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Environment, HELDREF Publications, 4000 Albemarle St. NW, Washington DC 20016. A scientific look at environmental issues.

Science News, Science Service Inc., 1719 N St. NW, Washington DC 20036, (202) 785-2255.

Seventh Generation Catalog, Colchester VT 05446, 1-800-456-1177.

For books available through SEAC,
send check or money order to:

SEAC
PO Box 31909
Philadelphia, PA 19104

You can get our catalog (the SEAC
Sourcebook) by giving us a call.

THE



High School Organizing Guide

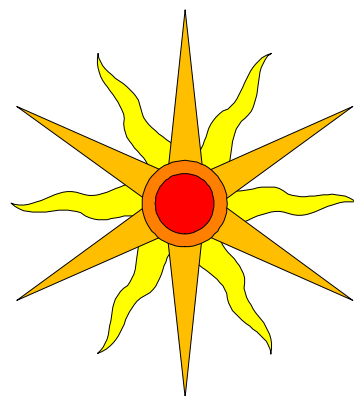
REACH OUT!

THE SEAC HIGH SCHOOL ORGANIZING GUIDE

A Friendly Forewarning

This is a comprehensive, up-to-date pamphlet published by SEAC solely for high school students. Right before your very eyes is a compilation of suggestions given by high school veterans, as well as attendees. Basically we are here to help you get a grasp on how to start and efficiently run a campus environmental group. This guide will (hopefully) help to answer the simplest to the more challenging problems students face dealing with campus clubs.

We advise that this manual not a document whose instructions must be followed to the letter. Rather, we suggest that you use this as a reference tool full of helpful hints and suggestions. If you happen to come across a more effective way of handling a problem, call and tell us your story-we are all ears.



High School students are the most enthusiastic and hardworking group of folks in our communities, not to mention the most idealistic. "Our goal is not impossible-we just want to change the world. Students of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your apathy!" says Tim Reardon. So, let's gear up in our environmentally sound garb, grab some environmentally responsible supplies, and pack some environmentally conscious snacks. And if you have any spare time, try starting up a club to get students involved in the environmental issues in your area.

US Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG), 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington DC 20003, (202) 546-9707.

Recycling

American Paper Institute, 260 Madison Ave., NY NY 10016, (212) 340-0500.

National Recycling Coalition, 1727 King St., Suite 105, Alexandria VA 22314, (202) 625-6406.

Environmental Justice

Citizens for a Better Environment (CBE), 501 Second St. Suite 305, San Francisco CA 94107, (415) 243-8373.

Earth Island Institute's Urban Habitat, 300 Broadway, Suite 28, San Francisco CA 94133-3312, (415) 788-3666.

EDGE: The Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Organizations, 785 Market St. 3rd Floor, San Francisco CA 94103, (415) 284-7215.

Environmental Health Coalition, 1717 Kettner Blvd. Suite 100, San Diego CA 92101, (619) 235-0281.

Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), P.O. Box 485, Bemidji MN 56601, (218) 751-4967.

Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ), 211 10th St. SW, Albuquerque NM 87102, (505) 242-0416. Southeast Regional Economic & Justice Network, c/o Southerners for Economic Justice, P.O. Box 240, Durham NC 27702, (919) 683-1361.

Good Magazines

Buzzworm's Earth Journal, 2305 Canyon Blvd. Suite 206, Boulder CO 80302, (303) 442-1969.*

E: The Environmental Magazine, P.O. Box 699, Mount Morris IL

necicut Ave., Washington DC 20036, (202) 429-8873.

National Wildlife Federation Campus Ecology Program, (202) 797-5468. Excellent introductory info for your school.*

Union of Concerned Scientists, 26 Church St., Cambridge MA 02258, 1-800-646-8272.*

Defense/Nuclear

Council for a Livable World, 11 Beacon St., Boston MA 02108.

Critical Mass Energy Project, 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington DC 20003.

Nuclear Free America, 325 E. 25th St., Baltimore MD 21218.

Hunger/Sustainable Agriculture

International Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, 1701 University Ave. SE, Room 202, Minneapolis MN 55414, (612) 331-1099.

Oxfam America, 115 Broadway, Boston MA 02166, (617) 482-1211.*

The Rodale Institute, 33 E. Minor St., Emmaus PA 18098-0015, (215) 967-5171. Low-chemical Farming workshops here and hunger prevention projects overseas.

United Farmworkers of America AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 62, La Paz Keene CA 93531, (805) 822-5571.*

Lobbying Legal Issues

League of Conservation Voters, 1707 L St. NW, Room 550, Washington DC 20036. Keeps voting tabs on each politician.*

Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, 2044 Fillmore St., San Francisco CA 94115.

Now It's Time For An Introduction

We, the high school students of the world, were born into a society almost completely ignorant of the damages it has inflicted upon mother nature and itself. The selfishness and careless greed many people harbor has ultimately caused irreversible damage to our ecosystem, as well as harmed and killed many fellow human beings.

Deforestation threatens to cut off the world's air supply and leave millions of plants, animals, insects and nations of indigenous peoples homeless; air pollution kills hundreds of innocent victims each year; global warming awaits to upset the entire climate system; acid rain poisons our waters; over-consumption is quickly depleting non-renewable, life-dependent resources; and corporations blatantly exhibit racism by targeting communities of color to "host" incinerators, toxic waste dumps, landfills, and other unwanted disposal facilities. Worst of all, apathy threatens to condemn us to a planet that will fall to pieces before people learn to care. This generation will have to make the most critical decisions concerning the future of this planet and society-whether to continue the legacy of destruction, or begin a new tradition of sustainability.

Now is not the time for us to cry about the problems already created, now is not the time for us to be apathetic, and now is not the time to allow these global and societal problems to spin completely out of control. Now is the time to take our futures in our own hands and send a message to our elders that we want and deserve better than what we've inherited.

Change can happen, but only with a lot of hard work, dedication, education, time and action. Working together is the key to creating this needed change. High school students, unfortunately, do not have all of the resources college activists do. This does create problems for us, but we do have one vital resource most colleges don't have-the support of the surrounding community. High schools have the ability to network locally and more effectively than the geographically widespread colleges. The problems we encounter can only make us stronger as a whole, because we gain the knowledge of how to deal with these problems in a creative and productive manner.



The High School Program

Authored by the participants of the

SEAC National High School Strategy Session

Our Definition of the Environment

What is the environment? Some say it's where we work, live and play. Others say it's the wilderness, the city, the suburb, or the farm. We're all right. It's that and what we don't see, like the destructive things that huge corporations, politicians, and high school principals do on their lunch break. It's the violence on the streets of New York City, to the wilderness reserves on the other face of the planet. Whatever you are, whoever you are, you have the right to live in a world that is free of injustices and inequalities. You have the right to be respected, as does the environment, because it's our home.

Our Needs

Face it, high school students have many diverse problems. High school students are continually disempowered by other generations-too young, to idealistic, to self-centered. This issue is central to student activism and we must work to fight it on all levels. How can we fight for the earth and justice, if we can't even organize ourselves? We don't have the resources that college students have, i.e., good computers and faxes, but we have the advantage of strong community support and enthusiastic young people. We need to discuss our ideas and problems with each other. We can learn a lot from college students and other activists, but we have a whole range of issues we can work to tackle in our own lives.

Mission Statement

The SEAC High School Program (SEACHSP) strives to be a diverse network of high school youth that will commit to strong words and actions to destroy the barriers of hatred against all peoples and our environment. Furthermore, the SEACHSP will fight for the empowerment and unification of all high school youth to provide a foundation upon which a national network of support can be maintained and developed.

Environmental Defense Fund, 257 Park Ave. S, NY NY 10010, (212) 505-2100.

Natural Resources Defense Council, 40 W. 20th St., NY NY 10010, (212)727-2700.*

World Resources Institute, 1709 New York Ave NW, 7th Floor, Washington DC 20006, (202) 638-6300.

Zero Population Growth, 1400 16th St. NW Suite 320, Washington DC 20036, (202) 332-2200. Working to ease population growth around the world.*

Toxics/Clean Water/Acid Rain

Acid Rain Foundation, 1410 Varsity Dr., Raleigh NC 27606, (919) 828-9443.

California Communities Against Toxics (CCAT), 3813 50th St. W, Rosamond CA 93560, (805) 256-2101.*

Citizens Clearinghouse on Hazardous Waste, P.O. Box. 926, Arlington VA 22216, (703) 276-7070. Excellent information for grassroots activists.*

Clean Water Action Project, 2500 N. Charles St., Baltimore MD 21218, (301) 235-8808.

National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides, 701 E St. SE Suite 200, Washington DC 20003, (202) 543-5450.

National Toxics Campaign, 29 Temple Place, 4th Floor, Boston MA 02111.*

Political Ecology Group, Box 111, 519 Castro St., San Francisco CA 94114, (415) 641-7835. Works on campaigns against Waste Management Inc.*

Energy Efficiency/Alternative Sources

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, 1001 Con-

Nature Conservancy, 1815 Lynn St., Arlington VA 22209, (703) 841-5300.

Sierra Club, 730 Polk St., San Francisco CA 94109, (415) 776-2211.

Deforestation

Programme for Belize, P.O. Box 1088, Vineyard Haven MA 02568.*

Rainforest Action Network, 301 Broadway Suite A, San Francisco CA 94133, (415) 398-4044.*

Save America's Forests, 4 Library Ct SE, Washington DC 20003, (202) 544-9219.

Species Diversity/Extinction

Endangered Species Coalition, 666 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington DC 20003, (202) 547-9009. *

Endangered Species Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington DC 20240, (703) 235-2771. Info on the Endangered Species Act.

World Wildlife Fund, 1250 24th St. NW, Washington DC 20037, (202) 293-4800.

Scientific Research/Economics

Conservation Law Foundation, 62 Summer St., Boston MA 02108, (617) 350-0990. These people are amazing. They sue people who violate environmental laws and convince businesses that conservation makes economic sense.*

Council on Economic Priorities, 30 Irving Place, NY NY 10003, (212) 420-1133.

Co-op America, 2100 M St. NW Suite 301, Washington DC 20063, 1-800-242-COOP. Environmentally sound consumer products.

