Family Code Nights

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Family Code Nights are one-hour coding sessions taking place in elementary schools. Parents and students learn how to create computer code by playing and solving online puzzles. These fascinating activities motivate excitement around coding in both parents and children. At the end of the hour everyone wants more.

Coding at School

Some schools teach coding to K-5 students as part of the elementary curriculum. Teachers are increasingly engaging students in coding activities by accessing the Hour of Code website https://code.org/learn. While this engagement is educational as well as fun for students, there is special value achieved when parents and students code together.

Why the interest in teaching coding at the elementary school level?

The 2009 NAEP High School Transcript Study revealed:

> The percentage of U.S. high school students taking STEM courses has increased over the last 20 years across all STEM disciplines <u>except computer science where it dropped from 25% to 19%.</u>

An article in Deseret News published in January of 2014 stated:

> At current rates, in 2020 there will be only 400,000 computer science students in the U.S. education pipeline. But the nation will need 1.4 million computing jobs, according to projections from the Department of Labor.

These troubling statistics have prompted the development and introduction of coding activities into the elementary school level. A non-profit organization called MV Gate has encouraged the participation of parents in Family Code Nights. As parents gain knowledge about coding, they can motivate and support their children in considering computer science as a field of study.

What Parents Can Do

The Family Code Night website www.familycodenight.org encourages parents to hold a Code Night at their child's school. It provides a free downloadable kit with all the materials necessary to run the event.

If you have children in the elementary grades, I recommend that you to check out the websites and take a look at the fun puzzles children can solve through coding. Share this information with other parents at your school, and if your school has not had a Family Code Night, work with your principal to hold one. They are fun and exciting events.

With love and affection,

Rosemarie