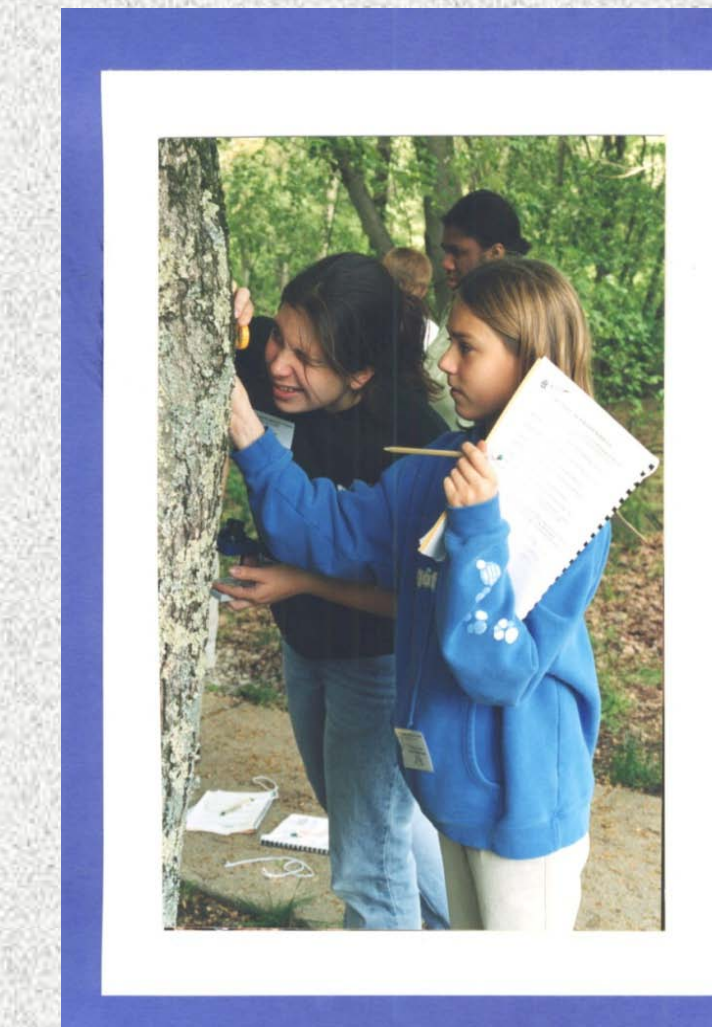




4-H Environmental Ambassador Program



Background Information

The demand on our environment continues to increase in direct proportion to population growth. Society is faced with issues related to air, land and water impacted by the disposal and management of solid waste. It is vital to address these issues and concerns effectively and efficiently while maintaining a balance among the environment, human health and the economy. Caring for the environment is one of the most critical challenges facing youth today. Today's young people, as the future leaders and inhabitants of our earth must take action to address these issues and create needed changes.

Program Description

The 4-H Environmental Ambassador Program is a 3 day/2 night conference that provides an opportunity for youth (grades 5-7) from a three-county region in southern New Jersey to study waste management and environmental issues and to become ambassadors in their schools and communities.

This program brings conservation, waste management alternatives and environmental issues to life through a variety of activities that use experiential, inquiry-based, interactive and cooperative learning techniques. Participants learn about alternatives such as recycling, landfilling, resource recovery, source reduction, composting and sewage treatment.

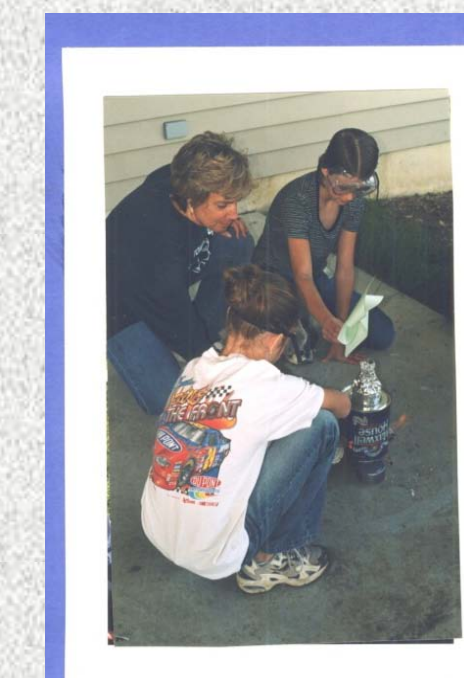
Hands-on activities consist of building a mini incinerator and landfill; constructing a compost bin; making an aquifer; habitat investigations and a town meeting. Youth explore a materials separation/recycling facility; landfill; composting facility; wastewater treatment plant and waste-to-energy plant.



Program Objectives

Participants will:

- become aware of environmental issues.
- develop scientific investigation, critical thinking & decision making skills.
- learn about waste management alternatives.
- develop an understanding of the "Reduce, Reuse & Recycle" philosophy; implement the process and share knowledge with others.
- develop the knowledge and confidence to become active in their schools and communities in addressing waste management issues.
- develop an understanding of waste management and environmental career opportunities.



Collaborators

- Wheelabrator Gloucester, Inc. Resource Recovery Facility
- Cumberland & Gloucester County Improvement Authorities
- Salem County Utilities Authority – Clean Communities Program
 - Landis Sewage Authority
 - Vineland Office of Recycling
- Atlantic Community & Cumberland County College
 - Elementary & Middle Schools
 - Giordano's of Vineland
 - Wal-Mart



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Impact

Program impact data has been collected from participants utilizing an end-of-program evaluation, a pre-test and post-test survey and an individual plan of action. Findings have documented that the 4-H Environmental Ambassador Program has met the objectives. This program has reached 861 youth and 214 adults from 25 school districts since 1998.

Evaluation data over the past 14 years revealed the following results:

➤99% of the youth and adults increased their scores from the pre-test to post-test by an average of 38% in 1998; 31% in 1999; 45% in 2000; 36% in 2001; 42% in 2003 and 2004; 41% in 2005; 39% in 2006; 47% in 2007; 96% in 2008; 33% in 2009; 37% in 2010; 39% in 2011 and 2012.

➤566 participants or 75% self-reported an increase in knowledge of waste management alternatives.

➤417 participants or 67% self-reported an increase in knowledge of items that can be recycled.

➤79% of the participants indicated on the end-of-program evaluation that they learned "A Lot" about waste management and environmental conservation while attending this program.

➤100% of the participants indicated that they would recommend this program to other students.

➤99% of the participants rated the program as "Great" or "Good" on the end-of-program evaluation.

Some examples of how participants used or shared the information they learned include developing an educational video program about waste management for a local television station, starting a food compost program in school and expanding efforts to recycle.

Evaluation data from the 2012 4-H Environmental Ambassador Program include:

➤ 85% of the participants self-reported an increase in knowledge of waste management alternatives

➤85% of the participants indicated on the end-of-program evaluation that they learned "A Lot" about waste management and environmental conservation while attending this program.