

# **Eco Teams**

## **Philadelphia Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign**

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# Global Action Plan

- Global Action Plan (GAP) is the nonprofit research arm of Empowerment Institute.
- Conducts research in behavior change, public participation, and community empowerment.
- Consists of communities, non-governmental organizations in 17 countries.
- Prior Funders: Kettering Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Merck Family Fund, Pew Charitable Trusts.

## Empowerment Institute

Empowerment Institute (EI) is an international consulting, training and project management company.

Specializes in:

- behavior change program design,
- organizational capacity building
- implementation of large scale community and organizational transformation projects

# Eco Teams: Who Should Join?

1. You have a vague sense of what you should do for the environment, but beyond recycling, you don't know what to do or how to do it.

•2. You are well informed, but need motivation translating this knowledge into action.

•3. You are doing many sustainable lifestyle practices, but need help achieving better consistency for each practice.

•4. You are practicing a consistently sustainable lifestyle, but wish to go to the next level.

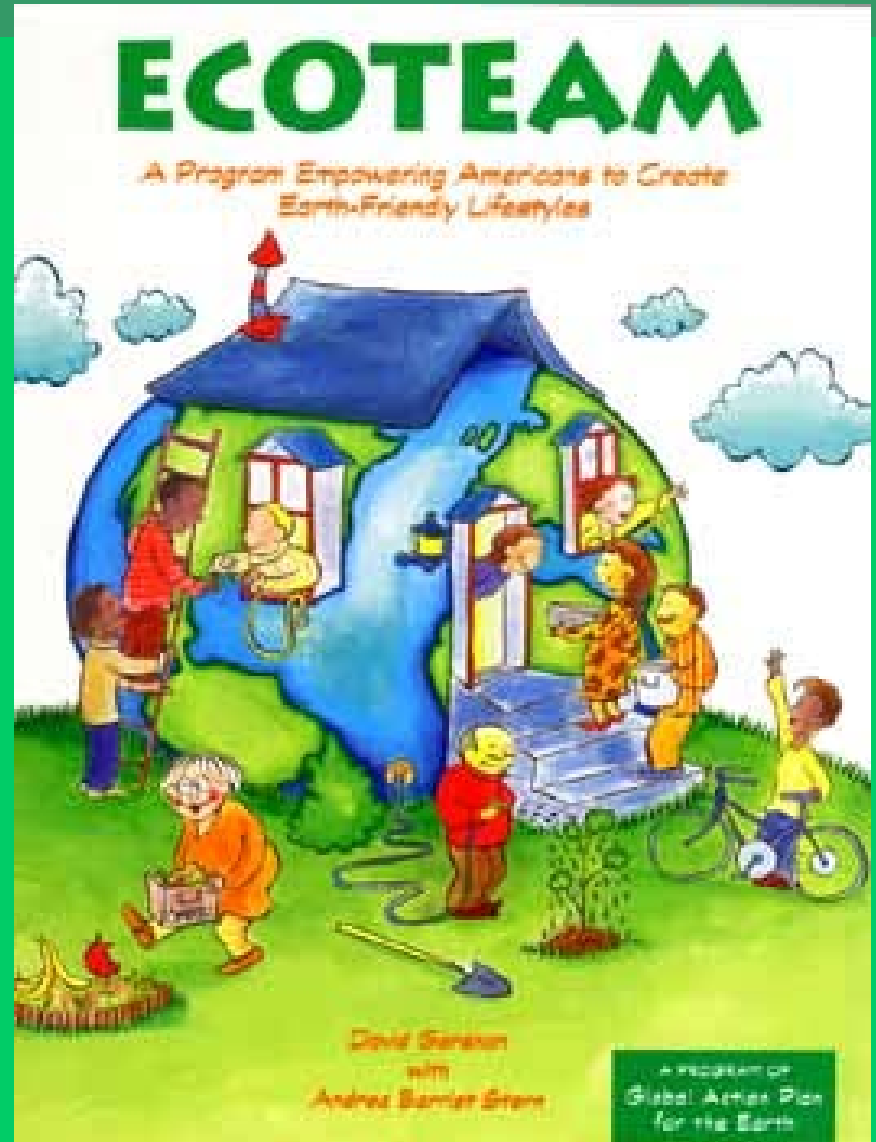
# EcoTeam Process

- 5-8 household goal
- 20-40 Neighborhoods in target city
- Cost per city is between \$90,000-\$150,000, between 3-5 agencies (EPA Gave Philadelphia prog \$50,000 in 2002)
- Find an Initiator to go door to door and meet neighbors and introduce idea
- Initial meeting to discuss program, purchase materials and set next meeting date
- Sustainability inventory
- Once monthly meetings to discuss topics and pick actions
- Follow up meetings to discuss implementation and next topic
- Final audit of changed practices

# Eco Team Lessons

“America on a Sustainable Path, one household at a time”

- Dumping on Garbage
- Wasting Water is All Wet
- Getting A Charge Out of Saving Energy
- Ticket to Ride
- Good Buys are Forever
- You make the Difference
- Catalogs & Orgs, Further Reader, Carry over Actions



# JUNK MAIL DIET



This year, you will spend about 16 hours—or the equivalent of 2 working days—sorting through your junk mail and only opening a little more than half. This Earth Action will help you avoid having most of this junk mail sent to you in the first place. Enjoy the extra time!

