

What is the HOP program? The HOP program was authored by Donald Knaack as a vehicle to get every school student in the state of Vermont (and eventually, the country) to take an active role in becoming a better environmental citizen. The program begins with each student in the school pledging to do one or more Simple Tasks. A Simple Task is a simple change one makes in daily behaviors and that change results in a better environment. For example, if you turn the water off when you brush your teeth, you will save between 400 to 800 gallons of water in a year.

Once the majority of students are on board with Simple Tasks, students can focus upon class or school-wide projects (such as composting, a battery recycling program, etc.....).

The following represents the final results from the year-long pilot program for the entire school (Grades 9-12). The school consists of 650 students and a faculty/staff of 142. The HOP Steering Committee was: Charles Scranton (Headmaster), Neil Freebern and Jen Hyatt – (Faculty Advisors), Sean Raphael, Sam Leonard, Megan Kelley and Hannah Wright.

The HOP Committee (worker bees) and Service Learning Component was: Neil Freebern – faculty advisor, Kirdan Squires, Kevin Cassidy, Mikie Zoesch, Marie Rogers, Megan Kelly, Warren Foster, Andrew Alden, Heidi Nicholas, Max Hausslein, Jillian Deibold, Lindsey Day, Galen Mooney, Jillian Lodi, Chelasa Samani and Spencer Murdock

1. SURVEY

The first action in the new school year was to survey the recycling habits of the general student body. 335 students answered the survey with the following results:

Material	Recyclers	Non-recyclers
Paper	148	187
Glass	202	133
Cans	271	64
Bottles	282	53
Wood	60	275
Metal	34	301
Plastics	94	241
Others	42	293

Clearly, the survey results indicated that, with the exception of cans and bottles, over half the school was not involved. The upcoming Trash on the Lawn Day gave us some clear parameters about how to affect change.

2. TRASH ON THE LAWN DAY

October 13, 2006 was Trash on the Lawn Day, which was a collaboration by the Service Learning Module, the Student Council and the HOP Committee. The following represents the top action steps:

- a. Place a recycling bin in every class and hallway
- b. Place recycling bins outside near garbage cans, fields, the courtyard, near the gym and on the courtyard around the cafeteria.
- c. Educate the students about what can be recycled (i.e., you can recycle stapled papers, but not papers with paper clips)
- d. Educate students and faculty about single stream recycling
- e. Figure out whether the plastic coated paper cups for tea, coffee, hot beverages can be recycled or provide a Burr & Burton mug that students and faculty can use for their drinks. Also, sell drinks more cheaply if a re-usable container is involved.
- f. Look into drink machines where students fill up re-usable containers
- g. Look into a compost program for the cafeteria

A, b, c and d

It was concluded that there were two ways to increase the recycling within the student body. First, establish an educational program that focused upon why they should and emphasized the direct results within their school community. The administration granted the HOP program a five minute segment of each Monday morning school-wide assembly for the sole purpose of this education. HOP students under the direction of Sean Raphael wrote and performed a different skit each Monday on topics designed to increase student buy-in to taking an active role in recycling. For example, one skit had a day's worth of plastic bottles that students had thrown in the garbage and nineteen tee shirts as the narrator explained to the students that the bottles they had thrown away in one day could have been recycled into nineteen tee shirts. Sean commented on his two favorite skits:

There are two ideas I am particularly proud of. The first involved strewing garbage in the gym where assembly is held, and reading text during it. As I stood at the podium, people entered from the side doors, carrying trash. They dropped it in front of me while I spoke about pollution, then picked it up while I spoke about what could be done to reverse it's effects. Another great idea involved a speech about turning off the water while brushing your teeth, in conjunction with one person brushing their teeth over a kiddie pool while two other people with milk cartons full of water pour more water into the pool. When I say "...turn the water off" the milk cartons stop being emptied, and there is only the sound of the person brushing their teeth.

-Sean Raphael

Secondly, with the potential increase in recycling, it was observed that the school needed more recycling bins in strategic populated areas so students could recycle with less effort. A plan was put in place to provide those receptacles.

