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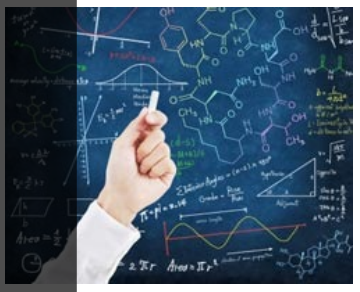
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## 8 Things to Remember When Integrating STEM



Feeling like integrating STEM into your current curriculum is an unsolvable equation? STEM doesn't have to intimidate or overwhelm you. It's an essential component of every afterschool program, so here are 8 tips to help you start the process.


1. STEM programming does not require STEM experts. Remember, a good facilitator's role is to be a role model for youth and to cultivate curiosity and engagement. Instead of providing expert answers, STEM role models say, "I don't know the answer. How can we find out together?"
2. Science programming does not only mean conducting science labs. Remember, STEM programming can be integrated into many disciplines or approached from many angles. Interpreting observations and using evidence in an argument are great examples of scientific habits of mind that are applicable across many disciplines.
3. Quality homework help, recreation, healthy meals—OST programs have many responsibilities. When is there even time to integrate STEM into program hours? Always! Remember, engineering design challenges or science investigations can provide opportunities to integrate math concepts, as well as practice expository writing when making observations or drawing conclusions.
4. Is STEM programming really aligned with youth development goals? STEM programming is an excellent way to build persistence in youth. Remember, scientists and engineers are constantly revising their ideas or reworking their designs. These STEM professionals are also constantly asking new questions as they make new observations or findings.
5. Okay, but what about 21st century skills, such as communication and collaboration? Remember, scientists and engineers do not work alone; these professionals rely on community analysis and feedback. STEM programming provides opportunities for youth to practice their complex communication and collaboration 21st century skills.
6. Tape, rulers, paper, and other supplies are all over the place. Youth are out of their seats, moving around, and talking loudly with one another. Remember, what looks chaotic, messy, and loud can also be a sign of highly engaged youth working together to solve a problem!
7. The STEM project is completed, now what? Remember, family nights that allow the influential people in a child's life to learn with youth or youth to showcase their hard work are powerful ways to connect families to out-of-school time work. Reimagine a "finished" project as an opportunity for youth to mentor younger grades in a subject area where they are newly confident.
8. STEM programming has real-world applications. Remember, connecting STEM programming to real-life careers helps youth channel their out-of-school interests into future aspirations.

*Written by Anna Padget Crocker, Project Associate: Afterschool and Community Initiatives at the Franklin Institute Science Museum. This work is part of the STEM 3D: Integrating Science into Afterschool, Home, and Community project which is supported by the National Science*

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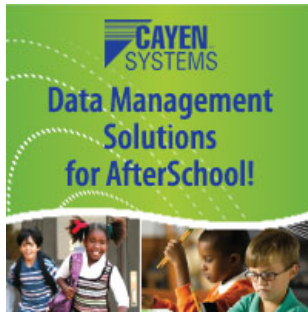
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National AfterSchool Association • 2961A Hunter Mill Road, #626 • Oakton, VA 22124 • [info@naaweb.org](mailto:info@naaweb.org)