Ready, Set, Start A Club

Here you are-ripe, ready, and willing to start a club to accomplish something-anything! But the problem is you don't know where to start. No sweat, you have everything you need right under your nose, your job is to find it and use it. This guide will help you to create a school-sponsored club.

Step 1-Ask around: Before anything else is accomplished you have to find other students who are just as willing as you to start a club. Try to find at least (stressing at least) 8 to 15 other students who you know are definitely interested. The numbers vary according to the size of every school, but 8 to 15 students is a good starting number for schools ranging in student populations from 800 to 2000 attendees. Don't worry if your school is smaller-a few active club members are more effective than a club of thousands that accomplishes nothing.

Step 2-Find an advisor: No club can be school-sponsored without an advisor. Advisors should be the most helpful and knowledgeable person in the club. Ask faculty at your high school whom you know are not already overly burdened with other activities. Pursue your favorite, most idealistic teacher. However you approach this, do not assume they will come begging to your doorstep to be the advisor of the new club. In all reality, you might be doing the begging.

Try not to appear too pushy, most staff people do have busy schedules. Let them have some time to think and work the club into their agendas. Need some help figuring out what to say when approaching a potential advisor? Try, "Hi Mr./Mrs./Miss < >, I just wanted to stop by and let you know that I'm thinking of starting a new environmental club and there's only one glitch, we need an advisor. Do you think you have the time to be our advisor? ..." Make sure you are clear about the level of involvement that he/she will have to commit too. Have a good idea of how you want to use your advisor-as a simple go-between for dealing with the administration or as a functioning member of the group.

Be simple and straightforward, don't go off on tangents about how wonderful the group will be or how much you'll get accomplished. Make sure you find at least one person willing to do the advising before moving on to the next step.

Step 3-Make a friendly visit to the office: Now that you have your 8 to 15 potential members and an advisor ready and willing to form a club, you can walk into the front office with pride and ask to fill out a form in order to start a club. Now, some schools may not have you fill out any forms, but simply send you to the student government advisor who will fill you in on what to do next.

It might also benefit the club to arrange a meeting with a senior administrator. At the meeting, be fully prepared with a complete written outline of the club's purpose, potential activities, and everything that the group may need from the administration (i.e., a meeting place, collection bins, storage area, etc.). Let the administrator know the club has support from a faculty member. Be completely organized and ready to answer any and all questions.

Step 4-Follow through: After you have done all of the necessary paperwork or talked to the right people, and you still don't get word, talk to them again, and again, and again. Wait about a week, then go find the right person and ask him/her when you will be contacted so that you can plan the first meeting. If you can't talk to the person, leave notes, leave messages-don't let them procrastinate.

Step 5-Pick a date: So at this point, you should have gotten word that the club has been approved, you have an advisor and those 8 to 15 willing members. It is now time to plan the first and most historic meeting. Talk to your advisor and ask which days during lunch are the best to hold meetings. Then ask the members which days are most convenient for them. Compare the choices, and pick the day that makes the most people happy. Happy members are active members!

Step 6-Publicity: It is time to publicize, publicize, publicize. Tell everyone you know about the meeting and the birth of the new club. Use student government as a resource tool and make signs to be hung everywhere and anywhere. Have an announcement read over the intercom system everyday until the meeting. Make flyers. Have invitations given to other clubs on campus, biology teachers, etc. Get a small notice published in the local and school newspapers. Get a list of potential members' emails and send them messages as reminders. The purpose of the mass publicizing is to attract potential members and remind those 8 to 15 members about the club meeting.

1-800-UNPLUG1. They are not a student group themselves but they work closely with SEAC and only students around all issues.*

General/Nature Preservation

American Rivers Conservation Council, 332 4th St. NE, Washington DC 20036.

Bureau of Land Management, Washington DC 20240, (202) 343-5717. The federal agency that manages 55% of public lands, decides grazing policies, etc.

Center for Marine Conservation, 1725 DeSales St. NW, Washington DC 20036, (202) 429 5609.

Earth First!, P.O. Box 5871, Tucson AZ 85703. Nonviolent direct action, monkeywrenching. Write for info on local groups.*

Earth Island Institute, 300 Broadway Suite 28, San Francisco CA 94133, (415) 783-3666. General info on lots of stuff.*

Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St. SW, Washington DC 20460, (202) 382-4799.

Friends of the Earth, 218 D St. SE, Washington DC 20003, (202)544-2600.

Greenpeace, 1436 U St. NW, Washington DC 20009, (202) 462-1177. Call or look under Greenpeace Action in the phone book for the office next to your area.*

International Rivers Network, 300 Broadway Suite 28, San Francisco CA 94133.

National Audubon Society, 950 3rd Ave., NY NY 10022, (212) 832-3200. They work primarily to save the birds.

National Wildlife Federation, 1400 16th St. NW, Washington DC 20036-2266, (202) 797-6800.*

Resources

Here is a brief list of some national environmental organizations. They can all be excellent sources of information and ideas. Take time to get in touch with them NOW. Don't put it off.

An asterisk (*) denotes an excellent group, but remember-they're all really good, or SEAC wouldn't have them listed.

Student Groups

Student Environmental Action Coalition, P.O. Box 31909 Philadelphia, PA 19104 (215) 222-4711. www.seac.org. email: seac@seac.org. Obviously your first source for information about student environmental activism and hot issues! Contact SEAC for info about other cool and ever-so-useful publications (like this one).*

Student Conservation Association, P.O. Box 550, Charlestown NH 03603, (603) 543-1700. SCA organizes high school students for summer crews to work in wilderness areas

Unplug, 1806 T St. NW, Washington DC 20009, (202) 234-0041 or

Students Organizing Students, 1600 Broadway Suite 905, NY NY 10019, (212) 977-6710. Social action around the issue of reproductive rights.

Legacy International/Youth for Environmental Services, Route 4 Box 265, Bedford VA 24523, (703) 297-5983. Legacy runs summer leadership and environmental workshops for students.

Youth for Environmental Sanity YES! Action Camps 420 Bronco Rd. Soquel, CA 95073, E-mail: camps@yesworld.org Toll free: (877) 293-7226 Fax: (831) 462-6970

Step 7-Pre-meeting things to take care of: Make sure to discuss with some of the other students what you want to accomplish at the first meeting. Granted, you're not going to draft a club constitution, create projects to work on and form committees all in one meeting, but just get a sense of what the members want to get out of this club. Then create an agenda accordingly. Without an agenda nothing will be accomplished and less students will be inclined to attend the next meeting.

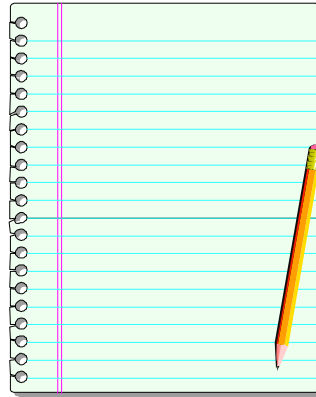
Facilitator, what's that? The facilitator of a meeting is basically the person who tries to keep things moving along. Their purpose is to maintain order throughout the meeting. Facilitators are different from the advisors. The advisors are to give their opinions when needed. The facilitator is a student who runs the meeting. Facilitators are used to prevent interruptions, give everyone a chance to speak, keep the meeting running according to the agenda, and prevent frivolous discussions about unrelated topics. It is a good idea to choose the facilitator before the meeting. The facilitator should feel comfortable talking in front of others and not lull everyone to sleep. Some clubs rotate facilitators every meeting and other clubs usually have the president preside. This decision is up to the group.

The Big Day: The key to having a successful meeting, besides organization, is to give people a chance to get to know one another. The club's purpose might be to help the environment, but students also use clubs as a means of getting to know each other. When people are acquainted, they are more likely to talk and express their opinions than sulk in the corner, mute. Play an icebreaker game. Make people share their most embarrassing childhood memory, or sing the refrain from their favorite 80's song. Or just have everyone introduce themselves. Whatever it takes to make people comfortable. Don't spend too much time with the introductions, the members will eventually get to know each other as time passes.

You might want to schedule a really motivational teacher or student to speak briefly about the environmental issues of today, and discuss as a group what kinds of projects the club wants to adopt. Try to end the meeting with at least one project in mind to work on right away. It might not be very realistic to expect to create a project, find people to carry out important roles, and do the initial club organization all in one meeting. Be sure, if nothing else, to schedule a concrete day of the week to have the meeting, and ask who would like to start thinking about being a club leader for upcoming elections.

Make sure to schedule the next meeting no more than two weeks from the first.

Don't forget to record this momentous occasion: Take notes! Take notes! Take notes! Is it clear yet? You or someone else absolutely must take notes during the meeting. Write down the times when the meeting began, when it finished and the times of certain topics discussed. Take notes of the topics discussed highlighting the important ideas, and the conclusions that resulted. Note who attended.



Notes are vital to remembering what happened so that actions can follow. Besides, most schools require clubs to turn in their notes at the end of the year in order to make sure the club is productive and not a social gathering wasting the school's time and resources. Can't quite remember what was said about the recycling issue? Look at the club's notes. Understand how important they are now?

Keep the club running: Now that the first meeting has taken place, it is time to focus on meetings to come. If the club turns out to be large in numbers, it might be a good idea to have a second day of the week dedicated for officers or willing students to decide what to discuss at the next meeting (this is where the notes come in). The smaller the group, the better (but no less than two!). Every meeting should have an agenda and a goal. Avoid at all cost having a meeting just to have a meeting. Try to make sure the meetings address a problem the club is solving, activities the club is involved with, or what projects the club will work on next. Don't forget in the process to continually publicize the club's next project, or meeting. This might seem like a lot to



handle at once and time-consuming, but it actually takes more time to read about what needs to be done than to do the work itself.

school students, we have our own decision-making body and are the largest member constituencies of SEAC.

SEAC is not a dictatorial organization. The role of the national office is not to tell you what activities you should do. The purpose is to work on outreach to other high school students, to be a clearinghouse for information and resources, and to let you know what is going on with other environmental groups around the country. If you ever feel like something is wrong in your group, if you want to get or spread ideas, or if you want to ask some questions, call the National Office.