E and f

The issue of alternatives to bottled water in the cafeteria has been researched, but no solid plan has yet to be developed. The HOP committee did look into the possibility of replacing plastic silverware, cups and plates with bio-degradable cornstarch ones. The findings were conclusive that

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The HOP committee took on the feasibility of developing a composting program in the school. Krista Harness advised us to organize an audit of the cafeteria and to begin to look at logistics. The audit was performed with Krista's supervision on April 3, 2007 in the school cafeteria by: Knaack, Harness, Freibern (Faculty advisor), Kirdan Squires, Kevin Cassidy, Megan Lelley, Warren Foster, Andrew Alden, Heidi Nichols, Max Hausslein, Jillian Deibold, Marie Rogers, Liindsey Day, Galen Mooney and Juliet Lodi. The results of one day cafeteria use were as follows:

CATEGORY	WEIGHT (in pounds)	VOLUME(in gallons)
Trash	14	25
Cans	4	6
Liquids	18	2
Bottles	15	40
Plastic/Styro	14	65
Food Scraps	15	12
Meat/Dairy	6	5
PrepScraps	18	10
TOTALS		
Pre-consumer compost	18	10
Full Compost w/corn		
Starch conversion	71	94
Recyclables	19	46
Trash	14	25
TOTALS FOR SCHOOL YEAR		
Pre-consumer compost	3240	1800
Full compost w/csc	12,780.	16,920.
Recyclables	3,420	8,280.
Trash	2520	4,500.

In summary, the present cafeteria practices finds approximately 3.13 thirty gallon bags of waste every day, or 564 bags a year. This currently costs the school about \$3500. to remove this waste.

Initially, Krista recommended a two-step program in which step one was pre consumer composting of kitchen waste on site with bins supplied by AVR. Step 2 would be full composting with an approved local farmer. After several meetings with administration, cafeteria and building & grounds personnel we learned this plan had many logistical obstacles including no space for the canisters, increased burden upon the buildings & grounds staff and the fact that a similar compost project had been tried several years back and it failed because the students who began the program graduated and there was no means in place to keep the program in motion.

The committee decided there were too many roadblocks to this plan, and it was suggested that we drop the Two Step idea and try to go directly to the second step, where all compostables will be hauled away by a local farmer. After several months work, we located Mr. Jed Rubin, of North Rupert, a certified Master Composter. We are currently in final negotiations for Mr. Rubin to take tall Burr & Burton compost beginning the 2007-08 school year in August.. At this point, the school will pay a yet-to-be-negotiated hauling fee and that will be the only expense.

In addition, as of June 1st, the cafeteria has switched 90% of its wrappers, plastic silverware, plates and cups to bio-degradable Green ware with a goal of 100% by the beginning of the next school year.

3. SIMPLE TASKS

After four months of weekly educational skits which included information about getting students and faculty to buy-into pledging to do Simple Tasks, we had a final response of 682 (or 86%). This component was realized by team leader Sean Raphael and four team members. The Tasks were sent to each Class Advisory, the advisory teachers administered the program in each class and reported the tallies via computer. The results were calculated and evaluated by Sean Raphael and Max Hausselin. The data will be made available to the students when school begins in August to: remind all students of their pledge and to foster the goal of getting 100% student, faculty and staff participation in the new school year. Here are the final statistics and the projected impact the specific Simple Tasks will have upon the Burr & Burton community:

- a. 156 pledged to not litter or allow family or friends to litter, including wrappers and cigarette butts. These students will provide a cleaner campus and prevent rodents and harmful insects that litter draws.
- b. 47 pledged to reuse containers for oils, honey, peanut butter, shampoo, and lotion, with a goal of reducing new containers by 50%. These students will prevent up to 11,750 pounds of plastic and glass from being disposed of and eventually from being manufactured (saving natural resources and greenhouse gas emissions).
- c.
- d. 287 pledged to turn off the lights when they leave an empty room. These students will save an estimated 5% on their electric bills and prevent the creation of 191 tons of greenhouse emissions from polluting the air during the next year
- e. 120 pledged to turn off the water when they brush their teeth. The average person brushes 1.5 times a day and allows one gallon of water to go down the drain. Therefore, the 120 students will save approximately 43,800 gallons of water in the next year
- f. 72 pledged to take 50% less time in the shower. These students will save some 302,400 gallons of water in the coming year, cut their electric bills by 13 % and prevent 158,400 pounds of carbon dioxide from polluting the air during the next year.

4. INTEGRATION WITH THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS DEPARTMENT

Last September, Neil Freebern, Chair of the Performing Arts Dept at the Academy, approached Knaack about the possibility of integrating the HOP project at the school with the Performing Arts students. After much discussion, the Academy commissioned Knaack to compose a new musical work that incorporated his HOP and environmental messages for the drama, dance, and instrumental and vocal music ensembles. The result was a 1 1/2 hour work entitled ALLAYOONA (The Lost Civilization) and was inspired by the book *Cradle to Cradle* by William McDonogh and Michael Braungart. The Lost Civilization is a journey into the future. 2107 to be exact. The place is right here on earth. The people are our great grandchildren and the world has changed remarkably. Why? Because we, our present generation struck the final deadly blow to the earth and its environment.

