapeutic models like AERO and TherapyCraft, and works every day to make therapy both accessible and transformative.

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