

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)

Ignition - Primary Space Education (1)

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SPACE EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE

Abstract

In the modern world, the collapsing or weakening family bond is becoming an issue that society is suffering from. This issue also influences the rising crime rates, unattended deaths and so on. It appears that this social issue has nothing to do with space. However, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Space Education Center has an aim to improve this issue by providing a unique programme called "Space Schools for Families".

JAXA Space Education Center analyzed the causes of the collapsing or weakening family bond. One of the factors is the lack of communication among family members in Japan. With the increasing number of dual income families, parents have a tendency to spend less time with their children.

The Center places a heavy emphasis on collaborations with the community and other organizations to help their endeavor. For "Space School for Families", the Space Education Center collaborated with the Kodomo Uchu Mirai Association(KU-MA) and local community organizations to develop educational materials and have them facilitate leadership training seminars. Through these collaborations, JAXA Space Education Center is able to spread such programs nationally without increasing its resources.

"Space Schools for Families" aims to enhance family bonds through learning "Space Science" with parents and children together. The "Space Schools for Families" programme consists of several gatherings throughout the year, called "Schooling", where the participating parents and children learn together about various space-related subjects and conduct basic experiments. They are given homework assignments to be done between sessions using the learning materials distributed during "Schooling." The differences between "Space Schools for Families" and the regular schools is that the former provides opportunities for the parents and their children to share time together at home to discuss space-related topics and conduct experiments as homework. This helps children understand STEM education and develop respect towards their parents that enhances parent-child relationships. The Center contributes to strengthen family ties through providing its unique space education programme.