But the future generation will come to the earth's rescue. Nature and its processes will be king. The earth will become sacred with no waste. Cities will function like forests and everything from computers to cars to clothes will either be biodegradable or recyclable. And during this journey into the future, we will understand why future generations refer to our generation as The Lost Civilization.

The Lost Civilization received four performances (1000 persons). Karin O'Neil was present for one of the performances and spoke about AVR, who was mentioned as a sponsor on the programs and publicity for the events.

4. PRESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

With the exception of one photo article and a Summary of the HOP school-wide activities that is slated for July publication, the press and pr students chose to focus upon the development of thee, thirty second Public Service Announcements for radio and television. The footage will be edited this summer and available to AVR for dissemination to the media in August. The scripts are as follows:

HOP PSA #1

Student 1 – If you turn off the water when you brush your teeth,

Student 2 – You will save a thousand gallons of water on one year

Student 3 – That's a huge amount of water saved!

Student 4 – And since only one percent of the water on this earth is drinkable

Student 1 – It's important for you and me to save water whenever we can

Student 2 – Don't waste water in the shower

Student 3 – In the bath tub

Student 4 – When you brush your teeth

Student 1 – Or any other time you use it

Student 2 – You can start a Help Our Planet program in your school

Student 3 – Go to www.helpourplanet.us

Student 4 – to find out how.
All students – Help Our Planet
TAG: Brought to your school by the Association of Vermont Recyclers and this station

HOP PSA#2

Student 1 – There's a new program for Vermont students
Student 2 – It's called Help Our Planet
Student 3 – And we're trying to get every student in the state
Student 4 – to pledge to little things that take no time or money
Student 1 – and if we all do them
Student 2 – we will have a huge positive impact on the environment.
Student 3 – Little things like, use less water
Student 4 – turn off the lights to save electricity
Student 1 – Carpool when you can.
Student 2 – You can start a Help Our Planet program in your school.
Student 3 – go to [www. help our planet.us](http://www.helpourplanet.us)
Student 4 – to find out how
All students – Help Our Planet
TAG: Brought to your school by the Association of Vermont Recyclers and this station

HOP PSA #3

Student 1 – The world is changing
Student 2 – Our environment is in trouble
Student 3 – Every student in Vermont can take action now
Student 4 – And it starts with simple, easy tasks
Student 1 – Don't litter
Student 2 – Turn off the water when you brush your teeth
Student 3 – Take less time in the shower
Student 4 – Turn off the lights –save electricity
Student 1 – Car pool when you can
Student 2 – You can start a Help Our Planet program in your school
Student 3 – Go to [www. help our planet.us](http://www.helpourplanet.us)
Student 4 – to find out how
All Students – Help Our Planet
TAG: Brought to your school by the Association of Vermont Recyclers and this station

Video footage and still photography documenting the HOP project throughout the school year will be archived during the summer. The HOP/AVR banner was installed in the cafeteria in February and will remain there.

5. TEACHER'S KIT – A teacher's committee consisting of Neil Freebern, Jen Hyatt and Kathy Johnson evaluated the existing kit and made suggestions to Knaack who integrated them into the following revision:

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[HOP \(Help Our Planet\)](#)

[HOP Logo](#)

[Environmental Programs
for Individual Students, Classes and School/Community Projects](#)

www.helpourplanet.us

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[Letter to teachers and students](#)

[Welcome to the HOP \(Help Our Planet\) program – a quick, easy way for teachers to foster better environmental citizenry in each student.](#)

[If you believe:](#)

- [the world's environment is in need of repair](#) [and its time for action](#)
- [individuals can make a difference](#)

- its easy to make little changes and perform simple tasks

Then you and your students can affect change!

The HOP program has three components: Simple Tasks for Individual Students, Class Projects and School-Wide Projects.

I am asking you to begin only the Simple Tasks for Individual Students. It takes about ten minutes of prep time and fifteen minutes of class time each week. The other components can be added when circumstances allow. This booklet outlines the three program components as well as other related information.

Thank you for helping our planet! ...

yours in sound recycling
The Junkman (Donald Knack)

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SIMPLE TASKS – the goal is for every student in the school to pledge to do the five Simple Tasks as outlined below.

Our earth and its environment are in trouble. Every person needs to become a better environmental citizen. It begins with each person making small changes in some of our daily activities. Take the HOP (Help Our Planet) pledge to choose the five small changes you can make that will have a huge positive effect upon the environment:

1. Turn the water off when you brush your teeth – and you will save 548 gallons of water each year
2. Instead of a ten minute shower, take a five minute shower each day – you'll save 4200 gallons of water, 2200 lbs of carbon dioxide from being produced and your electric bill will decrease by 13%
3. Turn out the lights when you leave an empty room – you'll save approximately 7/10 ton of greenhouse emissions and 5% of your electric bill in one year
4. Don't litter and don't allow family and friends to litter. This includes wrappers and cigarette butts – this results in cleaner air and water and prevents the rodents and insects that are attracted to litter
4. Don't buy products with Styrofoam packaging – the gasses and emissions from the production of Styrofoam is the second worst for the environment. Also, Styrofoam does not biodegrade. We must insist on not using something so harmful to the environment.

If students wish to choose other Simple Tasks, that is okay. Below you will find other Simple Tasks students may want to substitute or add as additional tasks they will perform.

Recycle all cans, bottles, newspapers and other recyclable items.

- Purchase larger portions of food with long shelf lives (nuts, raisins, cereal, etc...)
- Reuse containers for oils, honey, peanut butter, shampoo, body lotion, detergent, etc...
- Convince parents to purchase autos with high gas mileage & excellent emissions standards
- Don't use paper towels / paper napkins or reduce your usage. Use a cloth instead
- Use bath towels two or three times before laundering
- *Turn down the thermostat down at night and before you leave each day
- Use cold water for washes and rinse cycles
- Hang clothes outside to dry whenever the weather allows
- Don't burn trash
- Walk, bike or carpool whenever possible.
- Use non toxic substitutes for household products (most of which are superior to the commercial products): - lavender and citrus – for household & bath - vinegar – for floors and windows - baking soda – for sinks, tubs, toilets, drains, ovens, tile, etc... - borax – for tasks where baking soda is not strong enough
- *Use Bio-Pak products – for dishwashers and washing machines
- Plan trips that combine errands
- Don't use Swiffers or other disposable cleaning products
- As packaging accounts for 40 to 50% of household waste, pledge to reduce packaging. For example, taking your own bags and containers to your food store will save 500 bags during a one year period
- Buy used garments, furniture and accessories whenever possible.
- Buy only what you need – not what you want
- Before you purchase anything, think about how its manufacture impacts the earth and if there's an environmental concern, don't buy it
- Use energy efficient lighting and light bulbs
- Discard motor oil, gasoline, anti freeze and florescent lighting in the proper waste facilities

- Don't dump garbage or waste in places not designated for dumping
- Help parents buy products made from recycled materials whenever possible (such as socks, paper, bicycle frames, motor oil, sleeping bags, carpets, shoes, pencils, building materials, etc...)
- Start a composting program in your home
- Make Less/Less/Less a part of your life: less gas, less preservatives and less packaging

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CLASS PROJECTS

In addition to the Simple Tasks for Individual Students, a class may wish to take on a group project. Here are some examples:

- Re-commit to the earth – in this computer age when technology reigns supreme, re-commit to the earth by focusing upon the rain, wind, plants and animals and how we depend upon them. Identify special circumstances that may exist in your community –both positive and negative. Share your findings with your community (see NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT), and provide suggestions for positive improvement.
- Each student brings to school something from wood or metal which can be reused in a task different from that of its original task. Document the old use and the new use for all participating students.
- Study and make a chart of the vegetables, seafood, meats and drinks that contain dangerous, concentrated or unsafe levels of toxins, pesticides, or genetically altered components. Chart by food types (fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, seafood and drinks). Then make the lists within each category in order of either the “most toxic to least” or “least to most”. Now design and implement a plan to get this information out to everyone in the community (see NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT).
- Perform a Garbage Audit – collect the trash from a single source in the school every day for two weeks. The source could be the school cafeteria, a local business, a student's family or another classroom. Each day, inspect the trash to learn the ratio of garbage to materials that could be recycled (but weren't). Chart each day's ratio as well as notes on reoccurring materials that could be recycled but aren't. At the end of two weeks, calculate a final ratio of garbage to recyclables in the garbage, make a complete listing of materials that need to be recycled as well as any additional suggestions to better the ratio of recyclables to garbage.
- Grow organic food for your lunchroom. Start small, with one item (such as lettuce). This could eventually be expanded into a schoolwide project.
- Set up a system to collect and recycle electronic items, computers, batteries, cell phones, etc... This project can also be expanded into a school-wide project. •Clean up the school grounds on a regular basis
- Start a composting program in the school lunchroom. This could be expanded into a school-wide project

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SCHOOL-WIDE/COMMUNITY PROJECTS

A group of students or a class (or all classes in the school) designs a long-term project with a community component which results in a better environment for the community. Here are some examples :