SEAC's college network has had many years to solidify. The high school network has only just started. If you are interested in working with SEAC as part of a national organization, contact us. Chances are, you already have had some contact with SEAC if you got this organizing guide. We are always looking for students to get involved, so please do.





You're Part of SEAC!

Ever since the beginning of this century, students have been a political force in this country. The most recent example of this can be found in the environmental movement. Students have shown themselves to be on the cutting edge of issues and solutions. The Student Environmental Action Coalition was formed to promote this kind of activism. SEAC is a network of environmental groups, formed to educate, inspire and mobilize students.

SEAC was formed in the spring of 1988 after a notice appeared in Greenpeace magazine calling for a national network of student environmental groups. After Threshold (the 1989 student environmental conference in Chapel Hill, North Carolina), SEAC had over 450 member groups. Since then, SEAC has grown to over 2,000 groups and held the Catalyst Conference, the largest student environmental conference ever-with over 7,600 students from every state and 12 foreign countries converging in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, in October 1990.

So is SEAC just a college network? NO!!!! In February 1991, leaders of high school environmental networks came together in Chapel Hill, NC, to form a high school network as part of SEAC. As high

How to Run a Club

Structure

Body breakdown: As with all organizations which set out to accomplish goals, structure will determine the longevity of any group. In order to have a group that will function well and work together as a unit, proper organization is vital from the beginning. The most important part of a club is its members-without them, action would be pretty difficult. Members will provide the club with support and momentum. But in order for the members to be useful, they must be educated-that is where leadership is needed. The leaders of the club, whether they be committee chairs or elected officials, must make sure the members are given what they need in order to help accomplish a club goal. When the club does complete a project or win a victory, others outside the club benefit-sometimes drawing in more members.

Delegation: So the club has its members and leaders, but how can they work together? The best way to keep members interested and active in the club is to divide the responsibilities among the group. A group whose activities and campaigns are directed by one or two people is doomed to failure upon graduation, exams, personal problems, burnout, or other inevitable distractions that may plague the leader. Not enough stress can be put on the idea that delegation is the key to a successful organization. You must trust others to get the work done. Resist the temptation to become highly involved in managing every project your group takes on. When the group is young, you may find this irresistible. As the group grows, however, a leader who is involved in every project becomes so spread out that he or she becomes ineffectual and thus turns into an overextended, unproductive workaholic who gets nothing accomplished.

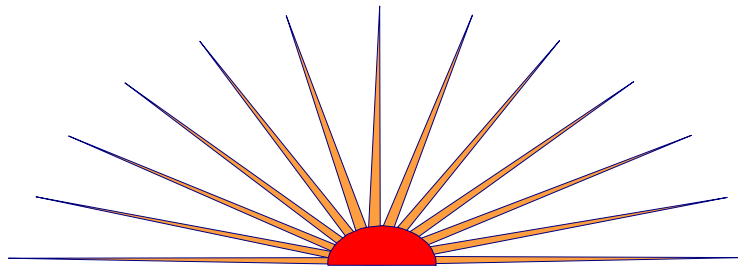
Give everyone a chance: Dividing the responsibilities can sometimes be a headache and at other times fairly easy. Most groups like to have committees who work on separate issues-i.e., one committee might work with recycling on campus, while another works on letter writing campaigns. It becomes much simpler if the chairs of committees are delegated to do certain jobs, and then given the freedom to divide those jobs among committee members. Or if the club has no committees, then it is best to let members volunteer to do specific jobs.

Absolutely try with all your power to avoid assigning jobs to members without their own initiative. Randomly telling people to do certain jobs will only harbor resentment and eventually membership loss. Let people volunteer to do work. If no one wants to do a specific job, then it is up to one of the leaders to complete it. If a student fails to perform a task they volunteered to do, then it is the leader's responsibility to get it done. Being a leader ultimately means doing more work than the members-usually the brunt jobs no one wants.

For new members who volunteer to do big jobs, try and pair them up with a more experienced member to provide guidance and suggestions. This partnership makes the project become a real learning experience for all those involved, and empowers students with a sense of accomplishment and courage to handle bigger tasks later.

Get everyone involved: In just about every group there will be those who want to do a lot of work and those who don't, people who aren't afraid to speak up and those who are. The timid members take more time to coax into becoming assertive. It might be best to ask the quiet students if they want to do certain jobs. Make sure it is only between the two of you. Do not ask in front of the whole group-that will only cause embarrassment to the student. Try to spend more time with the withdrawn students, but do not make them your sole focus.

How to pick a project: For some groups this may seem like a simple task, while for others it could become an enormous undertaking. There are so many issues to deal with-which one do we choose? It might be a good idea first to see which issue affects your community or campus greatest. If the group is looking for a project which will appeal to a large majority of the student population, take a census or a poll-find out what issues most students are concerned with. Remember, as with all democratic organizations,



cated environmentalists to work with you on the meeting. While you needn't all be from the same school, it would be wise to work with people from your surrounding area so you can get together when necessary. Then decide on a time and place for the meeting. Try to avoid having it at school, because of the bureaucracy involved. Aim for some large, centrally-located auditorium or hall. Some ideas: the YMCA, a college, church, museum, or zoo-the possibilities are endless. Set a date, at least 1 1/2 or 2 months in advance. Design a flyer with all pertinent information. Then print them up. Be sure to include a map and a number to RSVP. Don't expect people to RSVP. You may also want to write an inspirational schpiel about the importance of high school environmentalism.

Get contacts: Now start to work on getting contacts. Visit the front office and obtain a list of schools in the area you are targeting. You may want to try the list of student government contacts or organizations in the area. Also contact SEAC National Office and see if they have any high school contacts in your area. Then divide up your list of schools and start calling. Now and later on, it may be best to divide the state up into regions of roughly equal population (counties? congressional districts? random lines?). Try your list of contacts first, then try to call the schools directly. Tell them you are having an organizational meeting. Ask them if they have an environmental group, and, if so, ask for the head person. Send the school a flyer and ask them to distribute it. Always aim for the student contacts-they will serve your needs better than the faculty person.

Send out press releases to all the major papers in the area and follow up (see rules for press releases). Make sure any article that focuses on the meeting lets people know you want everyone to attend. A week before the meeting, call the students you have talked to and remind them. Also contact the newspaper and invite them to the meeting to do a follow-up story.

From there, see what everyone else wants to do. A good idea may be to decide on a state-wide campaign, preferably an issue that high school students can participate in by education and positive action. Plan some events, get together, get some work done. Have a state-wide action (within the bounds of practicality, of course), lobby the state house, have a state-wide canvass.

majority rules. So if one or two members do not want to work on an issue everyone else feels is important, it is not necessary for the entire project to be dropped-just find something different for those folks to work on.

If the group's problem is lack of ideas, look again at the surrounding community-what is the greatest environmental problem you see? Contact other organizations and ask what they are working on. Or check out the following sections in this manual which should give the club more ideas on what to do. Eventually, the group is bound to find a project they will enjoy working on.

Keep ideas floating: Be sure not to lose good ideas in bureaucracy. Always mention that the group is open to new suggestions and ask members to speak up during meetings. If a member speaks to one of the heads of the group about a new idea, make sure to discuss it at the next meeting. Ask for interested parties and form a new committee. Have at least one experienced member working on the new project, as well as new members. It is far, far better to attempt a project (no matter how crazy) and have it fail, than to have never attempted a project at all.

Get the project done

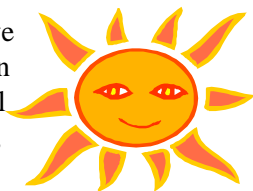
Let's get down to the specifics about how to divvy up jobs and responsibilities. Once a group has decided on a new project, it must decide on a strategy. Many successful organizers like to divide strategy into five stages:

- 1) Vision/objectives/goals-What are your goals for the short term (recycling, light bulbs, clean-up, etc.), and what is your overall vision (education of the student body, change in school policy, change in the power structure of the school to include students)?
- 2) Organizational considerations-How will this project involve members of the club at every level, from a brand new member to committee chair? Who will be responsible for those working on the project? What will this do for our club (increase membership and esteem, or will it produce a bad image of the club)?
- 3) Constituencies-What is your membership, and what are your obstacles to increasing that membership (i.e., a student body with the environmental consciousness of shoe leather)? Don't forget allies that will work with you. Think of related groups or other clubs that will help (student council, student government, key club, animal rights, etc.). Let them know why

they should be interested in the issue. What resources does the club have at its disposal? Building coalitions that can work together will drastically improve your clubs capacity for effective action.

- 4) Targets-What individuals or institutions are in the way of your goals? What are their motives? What kind of influence do you have over them (electoral power, tuition power, etc.)? How can you make them sympathetic to your cause? What other individuals and institutions have power over them? How can you influence these secondary individuals and institutions?
- 5) Tactics-How exactly will the club go about the project? How will this fit in with the next step of the project and with future plans? Tactics should be creative, flexible, and well thought out. They should also follow a logical progression of severity. To set up a composting program, for example, you may want to try a petition to the principal or the school committee before you start dumping tons of rotting food in the superintendent's office. Save that for later.

While this five step plan may seem a little excessive for simple projects, you must learn to use it, even in a simplified form. The earlier the club plans a well thought out campaign, instead of a pot-shot attempt, the greater chance of success later projects will have (i.e., the more empowered the members will be to make changes).



A Case Study

The easiest way to put all of this information into perspective is to give a real-life example of an actual high school club who used this strategy. The club was barely two months old, and the members had finally established its purpose and goals. So all they had to do was come up with a club project. Since most of the members had younger brothers and sisters, educating the younger generation was one of their top priorities. They decided that visiting the local elementary schools and talking with the younger students was the ultimate and most rewarding project for them.

Do The Networking Thing!

Remember life as a sole crusader fighting to save the environment from apathy and destruction? See how your ability (and the ability of everyone else involved in the club) to bring about change grew when you joined forces? Now imagine what effectiveness the club will attain when it joins together with other similar clubs. This is the idea behind a state- or region-wide coalition of high school environmental groups. Such groups already exist in many parts of the country, and when properly organized, can be a huge force for change. A state-wide group can accomplish many projects that are just too large for a single group. It can also bring students together and energize them about the movement.

