



Dear Families,

The **[[AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM NAME]]** will be participating in the Young Inventor's Program (YIP). This nationally recognized program, hosted by the University of New Hampshire, provides hands-on STEM opportunities for youth.

YIP fits our mission to provide enrichment opportunities to help students explore interests and develop leadership skills, social and emotional competencies and self-confidence. Invention education promotes analytical and creative thinking and problem solving. During the program, students will develop an original invention and take it from an idea to a completed design. The capstone will be a presentation of the inventions. We invite you to enjoy this project with your child by encouraging them as they build models of their inventions.

Students will be allowed to work on their invention projects at home and outside of **[[AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM NAME]]** (although they do not have to). Here are a few things you can do to help:

Set Criteria: A successful invention must meet several criteria. Students often have trouble verbalizing these. Ask your child to list all the things that have to be true for the invention to be useful. Examples might include: Can I make it work? Can I make a model of it? Is it safe? Would other people want to use and buy it?

Questioning: Instead of giving your child answers, ask questions that focus on the problem. For example, if they ask, "What should I build it out of?" you may respond with your own questions. Ask, "What do you think you could use?", "What materials are available to you?", "What do you know how to use?" Using this procedure helps your child retain ownership in the inventive process.

Construction: Encourage your child to use materials that are available at home or to recycle materials. Each student should build their model on their own. At times this is not reasonable. If your child wants to build a model out of wood, but cannot safely cut the wood, you can do it for them. However, you should have them first decide the size of the piece and mark where it should be cut. Children should be involved in all parts of building.

YIP is administered by The University of New Hampshire. You can learn more about it at <https://www.unh.edu/leitzel-center/young-inventors-program>. And you can find more information about Invention Convention Worldwide, a coalition of programs, including YIP, at www.inventionconvention.org. If you have any questions about YIP or your child's participation and project, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,