



The Family Room

NASA-approved 'Space Racers' coming to public television in 2014

By Hillary Busis on Oct 24, 2013 at 10:00AM [@hillibusterr](#)



It's a bird! It's a plane! Nope — it's *Space Racers*, an upcoming TV series aimed at preschoolers that hopes to do for science what previous programs have done for language, counting, and problem-solving. The show's secret weapon? Nothing less than NASA, which is attached as a technical consultant.

The series follows a group of five talented young spaceships — speedy Eagle, strong Hawk, smart Robyn, brave Starling, and competitive Raven — who are students at the Stardust Space Academy. As the ships travel throughout the solar system, they'll teach their viewers about “exploration, investigation, observation, and how to work together as a team,” according to a release.

Creator and executive producer Richard Schweiger says that the idea for the series first came to him at Washington, D.C.'s National Air and Space Museum five years ago. While watching his two boys play around with rocket ships purchased at the museum's gift shop, he was struck by an idea: “I was like, ‘Oh my gosh, how amazing would it be to do a show where the characters are the spaceships, and the spaceships can go on missions through the solar system?’” he explains to EW.

Previous vehicle-based projects like *Cars* and *Thomas the Tank Engine* were very much on Schweiger's mind as he began developing *Space Racers*. Eventually, though, his series would snag an advantage those other franchises didn't have: a deal with NASA. Representatives from the space organization worked closely with Schweiger and his collaborators to develop 50 11-minute episodes for the show's first season, each of which has its own educational goal. Every half-hour episode will include two of these shorts.

The series promotes an early childhood STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) curriculum, taught not only through cartoons starring Eagle and the gang but also through live-action interstitials starring NASA experts in locations like the Air and Space Museum and Maryland's Goddard Space Flight Center. Additionally, NASA gave *Space Racers* access to their library of space sounds and original photographs, lending each episode an extra element of authenticity.

The series, presented by Maryland Public Television, will premiere on public TV in spring 2014. Check out a trailer below — and visit PBS's [station finder](#) to encourage your own local station to carry *Space Racers*.



Link: <http://family-room.ew.com/2013/10/24/space-racers-nasa-tv-show/>