Get it together locally: First, try to contact the environmental clubs in the schools around your area and the surrounding cities. Get a list of the high schools in your county, then make a form letter and specify what you want to accomplish as a network and why they should be eager to join. Get the envelopes ready with their school's address and your school's address, then hand them in to the front office to be mailed.

For all public schools, mailing is done through what is called "District Mail." They can mail to any other high school, junior high or elementary school in the country, all paid for by our wonderful school districts (actually the government). But, the envelopes can only go to other public schools and must be addressed to the environmental club advisor. The clubs are school-sponsored, so you should have no problem getting this through the front office.

If there are private schools in your area, it is best to call them and leave a message about the network idea. Do not expect a tremendous response to your inquiry. Do expect a 2-3% response (really). Most likely, you'll have to do many mailings before things finally start to roll. See if you can get together with them to work on a local project, to compare problems and solutions, or just to hang out and talk environmental. Definitely do the networking thing.

State-wide outreach: When you begin to feel ambitious, start to think about state-wide outreach. Find a core group of very dedi-

private lands.

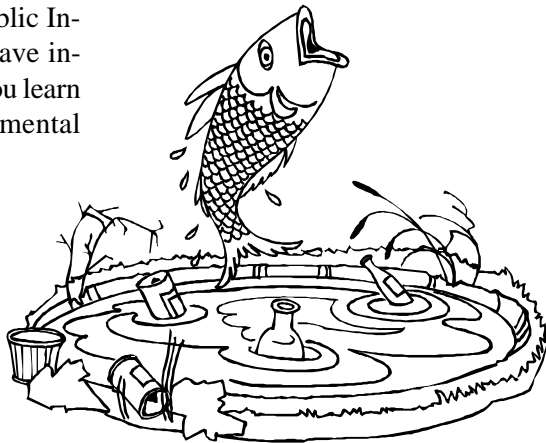
For more information on endangered, threatened or extinct species, contact the National Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society, Rainforest Action Network, and Endangered Species Coalition.

Water Pollution

With only 3% of the Earth's water actually drinkable or usable to humans, it is difficult to understand why people would want to pollute or waste it. Corporations dump millions upon millions of pounds of pollutants into the waterways each year, making some of the water undrinkable and dangerous to our health. Each year the military, corporations and commercial trash haulers dump millions of pounds of garbage into the ocean killing marine life, and polluting our beaches.

Make sure you know what goes down the drain at home. Try to dispose of those harmful chemicals at home through local businesses that specialize in the disposal of hazardous wastes. Use only detergents that are phosphorous free, as the phosphorous will be retained in the water even after it passes through the water treatment plant. Write letters to companies who are major water pollution offenders. Hold beach clean-ups. Test the pollution and lead levels in the tap water or beaches in your area and report the results to the city council, the mayor, the governor, or the Environmental Protection Agency. Get involved in the politics of the Clean Water Act, a Congressional measure to limit the amount of pollutants dumped into the waterways.

Greenpeace, Center for Marine Conservation, and the Public Interest Research Groups have information that will help you learn more about this environmental problem.



But, before they went out and fed young minds, they realized that having a strategy would make the planning of the project more thorough and lasting. The first thing the club discussed was the goals of the project. What did they want to get out of it, and what did they want the younger students to come away with? What kinds of things did they want to accomplish immediately, and in the long term? The group secretary ended up writing this statement for the first of the five stages:

“We intend for this project to educate the youth in our area about environmental problems that face us all today, and give them solutions on how to help reduce their role in damaging the environment. This year we want to talk to individual classrooms about the three R's (reducing, reusing, and recycling). And within the next couple of years, after we have established a good relationship with the teachers and administrations at the elementary schools, we intend to talk about a more broad range of issues-air and water pollution, rainforests, etc. We hope to visit the students once or twice a year to help educate and remind them that they can help in preserving the future of the environment.”

Now that they had their vision statement (as most SEACers like to say), they needed to break down responsibilities, because one person could not do it all. They finally decided to have committees work on different areas of planning. One committee dealt with script or speech writing, as well as educating the club members daily on the latest environmental news. Another committee worked with the local elementary schools' administration. They answered the five Ws (who, what, where, when, why, not to mention how) concerning the performances. And the last committee worked with the press and the community to publicize the project. They asked local TV and radio stations to run clips of their show and had the local newspapers run stories about the project. In addition, they continually let the high school student body know what was happening.

In order to keep this project running smoothly, they wanted to know if any roadblocks were to get in their way, and what they could do to avoid any if possible. They made a list of individuals and groups they knew would like their

project and would fight to keep it. The list included their faculty advisor, their principal, the local PTA, the student government, and local environ-

mental groups. Then they made a list of people or groups that might not like the presentations. That list included grumpy elementary school teachers who might think it's a waste of time. Now what resources did the club have at their disposal in order to pull off this presentation? They had \$100 to make props or diagrams, a person on speech team, the biology teacher as their advisor, and a membership with SEAC.

Now that the group knew what they were up against and what resources they had in their favor, they focused their attention on gaining permission to do the presentations. The crucial people to approach were the principals at each of the elementary schools. But in order to get to the principals they had to talk with another office contact first—the activities coordinator. Once all of the logistical hurdles had been cleared, the group moved on to the presentation itself.

What information was to be given to the students? How were they going to display that information? In what sequence were they going to present different issues? They ended up having one person talk straight to the elementary school students, while the others did funny skits. The project turned out to be a huge success. Had they not planned as thoroughly as they did, the project would not have lasted as long as it has (it has been about six years now).

Keep a timeline: Always remember to set up a timeline, no matter how vague. You should definitely have some idea of when certain stages of the project should be underway and when the deadline is up for the administration before you move on to more extreme measures (if they haven't responded to our petition by midnight on the 22nd, we remove every light bulb in the school).

A few tips: Try to get your idea out to as many people as possible. If you are campaigning to get the school to change, contact administration officials at every level, from custodian to School Board member or Trustee. The more people you contact, the more likely it is you will find a sympathetic soul who will help. Make the group sound like the underdog. "Well, we just want to help out the environment and save the school a little money, but the administration won't listen." Emphasize your willingness to work with the administration.

Compromise? So let's say you have a dialogue with the school officials and they agree to go essentially halfway on a project. Is this a failure? No. The

east Asia, contributing to global warming and threatening biological diversity. Poor, developing countries are destroying their natural resources in order to produce enough money to pay off the interest on loans from the World Bank. Rainforest land that is not suitable for farming is being cleared to grow cash crops.

Many school groups have found themselves buying land in the tropics through organizations like Programme for Belize and the Nature Conservancy. Purchasing land is a good way to prevent immediate destruction and carry out research (both of which are vital activities), but simply buying land ignores the immense economic, social and political forces behind deforestation. When the land is bought and preserved, the citizens of that region will still be without what they need. Sustainable agriculture must be developed on a broad scale, both with and without the forest (i.e., on forested and deforested land). Farmers should be able to raise food on their own land, instead of working for large corporations that export everything grown on the land.

Here are some good resources: Rainforest Action Network, Greenpeace, and OXFAM America.

Species Extinction

The most important component to a healthy ecosystem is the diversity of species. Before the industrialization of humans, the ecosystem would lose



one species every ten thousand years. Now the earth loses three species everyday due to deforestation, urban sprawl, or maybe (though very rarely) natural evolutionary changes. It is estimated for every species that becomes extinct, thirty more species follow. Why? Because the ecosystem is a chain, a body in which every species plays a critical part. If one dies,

other species dependent upon the dead species die too.

Saving endangered species is probably the most difficult project a club can try and accomplish because there are no direct activities the club can do to visibly see results, besides traveling to Asia and hunting down the poachers. The best advice is to educate yourself and others (primarily those younger students) about endangered, threatened, or extinct species. Get involved in the political aspect of saving species with organizations fighting to strengthen the federal Endangered Species Act, a governmental policy which is designed to help protect threatened and endangered animals on public and

Ozone Depletion

Another vital part of our atmosphere is the ozone layer, composed of triple oxygen molecules (O₃) that absorb ultraviolet radiation. A dramatic decrease in the amount of ozone in the upper stratosphere has been traced to human-made CFCs. CFCs do not eat ozone—they simply catalyze its decomposition (without being used up themselves) and then go on to help destroy more O₃ molecules, for its entire lifetime (about 100 years). The ozone hole at the South Pole is now bigger than the size of Antarctica, and there are other holes over the North Pole, North America and Australia. The thickness of the ozone layer is decreasing at all latitudes. As the ozone layer thins, more UV rays penetrate the atmosphere, bringing with them a host of problems, including decreased numbers of species at the bottom of the food chain, damage to crops and increased skin cancer rates.

The CFCs used as coolants in air conditioners and refrigerators should be recaptured when the system is repaired or scrapped.

CFC usage should be phased out around the world, in accordance with the Montreal Protocol. Many companies claim their products are “ozone safe” because they do not use CFCs. Remember when you read these labels that CFCs have been banned since 1976, and the replacement for CFCs are hydrochlorofluorocarbons, or HCFCs, which are less damaging but still dangerous.

Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the Natural Resources Defense Council have good information on ozone.

Rainforests

Rainforests are vital to the global ecosystem. They control weather patterns for much of the world by holding and slowly releasing moisture. Tropical forests are also immense biological reserves. Scientists cannot begin to estimate how many species of plants and animals live in the rainforests. They can only say that millions of species have yet to be discovered, and that many will become extinct before they can be studied. 40% of the medicines in the US come from the rainforest, and no one knows what cures undiscovered plants might hold.

Unfortunately, tropical rainforests are being destroyed at the rate of 3 acres per second. Fires burn across South and Central America, Africa, and South-

club has succeeded, in a very real sense, by actually getting the school to listen and make some kind of change—student ideas have been incorporated. However, this is not a total victory. This is just one step. The complete change must be made. Keep pushing until the change is made in its entirety. Do what is most effective in reaching your goals, but never compromise your principles.

Hang loose: Finally, be sure your strategy is flexible. If something doesn't work, if a certain approach is not getting through, think about your tactics and don't hesitate to change them. Don't get frustrated if you are moving slowly. Just keep chuggin' along and you will succeed. A group whose projects are innovative and exciting is bound to get ahead of itself on at least one occasion. If the group really decides that a project is going nowhere and has no chance of redemption, dump it and take what you have learned and put that to good use on other projects. Learn from the group's mistakes.