## EARTH ACTION

- Write to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, N.Y., 11735. Tell them you want your name taken off all third class mailing lists. This should eliminate most of your junk mail.
- Contact those companies whose catalogs you still want and make them aware your name is listed with the Mail Preference Service. Ask them to keep your name on their "in-house" list only and not to sell your name to other companies.
- Above your address label on the junk mail you do receive, write a message stating that you would like to be taken off the company's mailing list. You can return your message in the company's own self-addressed, postage-paid envelope.
- Ask your post office not to put advertising circulars in your mailbox or post office box. Be diligent. Write the local postmaster if necessary.
- Recycle whatever junk mail you do receive, and use the blank backs of pages as scrap paper.

## MATERIALS

- Stamps and envelopes, if not provided.

## TIME

- A few minutes each time you collect the mail until you're only getting the mail you want.



## RESOURCE SAVINGS

*If you eliminate all the junk mail you receive in a year, you can lessen the demand for one and a half trees being used and save resources needed to manage the waste. That's "f-u-n-s-t-a-b-l-e!"*



# Lesson Plans

## Energy

- Turning things off
- Better Sweater
- Chill In (Unplug air)
- Chill out (call utility about energy audits)
- Fridge Physical (fridge uses 40% of total household appliance use)
- Furnace tune ups
- Compact fluorescents
- Water heater insulation
- Insulated windows
- Wash clothes less
- Go see sunrise

## Water Actions

- Check for leaks (drip from faucet can waste 20 gallons a day, leaking toilet 200 gallons)
- Add full half gallon jug to toilet tank
- Ask utility for free energy audit and low flow showerheads
- Other: Faucet off, dishwashing, cold water in fridge, short showers, watering lawn
- More efficient garden watering
- Water purity check
- Watershed information
- Sustainable landscaping

**Resource Savings, Earth Action, Materials, Time**

**Action Plan (date & time), Discussed with Household, Action Done, Points.**

# Results

**After participating in the program,  
EcoTeam members**

- **Reduced garbage by 41%-51%**
- **Used 25-34% less water**
- **Used 9-17% less energy**
- **Used 16-20% less fuel for transportation**
- **And saved \$265 to \$389 per year**

# Benefits According to GAP

- **Direct financial savings**
- **Enhancing community environmental quality.**
- **Promoting existing environmental programs.**
- **Strengthening the fabric of the community**
- **Expanding environmental literacy**
- **Increasing local government revenues.**
- **Retaining dollars in the local economy**
- **Building consumer demand for environmentally sustainable products and services**

# Why the EcoTeam Worked

- **Workbook is a little hokey BUT very comprehensive:**  
**Mix of awareness, small personal changes, bigger household investments, becoming more educated on environmental impact of daily practices**
- **Focus on key info, Resource savings, Action, Materials and Time**
- **Increased awareness, putting values into practice**
- **“A lot of the stuff was easy to follow and easy to implement. I liked the party atmosphere.”**
- **Social activity: fun component is critical**

# After the EcoTeam

- **New experiences, new choices, continue adding new practices to our routines**
- **Better sense of effort involved in changing**
- **Permanent change in behaviors: Look for recycled and reduced packaging, more with reusing and recycling**
- **Sense of community: shared resources**
- **Having your neighbors' phone numbers and addresses is really helpful---You don't have to rely on chance encounters in the street**

# Livable Neighborhoods

- The next program run by GAP
- We attempted and then abandoned it
- Much harder to implement
- More sustained effort, more coordination in move from individual home to street
- Lack of consensus
- Target was to empower underserved communities to start change at the grass roots
  - Not the audience that was served

# Current status

- Philadelphia office has disappeared.
- Global Action Plan website lists no local contacts
- No one seems to know what happened (orgs. I contacted that couldn't help.):
  - Philadelphia Streets
  - Volunteer Match
  - PA EPA
  - NASEO
  - Temple Prof
  - People in Phila green community

# Applicability

## Benefits:

- Useful for everyone
- Created sense of community
- Enjoyable, social process
- Reinforce values with actions
- Results based
- Participants were accountable

## Drawbacks

- Now what syndrome
- Energized base that's left unused
- Livable Neighborhoods program is much harder
- Didn't achieve target audience
- Not self propagating

# Transferability

- **Designed to be duplicated and adapted**
- **Team based group learning can be used by everyone**
- **Knowledge pooled and shared is more effective than solo learning**
- **A little bit like AA: it's easier to change behavior in a group setting, setting goals and reporting back in**
- **Support system and base for additional efforts**
- **Grass roots efforts can bring change**
- **Make you more aware of local players, non profits and government agencies**

# References

- Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3 Press Release. “EPA Grant Helps Livable Neighborhoods Thrive in Philadelphia” 11/7/2002. <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r3/press.nsf/0/5137982d8e5614e585256c6a006d5dea?OpenDocument>. [4/20/2004].
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- Renewable Energy Policy Project (crest.org) Description of Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign. [http://sol.crest.org/environment/renew\\_america/94nar/94u2162.htm](http://sol.crest.org/environment/renew_america/94nar/94u2162.htm) [4/20/2004].
- Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3 Press Release. “EPA Grant Helps Livable Neighborhoods Thrive in Philadelphia” 11/7/2002. [4/20/2004].
- David Gerson and Adrea Barsrist Stern, “EcoTeam: A Program Empowering Americans to Create Earth Friendly Lifestyles.” (Woodstock, NY: Gobar Action Plan for the Earth, 1997.)
- Interview with Seventh Generation EcoTeam Member: Nadia Adawi. 4/16/2004.
- I called and emailed the Philadelphia Streets Dept, Volunteer Match, PA EPA, NASEO, a Temple Prof and people in Philadelphia green community with no results. 4/14-4/20/2004.