

Tips to help spark your child's interest in science

(NAPSI)—Children who enjoy science develop strong analytical and problem-solving skills, skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

To spark a child's interest, experts recommend taking science education out of the classroom and making it a hands-on experience. According to a new Purdue University study conducted by the National Science Foundation, students who took part in such projects learned more and showed deeper understanding of science principles than their peers.

Champions Science Adventures summer camp follows this philosophy with an innovative lineup that not only offers hands-on experiments but features activities that are fun and educational. Organized in four topical programs, each camp is one week long with flexible options to accommodate families' busy schedules.

"Summer is a perfect time to investigate the world around us," said Andy Allan, director of curriculum development for Science Adventures, also known as Andy the Science Wiz.

He encourages parents to explore science with their child through daily experiences. "Parents can be some of the best teachers, they can point out things, explain and inspire before a child has a 'formal' science education," says Allan. He offers these tips:

- Children tend to like to collect things. Encourage your child to build a collection of items easily found outdoors such as leaves, shells, bugs, rocks and so on.

- Provide a place to display these findings and ask questions about it.

- Explore the great outdoors by taking a family nature hike to identify birds, plants, insects and the like. Have your child keep a journal of discoveries along the way. Add draw-

ings when you get home.

- Invite your kids into the kitchen to cook with you, no matter what you make, and have them follow recipes to help improve their math and science skills.

- Visit a toy or hobby shop. There are numerous home science kits available on a variety of topics from dinosaurs to the human skeleton.

- Take a trip to a science museum for some exploration.

- Keep a weather journal.

- Grow a plant. Put something such as a radish seed in a pot and have your child check it every day. Record results in a photo journal.

- Find a dark open space and use a pair of binoculars to scan the night sky for constellations.

- Make paper airplanes and see which design stays in the air the longest.

For more information, visit www.scienceadventures.com.

