RECYCLE RALLY

HOW TO START A GREEN TEAM FOR YOUR SCHOOL

LOOKING FOR A HANDS-ON WAY TO GET STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ENVIRONMENTALISM?

CONSIDERING DIFFERENT WAYS TO TEACH STUDENTS VALUABLE LEADERSHIP SKILLS?

DO YOU WANT TO EMPOWER STUDENTS TO RECYCLE AND PRACTICE AN ENVIRONMENT-SUSTAINING LIFESTYLE?

WANT TO MAKE YOUR SCHOOL A GREENER PLACE BUT NEED HELP IN DOING SO?

WHAT IS A GREEN TEAM?

NEED IDEAS ON HOW TO GET STARTED OR HOW TO TAKE YOUR GROUP TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

THINKING ABOUT STARTING A CLUB FOR FUTURE ENVIRONMENTALISTS AT YOUR SCHOOL?

CONGRATULATIONS!

You are one step closer to helping students learn the importance of environmental sustainability and teaching them how to make a positive impact in their school and community. By starting a Green Team at your school, you're helping students develop valuable, hands-on leadership skills, all while making the world a better place.

The following will serve as your step-by-step guide to initiating and developing a strong group of students to take on the challenge of making your school a greener place.

In addition to this guide, you can access customizable materials in the Green Team Toolkit Supporting Resources folder on the Recycle Rally website to help you establish a Green Team and recruit and engage students.

WE'LL HELP YOU...

- ☐ **Establish a Green Team for the first time**
  - Set goals
  - Name your group
  - Enlist support from other faculty and staff
- ☐ **Recruit students**
  - Which students to target
  - How to invite students
  - Tools to help spread the word
- ☐ **Engage students who are ready to get involved**
  - Assign roles and responsibilities
  - Establish a routine
  - Discuss potential projects, activities and events
  - Create swag
  - Use social media to broaden reach
- ☐ **Identify additional resources**
- ☐ **Review contact information**

ESTABLISH A GREEN TEAM

SETTING GOALS:

An inspired group of students can influence the behavior and decisions of their peers and of adults in ways that few others can. So consider, which of the areas below would you be most interested in facilitating?

- ☐ **Tracking your progress** toward improving your impact on the environment and implementing plans to continuously improve
- ☐ **Educating others** and bringing them along on your school's journey to become a greener place
- ☐ **Working together to design** / build / implement a tangible reminder or project **to leave a lasting impact**
- ☐ **Promoting a contest or rewards program** to inspire others to contribute to helping improve your environmental footprint
- ☐ **Advocating for greener decisions** among your facilities, purchasing or administrative departments

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS THOUGHT-STARTERS AS YOU THINK ABOUT WHICH GOAL(S) WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO DEVELOP FOR YOUR GREEN TEAM:

- **How does your school compare against other schools in your consumption of natural resources, such as water, electricity, natural gas and solid waste?**
  - If you don't know, then you could devote a portion of your team's time toward gathering the data necessary to figure this out
  - If you do know, then you may want to focus on improving in the areas in which you are not doing so well, or focus on promoting and expanding the things that you do really well
- **Do you consistently overhear students, faculty or staff lamenting the fact that your school does not do something that it could or should be doing?**
  - Examples could include:
    - Using re-usable or recyclable / compostable trays in your cafeteria instead of non-recyclable materials
    - Turning off the heat when you're sweating on hot days
    - Recycling common school supply materials through alternative recycling programs

IS THERE ANY PART OF YOUR SCHOOL, SUCH AS A PLAYSET, WALL, SPORTING FIELD OR ROOF THAT IS DUE FOR REPLACEMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

If so, could you and a team of students influence the decisions to replace or upgrade it with a more sustainable version?

- **Are there certain green behaviors that you have implemented successfully in your personal life that are not yet implemented at your school?**
  - Examples could include:
    - Composting food scraps
    - Adding aerators or low-flow fixtures to water faucets
- **Are there any open spaces that your school could better utilize to improve your environmental footprint?**
  - Examples could include:
    - Planting a rain garden
    - Planting more trees
    - Removing invasive species and planting native species
- **Are there any common myths or misperceptions that are consistently shared throughout your school that could be clarified?**

LAST THOUGHT ON SETTING GOAL(S):

Don't be shy about striving to achieve something big. If you do determine that you want to achieve a rather ambitious goal, be sure to break out some milestones along the way to give your team a chance to see they are on track and to keep them motivated to get all the way to the finish line.

NAMING YOUR TEAM:

Come up with a name for your group that fits with your goals and with your school's personality, mascot or location. We'll reference it as Green Team throughout this guide, but feel free to make your own name!

Examples include:

- Sustainable Superstars
- Waste Warriors
- Eco-Champions
- Eco-Maniacs
- