Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com.

- www.epa.gov/kids/
  Students and teachers can access information and activities on recycling, pollution and many other elements of environmental health through this site by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- www.kidshealth.org/kid/asthma Basics/what/asthma.html
  This informative site was developed by The Nemours Foundation’s Center for Children’s Health Media. It provides articles written for children about what asthma is and how it is treated.

- www.trash4kids.org/fieldtrips.html
  Take a virtual field trip to a landfill, compost facility or scrap yard by visiting this web site created by the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, Illinois.

Suggested Print Resources


Environmental Health

Grades K–4

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting programs in the series Health for Children.

Children are faced with many different decisions each day and find themselves in situations that can affect their emotional and physical health. As such, it is important for students to learn how to make healthy choices, develop healthy habits, and set personal health goals. Each program addresses an important topic for living a healthy lifestyle. Students are encouraged to think about the decisions they make and how those decisions impact their well-being. They are presented with strategies for making good personal choices, practicing refusal skills, seeking help from adults, and being a good friend to others.
**Program Overview**

People can stay healthy by keeping their environment healthy. We all rely upon natural resources to help us live our lives. You can do your part to protect natural resources by remembering the three R's: reduce, reuse, recycle. Air, land and water pollution are unfortunate occurrences that have an effect on the environment and our health. Air pollution includes automobile exhaust, smoke from factories and burning trash. Polluted air can sometimes trigger allergies and cause asthma attacks. Litter is an example of land pollution. Garbage should always be properly disposed of. You can sort recyclables and take them to a recycling center and you can make special arrangements for the removal of hazardous wastes. Making a compost pile is a pollution-free way to get rid of garbage and help plants grow. Never drink water from lakes, rivers or oceans. Many of these water sources, including groundwater, have fallen prey to pollution and so the water must be treated before it is safe for drinking. Sanitation workers, scientists and even kids can all be health heroes in the effort to make the planet a cleaner and healthier place to live.

**Vocabulary**

**environment** — All of the conditions, both natural and man-made, in which people live.

**natural resources** — Materials that are necessary for living things and are created in nature.

**reduce** — To use less of something.

**reuse** — To use something again.

**recycle** — To collect used materials to make into new things.

**pollution** — Chemicals and wastes that poison the land, air and water. Pollution can be caused by many things, such as litter, oil spills and exhaust from cars.

**smog** — Air pollution that contains a mixture of fog and smoke.

**asthma** — A condition that causes difficulty breathing. When an asthma attack occurs, the airways that lead to the lungs are constricted. An inhaler is often used to shoot medicine into the airway and lungs to open them up quickly.

**landfill** — A large area that is used to dump and bury garbage. It is lined with plastic or clay to prevent anything dangerous from seeping into the ground beneath it.

**hazardous wastes** — Trash that must be disposed of in a special way because it contains chemicals or other poisons that are harmful to the environment (e.g., paint, car batteries, automobile oil).

**compost** — A mixture of decayed plant materials that is used to fertilize soil.

**groundwater** — A pooling of water that collects underground after it soaks through the soil and reaches a layer of rock that prevents it from going any deeper.

**acid rain** — Rain, snow, sleet or hail that has a high concentration of harmful sulfurous and nitric acids. Acid rain forms when pollutants from burning fossil fuels combine with moisture in the air.

**chlorine** — A chemical compound used as a disinfectant in waste water treatment plants and swimming pools to kill bacteria.

**Pre-viewing Discussion**

Before viewing the program, engage your students in a brainstorming activity to determine their prior knowledge about environmental health. Use the following questions to help students recall their own ideas:

- What natural resources do you need to stay healthy?
- What are some examples of pollution?
- How can pollution affect you?
- What can you do to make your environment a healthier place to live?

Additionally, record any questions that students may have. Return to these questions after viewing the program to see if they were answered in the show.

**Focus Questions**

1. What are some examples of natural resources?
2. Name the “three R’s” and give an example of each.
3. What is air pollution? How can you help to reduce it?
4. What is noise pollution? How does it affect people’s health?
5. What is considered one of the biggest causes of an asthma attack?
6. Where is trash taken after it is collected?
7. How should hazardous wastes be disposed of?
8. How is compost made?
9. What can cause water to become polluted and unhealthy for living things?
10. What water should people never drink?
11. What are some jobs that are dedicated to keeping the environment clean?

**Follow-up Discussion & Activities**

- Investigate careers geared toward reducing pollution and maintaining a healthy environment (e.g., pollution control technician, city planner, park naturalist, wildlife biologist). Plan a career day by inviting people in environmental professions to speak or by having students report on specific careers. (Visit [www.khake.com/page46.html](http://www.khake.com/page46.html) for a list of related careers.)
- Lead the class in a campus clean-up, picking up litter and identifying any other environmental health issues present in the school. (Before going, have students take a similar “virtual trip” by visiting [www.nrdc.org/greensquad/](http://www.nrdc.org/greensquad/))
- Plastics are stamped with a number code (1-7) for sorting at recycling centers. Have students bring in recyclable plastic items from home. Sort plastics by their number code. Use the list found at [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dshn/redrecy/plastic.htm](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dshn/redrecy/plastic.htm) to identify what new products are made from each group of plastic items.
- While chlorinated pool water is considered harmful to drink, drinking water is also treated with a very small amount of chlorine. Discuss with students how a chemical can be helpful in small amounts and poisonous at the same time. Conduct research to find the difference between chlorinated swimming pool water, drinking water that is treated with chlorine and untreated drinking water that could be contaminated with disease-causing bacteria.