What if my child is not 9 years old by July 1?

We have had kids as young as 7, almost 8, complete the workshop with no problems and always leave the final decision up to parents as we want everyone who is able to participate in what we are trying to do.

 Our original target audience was the 10, 11, 12 year old group for several reasons, mostly because they are old enough to complete the activities and still young enough that they might be influenced by a positive experience with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math topics.

We advertise 9 to 14 year olds because we had to put some limits somewhere. The reality is that some 9 year olds may be a little young, although we have had a couple of very outgoing 8 year olds do well; and the 13 – 14 year olds are usually a little bored; especially if they have had much exposure to technology. It really is more about social maturity which is very different for every child. We have had outgoing 8 year olds do better than some shy – retiring 10 year olds.

The main issue is – are they comfortable working in a 'team' environment with several other students. We focus on teamwork and brainstorming skills to solve problems, we just happen to use LEGOs as the catalyst. We have said many times that the same activities could be completed with model rockets or airplanes; the LEGO kits just lend themselves to producing quick results. If you would like elaboration on the activities and what participants will be doing just call.

What is the difference between Adventures in Robotics I and Adventures in Robotics II?

The main difference is that AIR - II picks up where AIR - I leaves off. We skip most of the introductory information about problem solving, how motors work, robot assembly, programming, etc. and dive right in to solving challenges using the robot kits.   We do a short review for those that may have forgotten some of the previous material but the focus is really on using the kits to complete some task or solve a problem. It has been described by past participants as being like the Friday demonstration day of AIR - I "all week long".

We typically have a mix of participants that have completed AIR - I in some previous year and those that have just completed the previous week along with those that know Lego Systems from school or other experiences.

Can parents stay and observe?

Parents are absolutely allowed and encouraged to stay and observe. The only thing we ask is that they keep their distance and allow the students to do the work themselves. We challenge the kids on several instances in order to encourage them to stretch their expectations; sometimes the temptation to step in and help is very strong for parents who are observing.

What if I don't want to stay and observe?

We have a fully equipped and staffed library in the building just steps away from our laboratories were the workshops will be held. There would be Internet access along with other media available if you wanted to do any research, reading or viewing / listening during the camp.

Another option, if the weather is nice, would be visiting some of the sights on campus including The Veterans Memorial, Art Gallery, etc. There is a very nice hiking / biking trail to the main campus from the tech ctr. which is an easy 20 minute walk.

What if my child needs to miss a day due to other obligations?

It is not unusual for students to miss during the week and we typically have kids come and go all week. When working on a group project the group can carry on without a member present. Just like in the 'real-world' when someone is out sick. Upon returning it won't take long for the group to bring everyone up to speed.