- In a small town where there are not adequate litter bins, undertake all phases of a plan to place litter containers where they are needed. This project includes the necessary governmental preparations & permits and procurement & preparation of the containers (volunteers to prep and paint as well as businesses to donate materials and money for expenses). The final component would be the resources to disseminate the bins as well as a public relations campaign to local media to educate the community about its new opportunity to help our planet (see NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT).
- Students would look at what's missing in their community / school – based upon what other schools in other communities are doing / not doing regarding pollution or environmental concerns. For example, in a community with no active recycling program in the school, set up and administer such a program. Or, in a large metropolitan area, where there are large number of SUVs (sport utility vehicles), students could develop and produce a public awareness program (using local newspapers, radio, television, web, etc..) about the negative effects an SUV has on the environment with an encouragement for people to not purchase them.
- Develop a program to encourage local merchants to sell recycled products and products made from recycled materials whenever possible. Then publicize the information to the community (see NOTE ABOUT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT).
- Create, develop and disseminate a public awareness program to educate the community about how pollution has affected foods (i.e., fruits, vegetables, meat, etc...)

•Create and develop in your community (your town or just your school) programs to ban (possibly by town ordinance) certain products or actions because they harm to the environment (i.e., Styrofoam, SUVs, burning trash, etc...).

•In a small town, develop or create a uniform garbage & recycled materials pick-up for all citizens paid for by the taxpayers. This enables complete control of 100% of the recycling and the waste hauler's faithfulness to the proper handling of all materials.

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MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Some projects mention informing the community about your work results. The standard way is to write a news release (sample news release follows) and disseminate it to all media via email. Also send copies to all area town managers, mayors, etc.... as well as all elected officials at the state and federal levels. The following is a format for news release writing that most media expect in the following order:

1. Identify it is a news release and that it is For Immediate Release
2. Date, contact person and contact info if media needs further information.
3. Title of your news release. It should give a brief, concise summary of what you want to convey.
4. The Body begins with the location of the news event and then gives the news-worthy information. List this information in order of importance: the most important facts down to the least important ones. News editors sometimes shorten stories and they do this by deleting information from the bottom up.
5. Include calls to action as well as quotations about the news event from important people connected to the news.
6. End by acknowledging any and all sponsors, etc...
7. Indicate "END" for clarity.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Deb Jones, djones@hotmail.com
2004

September 9,

FREE BROCHURE FOR HEALTHY EATING

Manchester, VT... The New School announces the availability of a free brochure to all residents entitled: Toxicity in the Foods We Eat. This brochure outlines the various food most people commonly eat, by food categories (meats, vegetables, grains and others) and classifies them in a list from the safest (least amount of pesticides, preservatives, hormones, etc...) to the worst. For example, most strawberry producers apply heavy pesticides upon the plants making strawberries a very toxic fruit unless its properly washed. "This brochure will help our citizens make informed choices about the foods they eat" says New School Principal Vivian Fox. All residents will receive their free copy of this brochure in the Oct 25th issue of The Pennysaver. For additional copies, call 802-444-0000. The creation of this brochure was a Class Project at the New School as part of the Be Hip... HOP (Help Our Planet) Project sponsored by The Vermont Association of Recyclers, The State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and Casella Waste Management. The Be Hip... HOP is a project designed to teach school age children how to become better environmental citizens. END.

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VERMONT STANDARDS & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The following Standards should be achieved through implementation of any of the three the HOP programs:

Reason and Problem Solving Standards

- 2.1 – Question/Problem Solving
- 2.2 – Approach/Abstract and Creative Thinking

Personal Development Standards

- 1.1 – Worth and Competence/Healthy Choices
- 1.2 – Making Decisions/Relationships

Civic Responsibility Standards

- 4.1 – Service/Human Diversity/Change

History and Social Science Standards

- 6.3 – Citizenship
- 6.4 – Diversity and Unity

6.6 – Identity and Interdependence

Science, Math and Technology Standards

7.1 – Inquiry, Experimentation and Theory

7.2 – Mathematical Problem Solving and Reasoning

7.4 – Systems 7.5 – The Living World

7.6 – The Universe, Earth, and Environment/Design and Technology

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SHARE WITH OTHER STUDENTS

In addition to the reward of excellent community service, all students who participate in either a Class Project or a SchoolWide Project will be eligible to attend the Youth Environmental Summit (YES), sponsored each Spring by the Association of Vermont Recyclers, in which all students will share the details of their accomplishments with each other. The day will culminate with a Junkjam led by The Junkman in which all students will grab a provided stick and a recycled material and experience the tremendous power of performing simple percussion music as a part of a group. The use of the recycled materials will also present a philosophical parallel to the recycling and reuse messages that will permeate this event. Teachers need to go to <http://www.junkmusic.org/hop> to register their specific projects in order to be eligible for YES. For more information on the Youth Environmental Summit, contact Krista Harness, Association of Vermont Recyclers, yec@vtrecyclers.org, 802.454.8400.

