



Using Family Science Day Events to Inspire Future Scientists

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Dickinson State University organizes four Family Science Day events each fall to increase student engagement in the sciences. Offered on Saturday afternoons, each event focuses on a different science-related theme. Families can attend these events free of charge, and the kids participate in a large-variety of hands-on activities which center around the event's theme. Previous themes include The Amazing Telescope, Night of the Titanic, Dinosaur Prophecy, and Space Exploration.

These events are amazing opportunities to show young children how much fun science can be. Many of the kids come from schools where science is neither interactive nor engaging. The activities help the children learn that science is a process of discovery that helps us better understand the world around us.

University students staff all of the activity booths at these events, and this has proven to be a very valuable experience for them as well. Some of the students who help are majoring in a science field, and for them, the experience teaches public communication. They learn to break complicated concepts down into simpler terms that young kids can understand. Other students who help with these events are not science majors but may be taking a science course as part of their college curriculum. For these students, the experience reinforces various concepts that they are learning in their science class. For many of them, it also opens their eyes to the idea that science can be engaging. Some of them even discover that they have a true gift for teaching.