

# A role of stem education

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## **How Early STEM Education Could Effect STEM Careers**

STEM (Science, Technology, Math, and Science) represent a large portion of the workforce, but only a small number of college students are actually in STEM majors. The STEM field is growing rapidly, but it doesn't have a growing workforce to match the growth. Early STEM education in elementary school could change this. Some schools are already implementing such programs, but there are still a shortage of workers, however it has been proven that students who take advanced classes eventually go to college, and then, STEM fields of work.

Some people say that it is never too early to begin education for children. Even more so for STEM related education. One educator says that STEM education could begin as early as 3 months old (Sneideman). At some schools in Florida and California, there have been programs implemented to engage young learners with STEM related activities and homework, which is important, because studies have shown that by the time children reach the eighth grade without proper STEM classes or exercises that engage their interest, 50% of students no longer care about the sciences and think it doesn't pertain to their future (Murphy). This means that by the time they are in high school deciding on colleges and their lives, 60% or more could have decided that science and math simply “ don't matter” and opt for a non-STEM related field.

When a child has access to proper STEM education, he or she is much more likely to pursue a STEM related field as a college major or career.

Undergraduate students pursuing STEM majors were interviewed about when

they were most excited about math and science and what led them to choose those careers, and they said early childhood experiences in elementary school were what led them (DeJarnette, 78).

Because of the current lack of STEM initiatives in elementary schools, however, there is still a shortage of STEM workers in the United States. In an article by Linda Rosen, it is stated that there is and has been a shortage of STEM workers, even as the demand for them rises. It is not just Rosen that sees this. There are a number of scholars that recognize the growing problem for the lack of workers, and want a solution to gain back the numbers. Such a solution could easily be gained through projects to implement more scientific and mathematic teaching in elementary schools.

Early education has another benefit as well. When a child is engaged in class, their attention will rise, and they will most likely get better grades and test scores. Then, they will be far more likely to take more rigorous courses in high school. This has two benefits: besides getting a more beneficial education, teens who take advanced courses are more likely to go to college, whether or not they pursue a STEM career. Those AP or honors classes better prepare students for college and the real world. Thus, it would be even more beneficial to kids who have been introduced to science and math since elementary school.

Science and math are very importance for society, and even more important for individual students. STEM gives children an interest in the world, and what better time than when they are just learning about it: childhood. Early STEM exposure in elementary schools gives children an advantage that can

follow them for the rest of their lives. Through STEM initiatives in elementary school, children can therefore lead a better education and are more likely to go to college and pursue a STEM career where it may be needed most. If you ask someone in STEM, they will probably link their interest in the field from an early memory in elementary school, that made such an important impression that they decided to continue on that path for life.