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A GUIDE TO STARTING A HOP PROJECT in your school

by Katherine M. Quimby

Getting Started:

Form a Leadership Team:

In order for “Help Our Planet” to work at your school, you need a team approach. The environmental club is the natural core, but if your club is small, you’ll help the program succeed if you can collaborate with another student group, whether it’s a science club, an art club, or a school service club. Eventually you’ll be reaching out to other school groups (See Roll-Out).

Get Familiar with the Mission:

Other students, including some of the ones you’ll be recruiting, will ask, “What’s ‘Help Our Planet’ all about?” Make sure you know so you can tell them right away. Need a sound byte version? Here it is: [Fill in the blank]

Find Adult Allies:

You’ll also need buy-in from key adults, including your school principal and the head of your physical plant department. When you meet with these administrators, be prepared with some facts. Nothing pleases building superintendents more than learning that a program like “Help Our Planet” will save them money in the long run.

Set Your Calendar:

Knowing what is happening when at your school will help you plan when you will introduce “Help Our Planet” to the rest of the school. Mark the weeks when nothing can happen because of vacations, testing, or class trips. Schedule planning, a time to conduct an initial survey, a kick-off activity, and any and all events that will be included in “Help Our Planet.” Make sure you include some fun activities that will make students more open to your message—a recycled art day, face painting, or tie-dying T-shirts (organic cotton ones, with Earth-friendly dyes, of course!) for example.

Local Lasts:

“Help Our Planet” will be most successful if it’s adjusted to fit your school. We know every school is different. No one knows your school and your fellow students better than you, which is why you are the ones who need to:

- 1) Identify your school’s assets
Does an art teacher always do a unit with found objects? Does a Consumer Science class want to start a school vegetable garden? Is there a way to involve these classes with your Help Our Planet project?
- 2) Identify opportunities to access groups of students such as:
 - school-wide assemblies
 - advisories
 - study halls
 - activity periods
 - carnivals

cafeteria
sports events

How many students you'll be able to access at a time will determine how you introduce "Help Our Planet" at your school. If you are able to introduce it to the whole school, you'll need to decide whether you want to "go for broke" or whether you'd like to build your success by introducing the program to one or two smaller, sympathetic groups first.

- 3) Develop the approach you'll take at each event. If you're making a presentation in a study hall, it will look different than a skit performed in front of the whole school, or than a booth you'll design for spring carnival.
 - Key facts about marketing
 - People need to be exposed to an idea 3 times before they remember it.
 - Humor works!
 - Images are more powerful than words. A pyramid of 42 one-gallon jugs will stick in people's heads much longer than an announcement or even a poster telling them how much water they'll save if they switch to a low-flow showerhead.
- 4) Decide how you'll implement "Help Our Planet." The goal is to get each student in your school to commit to all five Simple Tasks, but you can figure out the best way to make that happen at your school.

Will you give people a choice of one of the five?
Do you want to focus on the task your group feels strongest about and then add others as people buy in?

How are you going to document people's commitment? The possibilities include going paperless and using spreadsheets, having large posters, using certificates or any other idea you come up with

Where are you going to have the sign-up? Central locations such as the school lobby or cafeteria might work at your school, or you might want to visit study halls or set up a booth at Homecoming or Winter Carnival.
- 5) Develop a way to track progress. The possibilities include:
 - Spreadsheets
 - The classic "thermometer"
 - The signed posters

Roll-Out:

Expand Your Team:

Now you know how you want to implement the program, it's time to expand your leadership team. Reach out to other groups of student leaders—student government, the honor society, the artists, the band, athletes, the cheerleaders. If they say they're over-committed, ask them to at least be the first to sign the "Help Our Planet" pledge and set an example for the rest of the students.

Use Their Strengths:

Once you've got commitment from some of these groups, draw on their talents. Ask the cheerleaders to come up with a "Help Our Planet" cheer; have the basketball team demonstrate their skills by dunking recyclable cans and bottles into recycling containers, not trash cans. Ask the art club to come up with a logo and a giant poster for your schools' "Help Our Planet" initiative, or commit to creating a giant sculpture out of a recycled can collection. Get the drama club to write a skit or a radio drama that could be performed over the PA system.

Plan Your Kick-Off

Any one of the activities your expanded team comes up with could serve as your kick-off.

You may also want to schedule a special event such as Trash on the Lawn Day or a Junk Jam (visit [avr website] for more information on these activities.)

