



Why STEM?

Why is it important to encourage girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)?

As PBS Kids points out in “[Tips for Encouraging Girls in STEM](#),” there are many reasons STEM is important:

- STEM is everywhere and knowledge of STEM is key to understanding how things work and being an educated consumer.
- Doing STEM activities teaches girls practical life skills such as problem-solving, persistence, teamwork, and creativity.
- More and more jobs involve STEM, even those not officially in the STEM field.
- Individuals with STEM skills are in high demand because there is currently a shortage of workers with the skills needed, for example, in manufacturing, engineering, cyber security, and biotech.
- STEM careers are worth considering because they generally pay well and often offer opportunities for flexibility and creativity.
- Increasing the number of women in STEM jobs will benefit both individual women and the workforce overall by ensuring that the talents and needs of a wider breadth of people are represented.
- Most of all, getting involved in STEM is a good idea because it’s fun and rewarding!

Tips for Parents about Ways to Encourage Girls in STEM

As an adult, you probably know that historically, girls and women have been marginalized in many STEM fields. While there are still challenges, the good news is that things are improving. So, when talking to girls about women in STEM:

- Focus on the positive. Girls need to know is that STEM is interesting, fun, and engaging.
- Talk about how much can be learned from STEM, how fun it is to explore questions about how things work, and how relevant STEM is to everyday life.
- Let girls know that being knowledgeable about STEM opens doors—both anticipated and unanticipated!

Links

- [Tips for Encouraging Girls in STEM](#)—why STEM matters by PBS Kids
- [Why STEM Matters](#)—Everyone Benefits When We Give STEM the Gift of Girls
- [The State of Girls and Women in STEM](#)—a summary of key trends
- [Women and Information Technology by the Numbers](#)—current statistics
- [Technology Careers](#)—NCWIT on why young people should consider careers in computing and information technology
- [U.S. Bureau of Labor](#)—data on employment in a variety of fields