

Let's start with the little ones



Parents must be involved

How can we encourage girls and boys to persevere with aeromodelling?

Around the world, young girls and boys are being given insights into the varied and exciting world of

aeromodelling at hundreds, if not thousands of junior events.

What remains?

Children enthusiastically build small and larger model planes from balsa wood and lightweight foam materials and

then fly them in a hall or on an open field. This is great. However, many of the clubs responsible for these events complain that none of the children remain faithful to aeromodelling.

Aeromodelling workshops create trust among parents and goodwill with politicians

Success can be measured not only by the number of new aeromodellers but also by the image of aeromodelling that we create among the public. Meaningful activities with young people are appreciated not just by their parents, but increasingly also by the authorities dealing with education and social affairs. More and more young people are using smartphones and computer games. The increasing digitalisation in education has taken over and left no room for crafting activities. In this context, the importance of a return to a more practical emphasis cannot be stressed enough. Learning should be by head, heart and hand (See e.g. "Handlungsorientierte Pädagogik" (Activity-based Education) by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, 1746–1827). Finally, we must not forget that people who have positive memories of an aeromodelling course are more likely to return to this hobby later in life.

Parents must be involved

Today, the involvement of parents in aeromodelling activities for children is considered to be crucial. There are several approaches for achieving this:

1. We, as aeromodellers, start with very simple "projects" for the youngest children from four or five years of age.



2. Mothers, fathers and often grandparents are allowed to help.
3. Competitions, e.g. "whose little airplane has the best paint job, which one flies the furthest or the longest", etc.
4. Parents act as coaches, which often lets them be young again themselves.

All very well, but where are all the young aeromodellers?

Universal formulas are few and far between. From what I have seen, events for children that are held annually over a number of years tend to keep attracting the same families. They don't just turn up with the first "aeromodelling novice" but will return with younger siblings and sometimes eventually even grandchildren. This gives us hope. But how can we keep young people and their parents active in the aeromodelling world for a bit longer? My recommendation is for organisers to record contact details of participants. This

national aeromodelling associations and Aero Clubs keep in contact with parents and young people via social media, newsletters and other periodicals. Of course, this will only work if these regularly announce junior events for all ages. Good luck!



CIAM Flyer 5-2019

Editor: Emil Ch. Giezendanner
Photography: Rahel Meister

<http://www.fai.org>