Hold Your Kickoff and Sign-Up

The event is underway, your "Help Our Planet" sign-up is happening along with it. Smile! You've done it. Take pictures of it all so you'll remember.

Publicity:

Spread the word about what you're doing. Take photos of events, write press releases and send them to your local papers—they're always looking for good news about young people. Spread the word: Acting together we can all "Help Our Planet!" Get photos in your yearbook.

Assessment:

After the event, track your progress. It's not unusual for programs to start out slow or small. Persistence pays. Your goal is to get everyone to commit to doing the "Five Simple Tasks," but if you get everyone to commit to one, you've come a long way.

If the numbers are smaller than you'd hoped, try to figure out why. Talk to some of your allies about the problem—and plan another event, something different from the first one. Would a raffle work at your school? Everyone who makes a commitment could get a chance to win a donated prize? (Make sure the prizes are consistent with your message.)

Assistance:

You don't have to do this on your own. If you need help, visit the "Help Our Planet" website, contact the Association of Vermont Recyclers, or call your local regional solid waste management district.

Celebrate

When you reach a major milestone—half the students have committed, or everyone has committed to one task—celebrate! Make it fun—a battle of the bands, an ice cream party, a "Used Music Swap with music playing in the background," whatever works for your school and is in keeping with the "Help Our Planet" theme. Even at these celebrations, make sure students who are suddenly inspired can pledge to "Help Our Planet." When you reach your final goal, plan a major celebration!

What's Next:

You did it! Everybody's on board. You've got a tremendous—and well-deserved—feeling of accomplishment. But what do you do with it?

Pass it on—make sure that incoming freshmen know that "Helping Our Planet" is something everyone at your school does.

Pass it on—share "Helping Our Planet" with another school

Make a new commitment—Is there another task your school could work on, such as a school compost project, or starting a student carpool sign-up, or including locally grown foods on the cafeteria menu.

"Help Our Planet's" goal is to spread awareness of and commitment to acting in ways that, well, help our planet. Once the "Five Simple Tasks" are complete, it's up to you to act on that awareness and commitment. We know you can do it, because look what you've done already!

To the "Help Our Planet" Advisor:

You'll help the program succeed if you share leadership with students in the core group. Ask questions that call for a variety of responses—"What opportunities does our school offer for contact with groups of students?" is a much better approach than saying, "Since we have weekly programs, that's the logical place for us to make our presentation. What do you think?" Let the students do the thinking!

You'll help the program most when you make sure students stay on task and moving in the right direction, when you praise students for achievement, and when you handle anything that can only be dealt with by an adult.

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ENVIRONMENTAL TIDBITS

Source: www.nih.gov/od/ors/ds/recycle/facts.html

In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his / her weight in garbage. Each adult will leave about 90,000 lbs. of trash for his / her children. * Recycling all your wastepaper, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 850 lbs. per year. * By recycling one glass bottle, you save enough energy to light a 100 watt light bulb for four hours.

Source: www.recyclingit.com/recyfact.htm

* Every three months, Americans throw away enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial airliner fleet. * You can make 20 recycled aluminum cans with the same amount of energy it takes to make one new one.

Source: www.resourcefulschools.org *Each ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4000 KW of energy and 7000 gallons of water. *Americans throw away 25 trillion Styrofoam cups each year. *Every Sunday, Americans do not recycle 90% of the newspaper they read. That wastes 500,000 trees every Sunday.

Source: www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=552 Five Reasons to Recycle 1. It conserves our valuable natural resources 2. It saves energy 3. It saves clean air and water 4. It saves landfill space 5. It saves money and creates jobs

Source: www.moscowrecycling.com *The average person throws away 5 lbs. of garbage each day and over half of that could be composted *It takes 3 1/2 barrels of oil and 7000 gallons of water to process one ton of wood into paper.

Source: Transportation Alternatives *People who change their motor oil at home dump an Exxon Valdez worth of oil into the ground every 2 1/2 weeks.

Source: New Transportation Vision *Ground level air pollution from cars is estimated to cause 30,000 deaths per year
*The US could save 33 million gallons of gasoline each day if the average commuter passenger were increased by one person.

Source: People Power *In Denmark, they charge a 200% sales tax on all automobile purchases and they have a \$1000. per year auto registration fee. That money is used to benefit public and bicycle transportation.

Source: American Forest & Paper Association *Every ton of paper recycled saves 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
General Reminders About Recycling *The general recycling symbol does not mean the product is totally recyclable. Look for the percentage of how much recycled material the object contains. You are looking for the highest percent of "postconsumer" recycled content.