Dealing With The Administration

Dealing with your administration is a vital part of managing a successful club. You must strive to form a working relationship, one which is cooperative and flexible, in order to ensure that the goals of the club are not stunted (squashed?) by an annoyed administration. Resist the temptation to stereotype your administrators as reactionaries who will work against the students and their clubs. Most will support your actions if they are presented in an organized and convincing manner. This means that a sit-in may not necessarily be the best way to initially present a suggestion to the school. Do not do something rash and risk getting yourself and the club branded as radicals before you have exhausted all diplomatic channels. Only after negotiations and persuading has failed should you bring out the big guns (or the big picket signs). Use the system to your advantage as much as you can before using antagonism and civil disobedience.

Private schools: If you attend a private school, remember that your administration will generally be much more receptive to requests than would be the bureaucracy of a public school. Use this to your group's advantage. Some private school administrations will get to work as soon as you make a request.

Public schools: While change might happen more slowly on your campus, remember that politics play a big role in the efficiency of your school board. The high school is run by a principal, who is employed by the school district, who is run by the state. Someone will be on your group's side-the trick is to find that person.

Finally, as a general rule: Remember to make your request specific rather than vague. Do the primary research yourself. For example, say, "Here are three models of water saving toilets, this is where to buy them, and this is how much money you will save," as opposed to, "We want toilets that use less water." And always put it in writing. Send out memos (on unbleached, recycled paper) to the administration, faculty, and custodial staff at every step along the way. Describe your actions and clearly state what is asked of the faculty. A letter is a constant reminder of your presence, and can impress many people with your businesslike efficiency (or the appearance thereof).

it will be listed as its own section in this manual in order to give a general meaning of what it is to those unfamiliar with the term.

In order to effectively work on issues dealing with environmental racism and environmental justice, the club will have to work directly with larger organizations or with the communities themselves. Education is another key role the club can play in the struggle for equality.

For further information call Greenpeace, Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, EDGE (the Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Organizations), the Urban Habitat division of Earth Island Institute and, of course, SEAC.

Global Warming

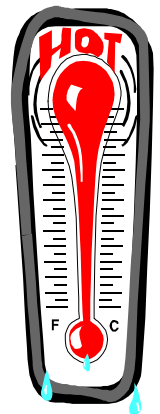
Certain gases in the atmosphere absorb infrared radiation and trap energy from sunlight, lowering the amount which radiates back out into space. The four most important greenhouse gases, and their causes, are:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂) - burning fossil fuels, deforestation
- Methane (CH₄) - decomposing solid waste, swamps, aerosol sprays, rice paddies, cow flatulence, burps!
- Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) - air conditioners, Styrofoam
- Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) - smog, chemical fertilizers

These gases are being spewed into the atmosphere at increasing rates, trapping more and more of the sun's heat. Scientists expect a warming of 3-8° F by 2050.

Nobody knows for sure what effects this might have. A dramatic increase in temperature might melt polar ice caps, raising the sea level one to two meters. However, the global ecosystem might have some "safety-valve" mechanism that averts such a scenario, but who wants to wait around and see?

The best defense right now is one that is simple and pretty much assured of working-namely, reducing the amount of greenhouse gases we pump into the air. This includes reducing the use of CFCs, controlling smog, and reducing the number of cows that are around to fart and belch (so, eat lower on the food chain!).



dards, expanded mass transit, greater conservation, and other measures must be implemented to reduce demand. Many technologies which already exist do just that. Energy-saving windows reduce heat loss and cooling costs. Compact fluorescent lightbulbs use only 1/4 of the electricity used by conventional bulbs. Solar water heaters are available for home use. Gas mileage standards for automobiles should be raised to 40 mpg. Sport utility vehicles should be subject to the same mileage and emission standards as all other cars.

Lately, many electrical utility companies have found themselves encouraging conservation. Their reasoning is that if they sell less electricity, they will make more money. When the cost of a new power plant is calculated, it is in fact cheaper to control rampant consumption than to build a new plant. Unfortunately, most states don't require utilities to figure in the environmental costs of new plants. In addition, many municipal power plants don't work the same way (they never had to build a plant—they just buy their energy from a big private company), so they have no use for energy conservation. They must be forced to encourage efficiency among their subscribers.

These folks have great info about energy issues, so talk to them: Union of Concerned Scientists, Greenpeace, National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology program, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, and SEAC (see Resources for addresses).

Environmental Racism

To a few students this may be a familiar term, but to most this is a new phrase. Environmental Justice is the fight to keep landfills, toxic waste dump sites, incinerators and other unwanted facilities out of the low-income, people of color communities most often targeted by large corporations. Environmental Racism is the term used to describe a company who knowingly picks these communities, because they think the occupants of these areas are less politically powerful than they, and are less willing to fight. Through environmental justice we hope to empower all people to stand up for their right to live in a healthy environment regardless of their social or political status.

This is not the type of issue that can be written about in one section as its own problem because environmental racism perpetuates other issues like air pollution, water pollution, energy, rainforests, etc. For the sake of space

Faculty Advisors

A blessing: A strong faculty advisor is, without a doubt, good for the club. He or she can help you find your way through Bureaucratic Hell, convince other teachers and administrators of the club's worthiness, and aid with the organization and strength of the club. In addition, teachers do not graduate after four years. Therefore, they can lend a sense of permanence to the club. By all means, try to secure a strong, interested advisor.

Not a curse: On the other hand, do not despair if all of the teachers in your school are devoid of any environmental enthusiasm. Many successful clubs have thrived without the aid of a strong advisor. Just be sure that the organization of the club is strong and stable, and the heads of the group are motivated and driven (does this describe you?). But, you must try to find at least one faculty member who is vaguely supportive of the club's plans, so you will have a name to satisfy the administration.

Bureaucracy

Have a friendly chat with administrators: When you meet with an administrator to discuss suggestions for the school to undertake, be prepared. Have the benefits of such a change clearly written out, with monetary considerations right out front. When you meet, know the points you wish to talk about and stick to them. Many strong administrators have rushed through a meeting agenda, flustering a student who then leaves the meeting promptly realizing all the other points he or she wanted to discuss.

Inevitable conflicts of interest: If, at any point, you find yourself caught in a conflict between two branches of the school, escape. Let the custodians and the principal, for example, work out their differences among themselves. Do not act as a go-between, or you may find that some of your programs will be casualties of conflict, and may never be implemented.



Our Environmental Friend, The Custodian

Soon you will realize that the custodians are among the most environmentally important staff members of the school. These godly employees are responsible for all refuse disposal, cleaning materials, and general maintenance of the school. A strong relationship with them is key. Let the custodians know what the club is all about. Make it clear what your program involves. Make sure they do not throw your recycling boxes away! If student volunteers will be collecting the paper, hint to the janitors about their decreased workload. If they are doing all the work, ask what the club can do to make their job easier.



After you have gained a harmonious rapport with the custodial staff, get some info. What kinds of cleaners do they use? Exactly which carcinogens are being applied to the playing fields? How much does the school spend on electricity? From here, look for alternatives and suggest them, to both the custodians and the administration. Some custodians, in fact, are open environmentalists. Above all, make the staff like the club. Invite them to meetings. Give them information on different issues. Janitors can be some of the coolest people you will ever meet. This is not a universal rule, but give it a shot. They have to deal with snotty teenagers every day—so make your club the exception.

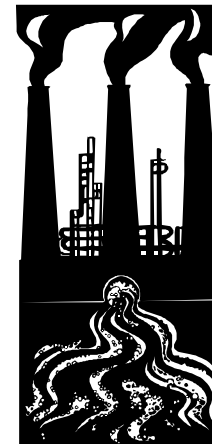


Issues To Deal With

This section is designed to give general background information on environmental topics and ideas for solutions on a very large level. This is really just a superficial overview. If you are seriously interested in an issue, contact the organizations recommended in the Resources section for good information.

Air Pollution

Air pollution is nothing more than suspended particles of soot, ashes or chemicals discharged into the air. Yet, the effects of these suspended particles are frightening. The particles become lodged in our throats and make respiration difficult. The chemicals are absorbed into our lungs and bloodstream, ultimately causing sickness and diseases like cancer. Smog (actually nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds), carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide are among the most predominant chemicals in the atmosphere. Acid rain, caused by the trapping of sulfur dioxide in the clouds, is just one of the many by-products air pollution causes.



Encourage others to drive less and carpool (how many times have we heard that, but how true it is), compost as much garbage as possible to avoid incinerating it, and get involved in the strengthening of the Clean Air Act, a federal law to limit the amount of pollution spewed into the air.

For more information contact Greenpeace, Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Environmental Defense Fund.

Energy Efficiency

Daily the U.S. burns millions of gallons of oil and millions of pounds of coal, contributing to global warming, acid rain, smog, and a host of other environmental problems. Strong measures are needed to combat the U.S.'s dependency on oil and other nonrenewable resources. Aggressive alternative energy research is needed alongside energy conservation programs. Solar, geothermal, and wind power must be developed quickly. Efficiency stan-

Pancake breakfasts: Find a space with a big kitchen (churches and community groups are great for this, and don't forget your cafeteria!) and cook up pancakes, tofu scramble, vegan sausage, hashbrowns, fruit salad, coffee, and other breakfast goodies. Get the food donated and charge \$\$\$ for breakfast.

Poetry Reading: Host a poetry reading at a café, at school, or at your house and ask for donations

4-Square Tournament: 4-Square is an amazing playground game that most kids who grew up in the USA played. Organize this just like the pool tournament, except you can do it anywhere for free (Parking lots work well). Combine this with a BBQ, street party, bake sale.

Educate the Masses

Education of the general student population is absolutely necessary to the success of the environmental movement. The club itself must have a firm grasp of environmental issues to make its actions effective. However, a club is useless if none of its actions move beyond the confines of the club membership. We need an entire generation that is well-educated and concerned. You must concentrate on reaching out to the "unwashed masses" to convince them of the importance of environmental protection. Don't worry about the people that are hostile to your message. Aim for those folks who are informed enough to know about environmental problems but just aren't motivated to take action. Here is an abbreviated list of ideas. The main point is to be creative when you are trying to educate people. Only you know what works best in your school and town.

Factsheets: Whenever your group embarks on a new campaign, write a factsheet to explain background information and to convey the group's strategy. Be sure the sheet is well-written, readable and concise (one page or both sides of a half page should be sufficient). Pass these out to all members of the club and make them available for the entire student body and faculty.

Articles: Write articles for the school newspaper. Find a reliable student who will be the environmental columnist for the paper, or rotate the position for every issue. Again, be sure the articles are interesting and short, and always mention what people can do on a personal level, as well as what the club is doing.

Get on mailing lists: Call up every environmental group imaginable and have the club (school's address) put on their mailing list. While you might feel guilty about wasting paper, you will gain a wealth of knowledge about environmental issues and what other organizations are doing to help. As a start, look in the Yellow Pages for local environmental groups, and check in books like 50 Simple Things or SEAC's Student Environmental Action Guide. While you're at it, you might as well let some of those local groups know you exist and volunteer the club's studentpower if they ever need help-leafletting, mass phone calling, poster painting, protesting (but you can't use the club's name), etc.



Posters/flyers: These can be an effective way to reach the student body, if they are done right. Obnoxious posters (“When you recycle last month’s test it becomes next month’s toilet paper!”) let people know that the club and the recycling program exists. Simple fact posters (“In one school day, 20,000 acres of rain forest are destroyed.”) can be a good way to make people ask questions. Informational posters with lots of words are often passed by in the hustle of the school day. It is best to place posters like this in areas where students must wait for a period of time (i.e. lunch lines, bus stops, counselor’s office, inside bathroom stalls). Use eye catching designs, fonts and colors to attract attention. Be sure the posters are readable from far away-don’t use tiny print or pastel colors.

Invite a speaker: An effective speaker can do wonders to educate the student body. Contact local environmental groups and ask them if they have a speaker or could recommend one. SEAC has a dynamic speakers bureau, with speakers on just about every topic imaginable, for relatively cheap. However, an all-school assembly can be ineffectual on account of jokes, talking and sneering. Having a speaker talk to individual classrooms or groups of two or three classes might be more effective. Consider the attitude of your school and use your own judgment.

Be sure to follow up on the interest focused by the speaker. Let everyone know about the club at the end. Also give an opportunity for action-announce a meeting to write letters, or do it right there. Put out a sign-up sheet for a related action-a beach clean-up after a speaker on coastal pollution, etc. Don’t let the excitement wither away-harness it!



Create a library: Have members of your group clip out and donate articles on environmental issues to a group library, which would be open for all students to use for environmental research topics.

Get out: Let members of your group know what they are saving. Grab a cool biology teacher or park ranger and go for a hike through the woods, grassland, beach, desert, or mountain. Talk about ecology. Roll over logs and look for bugs. While it may sound hokey, an experience in nature, whether for a morning, a day, or a weekend, can be just as stimulating and invigorating as a huge environmental conference. Or take the club on a field trip to

give towards the high end of the scale.

Any event takes lots and **lots of ADVERTISING**, and using sponsors or donors names on advertising makes people want to give you stuff.

Get stuff for FREE. Wherever possible use your charm and wit to get donations from businesses. Also try dumpster diving and getting your friends to donate things that they already have.

Make it FUN. You aren’t going to raise any funds if it isn’t fun for you and everyone else involved.

Use your TALENTS. Any fundraiser will be 10 times easier if you’re doing something you’re good at and love to do.

Use your FRIENDS’ Talents. You aren’t exploiting your friends by asking them to help. Often its easier to ask your close friends to help you put on a fundraiser than to just straight out ask them for money.

Events: Benefit Concert: Talk to some of the bands around school. See if any of them want to play for a fundraiser. Invite students from other towns. Have a cool benefit concert. Having a concert is a lot of work but, in the end, pays off generously if done effectively. Don’t forget to use the five-step strategy mentioned earlier in this guide as a way to plan for the concert.

Do some work: Offer the club as hired hands around the town. A good way to make money early in the year is to rake lawns for people. Just be sure to compost the leaves after they are collected. Get in touch with the local tree warden and educate students about how to properly plant trees. Then go around town and offer to plant trees in strategic locations (south side of houses, etc.) to reduce summer heating costs. See if your state’s environmental office has a similar program and could help the club.

Date auction: Get your sexy, eligible friends together and auction them off for an evening on the town to your not so suave friends.

Yard sales: Clean out your house and have your friends clean out theirs too, preach about simplifying their lives and letting go of material objects – you’re sure to get lots of stuff to sell. Also, dumpster dive a few weeks before for furniture and other goodies.

80’ s movie night: Pick out your favorite movies from the 80’s (it’s likely that amongst your friends you own them all, thus saving rental fees) and pop some popcorn. Have the event at your house, in the school library, lounge or cafeteria, or in a community space and charge a couple bucks to get in.

and ask for donations

4-Square Tournament: 4-Square is an amazing playground game that most kids who grew up in the USA played. Organize this just like the pool tournament, except you can do it anywhere for free (Parking lots work well). Combine this with a BBQ, street party, bake sale.

Longterm/Harder to do Stuff: Get donation jars put into stores: Make pretty donation jars and ask local stores, food co-ops, eco-friendly stores, health food stores (etc) to put them by the cash register. Collect the change from them at least once a month, and thank the store manager/workers profusely while you're at it.

Raffle: Get items donated and charge a small amount for raffle tickets or raffle off half of the profits from the ticket sales.

Aluminum Recycling/Bottle Deposit: Some areas of the country pay you for your recyclables or give you money back for returning bottles. Find out if this will work where you live and organize a group to go out and collect bottles and cans.

Auction: Auction off stuff (donated or dumpstered) or services (house-cleaning, child care etc.) to community members and your friends

Write us into your will: Hopefully this is a very long term option

Potlucks: Have one and ask for money at it. Its great to combine potlucks with any other event, the promise of food will do wonders for most events.

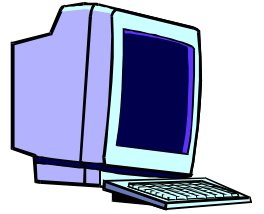
Friends and Family Letter: Send out a letter to everyone you know and ask for a donation.

Presents: Instead of getting gifts on Holidays, ask loved ones to donate money.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

The **SLIDING SCALE** is great for most events or saying 'No one will be turned away for lack of funds.' That way, people who really want to go to the event but can't afford to can still come have fun (most likely the folks you want to hang with anyway) and then the people who have money can

the nearest recycling or sewage treatment plant. Talk to your waste paper dealer and find out where the nearest recycling facility is. Arrange a tour. Let members know what happens to the paper after they spend their afternoons collecting it.



Educate the masses electronically: Use the P.A. system, morning announcements, bulletin boards, or other mass media in your school to educate students about environmental problems. Have an "Environmental Tip o' the week" which is repeated over announcements everyday or every other day for a week. A good formula is to describe an environmental problem in one or two sentences, and then give some ideas of what students can do in their own lives. ("Every second, three acres of rain forest is cut down, leaving thousands of animals and people homeless. Do your part, recycle and buy recycled")

A large percentage of your school's population undoubtedly has email, and it is more than likely that with a little detective work you could easily put together a list of addresses. Try sending a mass mailing to people via the computer, thereby reducing the guilt you might feel handing out dozens of flyers which would have inevitably found their way to the trash, often unread and ignored. Refrain from clogging your peer's accounts with junkmail-it will only irritate them. On the other hand, a timely and amusing message might peak their interest and push them to get involved.

Press releases: Use the local media to your advantage. When your group reaches a milestone, begins a new project, or has a visible action, tell the press about it. By letting members of your community know about your group and its activities, you can only aid the club's cause. A good article in a local newspaper can convince a person to attend a school committee meeting to speak out on the club's behalf. Pressures like this on your targets will increase the legitimacy of the club's cause and may influence some politician who seems to be stalling.

Always be sure to give the press enough time to respond. Find the deadlines for weekly papers and have your press release in their hands well before that deadline. Give papers and TV stations at least three days to respond with a reporter, but don't send anything in so early that it gets lost or forgotten about. Then follow up the day before or the morning of the event. Punctuality and an image of organization and preparation will make it more

likely that the club gets coverage. Press releases, letters, and articles must be done right if you expect any coverage. Use the correct format for releases-they should look like this:

>> **Press Release: For Immediate Release** <<

High School Students Clean Miles of Beaches
Contact: Cesar Chavez 555-5555, Emma Goldman 555-1234



Follow the heading with no more than a page of text. The first two or three sentences should explain exactly what the club is, what is going on, and why the press should care. Don't beat around the bush. Don't use passive verbs. Use simple words. Sentences should be to the point.

On Saturday, May 18, students from Rosa Parks High School's Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) will clear beaches from Florida to Maine. "Students are making a positive change in the marine environment and are challenging the myth of teenage apathy," says Murray Bookchin SEAC's chairperson and chief environmental guru.

Succeeding paragraphs should describe the club further and should also explain the environmental problem on which you are focusing. Feel free to quote a member of the organization, or to simply make up a quote that explains the group's views. A quote gives the release a personal feel and provides a direct sound bite to be used in the article or story.



Also consider selling reusable plastic cups or mugs. Maybe work out a deal with a foodservice company so a refill of the reusable cup or mug is cheaper than a new disposal cup, and you get more with each fill-up.

Events: Benefit Concert: Talk to some of the bands around school. See if any of them want to play for a fundraiser. Invite students from other towns. Have a cool benefit concert. Having a concert is a lot of work but, in the end, pays off generously if done effectively. Don't forget to use the five-step strategy mentioned earlier in this guide as a way to plan for the concert.

Do some work: Offer the club as hired hands around the town. A good way to make money early in the year is to rake lawns for people. Just be sure to compost the leaves after they are collected. Get in touch with the local tree warden and educate students about how to properly plant trees. Then go around town and offer to plant trees in strategic locations (south side of houses, etc.) to reduce summer heating costs. See if your state's environmental office has a similar program and could help the club.

Date auction: Get your sexy, eligible friends together and auction them off for an evening on the town to your not so suave friends

Yard sales: Clean out your house and have your friends clean out theirs too, preach about simplifying their lives and letting go of material objects – you're sure to get lots of stuff to sell. Also, dumpster dive a few weeks before for furniture and other goodies

80's movie night: Pick out your favorite movies from the 80's (it's likely that amongst your friends you own them all, thus saving rental fees) and pop some popcorn. Have the event at your house, in the school library, lounge or cafeteria, or in a community space and charge a couple bucks to get in.

Pancake breakfasts: Find a space with a big kitchen (churches and community groups are great for this, and don't forget your cafeteria!) and cook up pancakes, tofu scramble, vegan sausage, hashbrowns, fruit salad, coffee, and other breakfast goodies. Get the food donated and charge \$\$\$ for breakfast.

Poetry Reading: Host a poetry reading at a café, at school, or at your house

grade groups. Produce a show with skits and entertaining activities. Go to individual classrooms and speak to students on a more personal, one-on-one basis. Let the kids know what they can do to help protect the Earth, as well as give them information about the issues today. Working with younger children can be very rewarding, and a fool-proof way of ensuring your club has future leaders to keep it running.

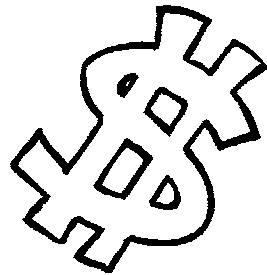
Make Some Money

As much as we would like, money for environmental groups does not grow on trees, no matter how many we plant. The club should find some way of funding its activities other than through membership dues or fees.

Best case scenario: You attend a school with lots of money. The administration loves the club. You don't need to worry about finances ever. Even then, you could still raise lots of money and donate it all to SEAC.

Reality: The school you attend is not rolling in money, and the administration does not smother the club with big, wet, sloppy kisses. The club is broke. No problem. A couple of blow-out fundraisers and the club is rolling in dough.

Sell stuff: This is obvious. The big question is, however, what to sell. One way to get a message out and make some moo-lah is to sell T-shirts. Have a contest to decide the best T-shirt design, preferably simple and one color. Some organizations sell T-shirts with the proceeds going to different campaigns, such as helping the rainforests, or freeing Tibet. Contact them and see if you can get some order forms. If you're going with a homemade design, call some printing places and check up on prices. See if anyone is willing to give the club a discount for its worthy cause. (This should be the case for everything the club does.) Check with some local businesses to see if they will subsidize the cost of the shirts in exchange for advertisement on the back. Or, find out how to silk screen yourself (check the Internet) and make your own! Consider taking orders beforehand to be sure that the club won't go into debt. Then get them printed, advertise like crazy, and sell, sell, sell! Who can resist a cool T-shirt for just ten bucks (or whatever reasonable price the club decides)?



Make Changes In Your School

Schools themselves are usually producers of massive amounts of toxic and solid waste. This is because the administration has never been presented with safer alternatives or pressured to implement them. We must bring these issues to its attention and show the administration that not only are alternatives more environmentally sound but economical as well.

When you are pushing these changes, avoid making them completely depend on volunteerism from the club. In the long run, making real changes in institutional policy and programs will be far more effective. For example, having students collect paper may be the best way to start the program and convince the administration it can be done, but, in the end, the school itself will have to take over.

Recycling

Recycling is one of the most obvious changes a club can make. Trash dumpsters are inherently evil. As landfills overflow, the changes a school can make become even more important.

Setting up a Solid Waste Recycling Program in Schools is an excellent guide that goes step by step through the process of setting up a program, in many ways better than what appears here. While it may cost some money, be sure to get a copy. Write to (of all places!) McDonald's Education Resource Center; 3620 Swenson Avenue, P.O. Box 8002, St. Charles Illinois 60174-7307, (800) 627-7646. (This does not mean we endorse or support McD's in any way-they just paid to print the Recycling Guide.) SEAC also has a much shorter version of this guide for free!

Paper

What to do with it: The first step (after gaining student support) is to find a place that will accept your paper. If your town has a recycling program, see if they will accept office-gradepaper separately from newspaper. If not, you will have to find a waste paper dealer. Unfortunately, many companies will not make a trip to your school unless it is profitable to them (i.e., if they can pick up 1,000-2,000 lb). If your school is large, try to locate a storage area that will hold large quantities (be sure the area is not a potential fire hazard). Some smaller companies may make the trip to get smaller

amounts, but will not pay you for the paper. You can also try to convince the administration to rent a dumpster for the paper, using the waste disposal fees saved by the decreased waste volume. You may try to set up pick-ups at other schools to make the trip more lucrative for the paper company. As a last resort, find a student or faculty member to haul the paper to a dealer on a regular basis. However, this cannot be a permanent solution to the problem.

Bin it: Next, the club must secure collection bins for the paper. If the school administration is funding the program, go ahead and buy sturdy recycled plastic bins or metal wastebaskets. If the club is on its own, scavenge boxes from the school's kitchen and copy room. After the club has them, be sure the bins or boxes are clearly labeled. This labeling serves two purposes: it alerts students of the boxes' purpose, and it makes it less likely that the janitors will throw the boxes away. Explicitly state what is and is not recyclable (i.e., newspaper, colored paper, textbooks). Don't let the boxes become a second trash can. No one likes a sanctimonious reminder that they are destroying the environment by mixing paper and plastic, but silently removing the inappropriate trash yourself and placing it in its proper place might evoke just enough guilt from the offender.

Collections: Depending on the size of your school and level of participation, boxes will need to be emptied either daily, every other day, or weekly. If the group is taking responsibility, ask volunteers to collect the boxes and assign them specific days.

Participation: As the program is being instituted, send a memo to each teacher asking her or him to inform students of the location of the boxes or bins and encourage participation. Depending on the character of your school, a contest involving recycling might be effective. Have advisories or homerooms collect paper for a week, then weigh the paper and declare a class the winner. The class with the most tonnage(or poundage) is the winner. You might also use this opportunity to ask teachers to try and copy on both sides of the paper.

road might have been caused by students from your school). In addition to being a great publicity tool for your club, clean-ups can be the perfect way to get club members and the community working together for positive change. Be sure you have plenty of garbage bags and plastic gloves (available at most large pharmacies) on hand for those who will be cleaning up potentially hazardous materials (e.g., syringes, condoms, etc., washed up on beaches).

Make Contact

Contact local organizations which deal with environmental issues and find out about their activities. Some examples include watershed organizations, recycling committees, the League of Women Voters, Greens, Sierra Club, Greenpeace, outdoor clubs, conservation commissions, and many others. Publicize their events among your group and volunteer to help with their campaigns. Express your willingness to do clean-ups, trailwork, lobbying, canvassing, and public education. Doing trailwork may be physically demanding on the club, but it will leave the members with a sense of accomplishment that very few other activities can. The Student Conservation Association (see Resources),organizes crews during the summer and school year that do trailbuilding and maintenance. Get in touch with them to find out about programs happening in your vicinity.

Get Out

This is, in many ways, the most exciting and innovative project a group can take on. What are the environmental issues facing the community? What are the issues yet to be exposed? Find out what is going on in your immediate area. Expose the problems that have been ignored up until now. This is the area where high school students can be on the cutting edge of the environmental movement. We have a link to the community that other groups do not have. The sight of high school students mobilizing on behalf of a good cause can motivate citizens in a way that larger environmental groups cannot. Such a project takes effort, however. Research, organizing, mobilizing, and action are all tough jobs.

Spread The Word

Visit the elementary or junior high schools around your town and talk to those students about environmental issues. Have an assembly for different

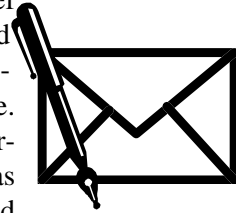


Act Now

Now that you have a club which is well educated and rearing to go, you must find ways to turn your energy into positive actions. This involves either directly aiding the environment or using the students to promote change. The following ideas are meant as little things the club can do on a daily basis. Try to avoid having these projects become the group's main focus. Ideas for big projects are given throughout this guide.

Letter-Writing

This is one of the pillars of environmentalism-letting those in power (congresspeople, corporations, committees, the President) know how you feel. Many books have been written on effective letter writing, but there are a few recurring tips: Make your letter brief and to the point. State your position quickly and obviously, and don't go off on a tangent about another disagreeable policy someone may have. Handwritten letters are fine and are much preferable to post cards or form letters. Remember, as much as we hate them, the grammar rules learned in sixth grade are vital to effective writing. Sloppy letters aren't effective.

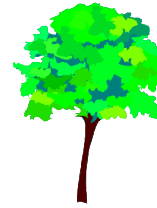


To get info on specific issues, contact the appropriate environmental organization (see Resources) and ask about lobbying efforts or corporate campaigns to which you could add your club's voice. Also remember to ask for very specific information (it might be best to talk on the phone) about an issue. If you just ask for general information, they will most likely send you a letter asking for money.

For general letter ideas, contact Greenpeace, League of Conservation Voters, Natural Resources Defense Council, the local Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), and, of course, SEAC.

Clean-Ups

These actions can be the most basic, yet beneficial form of environmentalism-going out and directly reversing damage already done. Clean-ups are also highly appropriate for high school students because of the link we have with the community (who knows, much of the garbage by the side of the



Fun Facts

- * Every ton of recycled paper saves 17 trees!
- * Paper products now consume 35% of the world's commercial wood harvest!
- * Producing recycled paper uses 64% less energy than producing paper from virgin wood!

Aluminum

Aluminum is one of the easiest materials to recycle. Cans can be melted down and turned into new products for a fraction of the energy needed to mine and process bauxite ore, which is mined in the rainforests of South America.



What to do with it: If you set up an aluminum recycling program, chances are that you or a student volunteer will have to haul the aluminum to a dealer. Few companies find it lucrative enough to make a trip strictly for aluminum cans. Aluminum usually fetches between 20 and 40 cents per pound. 25 aluminum cans weigh one pound.

Bin it: The best collection for aluminum cans are plastic garbage cans with holes cut in the lid. Again, try to get the administration to pay for the barrels before you go out and spend club money on what should be a school responsibility. To start the program, you may need to use tall packing boxes lined with plastic bags for collection. These boxes are easily found at any moving company. Cardboard quickly deteriorates from contact with soda or juice, however, so you need to buy plastic barrels as soon as possible.

