



Girls in STEM Survey Press Release

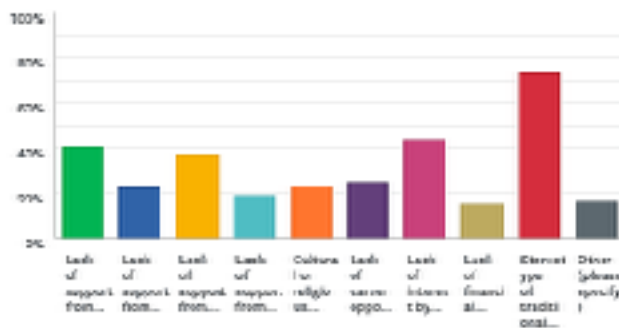
April 10, 2018 (Embrow, ON) – Survey reveals why girls do not enter STEM careers

Content:

A recent survey conducted by Canadian not for profit STEM Camp reveals the biggest reason for girls not pursuing STEM education is the stereotype of traditional perceived male roles vs female roles.

What do you think are the biggest barriers for women considering STEM based careers? (select all that apply)

Answered: 362 | Ellipsoid



ANSWER CHOICES	PERCENTAGE	RESPONSES
Lack of support from peers	41.05%	149
Lack of support from parents	23.14%	84
Lack of support from the education system	38.02%	138
Lack of support from the government	19.58%	71
Cultural or religious beliefs	21.69%	80
Lack of career opportunities for women in STEM	25.62%	93
Lack of interest by women in STEM fields and careers	41.67%	151
Lack of financial resources	18.70%	67
Stereotype of traditional perceived male vs female roles/jobs	74.10%	269
Other (please specify)	17.65%	64
TOTAL RESPONDENTS:		362

The survey was conducted in three hundred and sixty three (363) Canadian households as well as across social media channels. While the traditional role perception was revealed as the biggest obstacle (74.10%), girls' interest in STEM careers in general was second (41.63%) followed by a lack of peer support (41.05%) with lack of support from Canada's education system following closely behind (38.02%).

Moreover, results revealed that 23.14% of respondents felt that a lack of support from parents was the cause while 25.62% indicated a lack of career opportunities for women in STEM fields.

68.78% of responding parents indicated they would encourage their sons to pursue a career in a STEM-related field, while 72.53% of parents would encourage their daughters to pursue STEM-related careers. Why is this different? Interesting to note that more parents would encourage their daughters yet enrolments in STEM-related programs show traditionally that more boys participate. Another interesting result revealed that 99.17% of parents acknowledged that a solid education in STEM



subjects will be important to their child's future. Even though they recognize this fact, the number is still lower for encouraging their sons and daughters to participate in STEM activities.

While the sample size is small, STEM Camp CEO and Founder Kevin Cugler, believes it is indicative of a trend in Canadian society that has the importance of STEM education receiving more attention. "When the Government of Canada attaches enough importance to STEM education by putting it in the last two national budgets, people take notice" says Cugler. "The challenge now will be to find ways to encourage our girls and boys to participate in as many STEM-based programs and activities as possible".

The fact that girls aren't entering STEM education because of perceived pink and blue jobs leads Cugler to believe that the issue permeates society at all levels starting in the home, in the content we bring into the home, and the messaging in our educational facilities.

Resources

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11874-eng.pdf>

STEM Camp Online Newsroom: <https://stemcamp.ca/sc-news/>

Questions? Schedule an Interview?

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SURVEY

Survey Questions:

1) How important is STEM Education for your child?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neutral
- Not very important
- Not at all

2) Do you feel that a solid education in STEM subjects will be important to your child's future?

Yes/No

3) Will you encourage your son to pursue a career in a STEM-based field?

Yes/No n/a

4) Will you encourage your daughter to pursue a career in a STEM-based field?

Yes/No n/a

5) What do you think are the biggest barriers for women considering STEM based careers? (select all that apply)

- Lack of support from peers
- Lack of support from parents
- Lack of support from education system
- Lack of support from government
- Cultural or religious beliefs
- Lack of career opportunities for women in STEM
- Lack of interest by women in STEM fields and careers
- Lack of financial resources
- Stereotype of traditional perceived male vs female roles/jobs
- Other



Letter to Parents

Distribution Date: March 23, 2018

Subject Line: Message from CEO and Founder, Kevin Cougler

Dear Parents,

As you may be aware STEM Camp exists for two very important reasons. The first is to provide youth with the most amazing summer camp experience they could possibly have; while the second represents a much more serious and thought-provoking issue that we all face as Canadians.

Let me explain by asking you a question...

What would happen in twenty years time if you couldn't find someone to fix our computers? To fix our cars? To work on a team to provide fresh water to an area? To provide an engineering solution? To calculate, mathematically, how much medicine to dispense safely?

These seem like crazy thoughts, right? Yes, I agree. But, maybe not so crazy if we look at this from a perspective of innovation. It is widely accepted that STEM education is the key ingredient to support an innovative economy; thereby a healthy economy.

Many organizations in North America cite issues concerning a short supply of STEM workers. In an article published by Monthly Labor Review (2015, May 1) it was noted that, **currently**, the "demand for qualified individuals to fill STEM jobs outpaces the supply". STEM is a key ingredient to the recipe of how a country can be innovative and if we aren't graduating enough skilled STEM workers perhaps that starts to explain why Canada only ranks 15th on the Global Innovation Index (we used to be in the top 10) [

<https://globalnews.ca/news/2888159/canada-ranks-15th-on-global-innovation-index-heres-where-we-fall-behind/>].

A survey conducted by The CNA Corporation in 2010 revealed that while 50% of the U.S. workforce was female, only 24% of the STEM workforce was female. It stands to reason Canada has similar statistics.

Where can we find the next pool of STEM workers to help meet the current and future demand? One answer could certainly be Canada's women.

But, there's a problem. Girls are not flocking to STEM education and careers in numbers that will help to fill this labour gap. We need to attract them to these subjects and to do that we need to start asking questions, hard questions, about why this is happening.



I am asking our STEM Camp community to weigh in on this issue to help us gather some data. We will attempt to publish this data in the locations that STEM Camp operates this summer, as well as on our website for our community to view and use it to make decisions at STEM Camp regarding how we can modify our approach to help girls in their quest to be STEM Champions.

There are only five (5) questions on the survey. PLEASE take five (5) minutes to fill this out. And on behalf of all our Canadian girls, thank you for doing so.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9YMH58R>

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Cougler