

Educational Benefits of the Green Flag Program



Green Flag Overview

The Green Flag Program is a new project of the national Child Proofing Our Communities Campaign, coordinated by the Center for Health, Environment and Justice. The program's goal is to help communities make their schools healthier places, and to educate students about environmental issues. The program engages students and adults in researching questions and finding answers by educating peers and advocating positive environmental practices in schools.

With each positive step that school communities take, the Green Flag Program presents awards to the school and students, culminating in the presentation of the Green Flag Award of Environmental Leadership.

Educational Features of the Green Flag Program

- The program's educational philosophy draws from the well known State Environmental and Educational Roundtable (SEER) report. The report described the "Environment as an Integrated Context" approaches taken by the 40 schools that were surveyed.
- The Green Flag Program provides students with an opportunity to conduct investigation through hands on exploration of issues affecting their school and community.
- It is flexibly designed to function at all primary school grades and is ideal to fulfill high-school service learning requirements.
- The program educates students about the sciences, social studies and public policy, by engagement in a process of promoting and implementing environmental activities and programs. These programs can be applied to curricula in accordance with the National Science Curriculum Standards.
- The program teaches students how to employ methodical research towards making oral and written presentations, and towards achieving a tangible goal with obvious benefits.
- The program teaches cooperative learning by encouraging a team approach to problem solving, by employing organizational skills and public speaking, and by requiring students to form a group, recruit peers, and hold meetings.
- The program provides free guidance from issue experts and educators to assist students as needed, which both enhances the students' educational opportunities in specific fields and also connects them with local community organizations.
- The program promotes an interdisciplinary educational process that can involve teachers, community members, school facility and administrative staff.

Positive Results

- The (SEER) report concluded that the learning programs described as "Environment as an Integrated Context" produce improved standardized test scores in several disciplines, reduce classroom management problems, and promote a greater engagement in learning. For more information on the report see: <http://www.seer.org/pages/GAP.html>
- The Preliminary Report of the Maryland Green School Executive Summary indicates that the program's "Green Schools" have a higher science achievement than other schools.