The same rules as paper collecting participation apply here too, but students should be encouraged to empty their cans before recycling them.

Fun Facts

- * Every can that is recycled saves the equivalent of six ounces of gasoline!
- * Recycling cans saves 95% of the energy needed to make new cans from raw ore!



- * Every three months, Americans throw out enough aluminum cans to rebuild the entire U.S. commercial air fleet!
- * A can that is recycled can be turned back into a can and be on the shelves within six weeks!
- * 34 pounds of CO2 are saved by every 100 cans you recycle!

Cardboard

While not as obvious as paper or aluminum, cardboard is produced in great quantities by schools (usually in the cafeteria kitchen). There are also numerous existing companies that will come pick up the cardboard and recycle it (look under cardboard recycling in your local Yellow Pages). Unfortunately, they may charge a small fee for the pickup. As with all recycling programs, you should attempt to get the administration to pay this fee. Since cardboard is so big and bulky, it takes up a large volume of the waste stream, so if your school produces quite a bit, a recycling program may reduce waste disposal costs.



Polystyrene (Styrofoam)

AAAUUUGGGGHHHH!! Don't recycle it! Get rid of it! Styrofoam recycling is almost as heinous as making it in the first place. The most logical solution to this problem is introducing reusable trays and dishes in the cafeteria. In order to be as successful as possible when you lobby for the change, be prepared with the cost of new trays and cleaning methods. In the long run, reusable trays, plates and cutlery will tend to be more cost effective than disposable ones. This will probably be your most effective argument during negotiations. Remember, no school is going to be eager to abandon the ease and efficiency of a tried and true method to adopt a new procedure which will take time and effort to implement. Do not give up! Persevere! If you make enough of a stink, your school might find it easier to acquiesce than to hold out.

If your school refuses to consider the switch from disposables to reusables, talk to the purchasing agent for the school's foodservice and ask about buying cardboard trays or paper cups. Do some research beforehand about where to buy cardboard trays and how much they would cost, so the club will have some facts to show off. If the price of the cardboard or paper is

and do for your community what you were able to accomplish for your school.

More Ideas

Encourage water conservation among students and administration. Find out what pesticides are used on the school grounds. Investigate food service buying policies to see where the food comes from and how safe it is. Find out what toxic chemicals are embedded in your art materials and work on getting such materials banned. Support teacher strikes and attend school board meetings. And finally, DEMAND decent internet access, for it is becoming increasingly important to successful grassroots organizing. Think about what goes on around school, investigate it, then get moving and make some changes.

Conventional Wisdom is a Lie

You are not a consumer product fabricated in a factory. You are not the sum of your possessions that were stamped out on a machine. You are a living, breathing human being — a natural organism that is equipped to cooperate and cohabitate within the natural environment. Instead of trying to cope in a synthetic non-reality, break free from the machine and enjoy.

Subvert the Dominant Paradigm.

Developing a course on the environment is not as hard as it seems. There are many textbooks available, as well as an Advanced Placement course, along with an AP test for college credit. Sit down and talk to a teacher (or two or three) about the idea and about the process of putting together a class. Then speak to the appropriate administration official about it. If you don't find a sympathetic teacher or administration, talk with some school board members, trustees, parents or local politicians.

In the meantime, consider setting up a discussion group for environmental issues—perhaps separate from the normal group membership. Invite politicians, scientists, environmentalists and even representatives from the business community. Try to make the discussions as impartial as possible. Balance an environmentalist who visits with someone from the business community, and invite students of all political ideology to come and express their views. If a forum or discussion group like this is successful, it might be the single most convincing argument for a special course at school. Eventually, the set-up of such a discussion group may become the outline of an institutionalized course.

Down With Channel One

If you have the unfortunate luck to be at a school that participates in Channel One, look no further for a worthwhile project. There is no time better than the present to kick Channel One out of classrooms across America. Start a petition circulating that extolls the evils behind the program. Make your peers see that Channel One is more than a ten minute break in class. Open their eyes to the rampant consumersim and exploitation of youth that is involved. You will probably have to garner the support of teachers and parents if you want the administration to take you seriously. Their incentive for beaming the obligatory 10 minute 'newscast' to your school via satellite are the televisions and VCRs that come with the deal to air the broadcast daily. If you can present the administration with an alternate way to fund televisions in classrooms, they might be more receptive to getting rid of Channel One. Approach the Parent Teacher Association and explain to them how you feel. Hopefully they will be willing to work with you to get rid of Channel One.

If you are able to rid your school of Channel One, don't stop there. Start a letter writing campaign to local School Boards, PTA's and politicians. Let SEAC know what you did and how you did it. You can help to set a game plan for other high school groups eager to accomplish the same task. Try

higher than styro, you may need to put some pressure on the administration to push it through. Once they have agreed, talk to the local cardboard recycler and see if the trays are recyclable.

Buying Recycled

There's an old saying in the environmental movement that says, "If you're not buying recycled, you're not recycling." This holds true for schools. Not only must the club use recycled paper for its memos, notices, and posters, but it also must work to convince the school to buy all recycled paper. Find out how much paper the school or system uses, from whom it is bought, and how much is paid for it. In a private school, talk to the purchasing agent for information. In a public school, you will need to go all the way to the superintendent's office to the person who handles purchasing for the entire district. Then contact recycled paper dealers (see addresses at the end of this section) and find the best deal you possibly can on the environmentally sound paper. Also talk to the folks who run the bookstore and ask them about selling recycled notebooks and whatnot. And, of course, sell recycled stuff around the school as a fundraiser.

What to look for: Don't get suckered in by paper companies. Check to find the content of the paper. What percentage of it is recycled? How much of this is from waste paper (post-consumer), and how much is scrap wood from the floor of the factory (pre-consumer)? Some paper marketed as "recycled" has only 30% recycled materials in it, and only 10% came from recycling programs. The rest comes from overruns, trimmings, from books and envelopes, etc. Also check the bleaching process. Most paper in this country is bleached with a chlorine bleaching process that produces carcinogenic dioxins, although some companies use an oxygen-based process.

Problems with recycled paper: As wonderful as recycled paper is, there are its inevitable problems. Recycled paper does not handle well in Xerox machines. It tends to crumple easily and burn out machines faster because it is not as thick as virgin paper. Ask the paper companies about the stability of their recycled paper in Xerox machines. Recycled paper also presents some problems for teachers with bad eyesight. If the paper is brown or darker than regular white paper, some teachers may put up a fight (no joke) because they have to strain a bit to read from it.

Do it: Once you have found the most environmentally sound paper at the

best price, present the proposal to the school committee, the superintendent, or whoever handles purchasing for the school or the system. Then doggedly pursue them until they decide to give in and buy recycled.

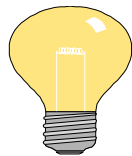
A great overview of the paper industry is the Greenpeace Guide to Paper, a handy little book that goes step by step through the process of making paper and its environmental consequences. It does cost a few dollars, but nothing to go broke over. Contact Greenpeace (202) 319-2444 or write to 1436 U St. NW, Washington DC 20009.

Waste Reduction

Reducing waste in your school is really a matter of looking around and figuring out what disposables could be replaced with reusables. If the club is dedicated, it may want to conduct an audit of the school and see what major components of trash there are. An idea: Install hand air-dryers or reusable towels in the restrooms instead of paper towels.

Energy Efficiency

Energy is, without a doubt, the hottest environmental topic in the country today. Schools are notorious for their inefficiency, both in heating and lighting. While improvements in this area must be institutionalized, there is much a group can do to push the administration towards efficiency. Fluorescent lights do use less energy than incandescence, but there are now super-efficient tubes and ballasts that use 38% less energy than standard fluorescents. Depending on your school's energy cost, these may be able to pay for themselves within one or two years.



First, talk to the head custodian or maintenance person and find out if she or he has considered lighting retrofits or improvements. Then, contact the lighting contractor that is working with the school (ask the head custodian for the name) and see if the contractor has any interest in helping out with a lighting retrofit-i.e., do they carry efficient lighting, will they help conduct an energy audit of the school, will they give you an estimate for installation? As always, try to keep the head maintenance person involved in the process so he or she knows what is going on. Then conduct a lighting audit of the building. If your school is large or the club is small (or both), pick just a wing or a floor of the school. Go through every room and find every fixture. See how much energy each uses (check

the tube and the ballasts for fluorescence)-it should be written right on the fixture. Then, find out how long the lights are on during the day. When do they come on in the morning? Are they shut off at night? How long are they on for the janitors at night? Night school? This is the long and involved part of the process. Now get together with the lighting contractor and show him or her the figure. Talk about alternatives. Then calculate total energy savings and money savings.

Once you have some facts and figures on the lighting, present your proposal to the appropriate administration official. Then, as with every campaign, doggedly pursue them until they give in and see the light. Contact SEAC to get a hold of Campus Ecology (the campus environmental audit manual).

Composting

Let's face it: Composting food wastes at your school is logistically difficult due to odor, disease, and vermin. If you are incredibly motivated, go for it, but expect lots of problems from the administration, the students, and the Board of Health. A good, plausible idea, however, is the composting of yard wastes, including grass clippings and tree leaves. If you are serious about composting at your school, check with your local garden store, county extension service, or library for more information. The internet can also provide a wealth of information on composting. Just type in compost on any search engine. The proper conditions for compost include a correct mixture of waste materials, moisture, heat, and air (oxygen, really). A good approach is to layer dry, fluffy, fibrous plant material (leaves, sawdust, etc.) with denser, richer organic matter like lawn clippings. You may want to seed the pile with worms, fungus, bacteria, mold, or other microorganism to speed decomposition. Turn the pile regularly to add air. Once the compost has decomposed, you may want to use it on the lawn as fertilizer. However, if the custodians use pesticides and herbicides on the lawn, you may actually be killing the plants to which you apply it.

Curriculum Changes

A good long-term project the club can focus on is getting your school to implement a class on environmental issues. The fact that students will be educated about the environment is just as important as the fact that student ideas will be incorporated into the curriculum-a rare occurrence.