Source: Common Knowledge *Under normal conditions, paper decomposes in 2 to 5 months, an orange peel in 6 months, milk cartons in 5 years, cigarette butts and plastic bags in 10 to 12 years, a plastic bottle in 50 to 80 years, a disposable diaper in 75 years, a tin can in 100 years, a beer can in 200 to 500 years and Styrofoam – never.

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The following list contains web resources for information about a better environment:

www.acterra.org - activists - Zero Waste Communities Strategy
www.anr.state.vt.us - Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
www.bikeroute.com/EnviroFacts.htm
www.ceres.org - Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economics
www.earthcare.org - Enviro education activities geared toward teens
www.earthday.net - Earth Day Network
www.earthjustice.com - Environmental Law
www.egbar.org/teachers.html – EGBAR Foundation Environmental Curriculum
www.elpnet.org - Environmental Leadership Program
www.environmentaldefense.org - legal side environmental issues
www.epa.gov/enviro/ - EPA's databases www.epa.gov/osw/ - EPA Office of Solid Waste
www.erarecycles.com -provides info on how to recycle different things-technical
www.grassroots.org - free business service to non-profits, many links here
www.grrn.org - Grass roots recycling network
www.massmees.org - Mass. Enviro Education Society
www.naaee.org - North America Association for Environmental Education
www.neeee.org - New England Environmental Education Alliance
www.newdream.org - Center for New American Dream-Community and Outreach
www.newsrelief.com/contentareas/scienceinthenewssample.html - Newspaper lesson about the change in ecology in an area
www.nofavt.org/programs/vtfeed.php - Vermont FEED Program - organic, sustainable farming education
www.nrc-recycle.org - National Recycling Coalition
www.nrdc.org - Natural Resources Defense Council- publish Onearth Magazine
www.oneearth.org -Earth Communications Office: env. activists Hollywood
www.recycleamerica.com - Combo of Waste Management and The Peltz Group, an educational, practical resource
www.shelburnefarms.org - Shelburne Farms, environmental education center
www.sierraclub.org - online magazine for Sierra Club www.usgbc.org - US Green Building Council's Certification Program- w/ recycling
www.vtrecyclers.org - Association of Vermont Recyclers (sponsor of the Be Hip... HOP program)
www.vermontsweep.org - Vermonts Statewide Environmental Education Program
www.wastenews.com - Waste management industry issues, opinions, etc
www.10percentchallenge.org - 10% Challenge, global warming education and emissions control tips

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6. SUMMARY OF THE YEAR

Without question, the level of consciousness has been extensively raised and the level of actual accomplishments for 180 days of work is laudable. A total of 28,107 contacts were made with the students from August until May. In summary, those accomplishments are:

1. The establishment of a full composting program in the cafeteria that will yield a savings in hauling fees of approximately \$1994. per year, have all students practicing the art, preventing some 564 thirty gallon bags of

garbage from being disposed of, enabling 12,780 pounds of bio-degradable waste to be returned to the earth, and in the process being better environmental citizens. Also, the cafeteria has gone from not using bio-degradable plates, cups, wrappers and silverware to 90% bio-degradable, with a goal of 100% within the next several months. This alone, will redirect 2,520 pounds of waste from the garbage back into the earth.

2. The establishment of environmental awareness and better environmental citizenry is now a part of the Burr & Burton culture
3. The establishment of more recycling bins throughout the school and grounds to enable ease of the recycling act
4. The Establishment of the Simple Tasks in which students chose a Simple Task which they pledged to adopt into their daily lives:

*156 pledged to not litter or allow family or friends to litter, including wrappers and cigarette butts. These students will provide a cleaner campus and prevent rodents and harmful insects that litter draws.

*47 pledged to reuse containers for oils, honey, peanut butter, shampoo, lotion, with a goal of reducing new containers by 50%. These students will prevent up to 11,750 pounds of plastic and glass from being disposed of and eventually from being manufactured - saving natural resources and greenhouse gas emissions.

*287 pledged to turn off the lights when they leave an empty room. These students will save an estimated 5% on electric bills, reduce their usage by 5% and prevent the creation of 8.61 tons of greenhouse emissions from polluting the air during the next year

*120 pledged to turn off the water when they brush their teeth. The average person brushes 1.5 times a day and allows one gallon of water to go down the drain. Therefore, the 120 students will save approximately 43,800 gallons of water in the next year

*72 pledged to take 50% less time in the shower. These students will save some 302,400 gallons of water in the coming year, cut their electric bills by 13 % and prevent 158,400 pounds of carbon dioxide from polluting the air during the next year.

Respectfully submitted on 28 June, 2007,

Donald Knaack
HOP/AVR

Neil Freebern
Burr & Burton