

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

FOR STUDENTS



I G N I T E
S T E M

The Value of Afterschool Programs

Afterschool STEM programs are an effective way to engage students in learning about STEM. These programs provide a space for teachers to work closely with students in various activities, answer questions, and help foster an interest in learning more about STEM.

It has been shown that afterschool programs can have a positive influence on academic performance. A Chicago afterschool and summer program called Project Exploration found that students that participated in its programs had higher graduation rates, and higher aspirations to major in STEM programs and attend college.

Afterschool programs can also have an effect on achievement gaps between groups of students. For example, the math achievement gap between high-income and low-income students also becomes smaller when low-income students regularly attend afterschool STEM programs.

http://expandinglearning.org/research/vandell/resources/AERA_Promising_Programs_FINAL.pdf

Established programs

There are a multitude of organizations with established STEM programs, that offer a range of materials and support across various topics in STEM. Here are some notable programs:

Girls Who Code - Girls Who Code runs free afterschool programs for girls in grades 3 to 5, and a separate program for girls in grades 6 to 12. Alumni of Girls Who Code are 15 times more likely to choose to major in computer science or related fields.

Girlstart After School - Girlstart runs free afterschool programs for girls in grades 4 to 5. Activities supplement skills that are learned in science classes during normal school hours.

4-H - 4-H is a youth group that offers a range of afterschool programs, including STEM programs. Their areas of focus in STEM include environmental science, plant and animal science, and engineering and technology.

CodeAdvantage - CodeAdvantage offers various computer science-based programs that vary in difficulty and topic based on grade level. They offer programs for students in grades 1 to 8. Some of their classes' themes include Python, game design, and robotics.

Science Action Club - Science Action Club offers three different programs for middle school students: Bug Safari, Bird Scouts, and Cloud Quest, each focusing on a different area of science. They offer kits for each program based on a sliding payment scale, depending on your school's resources.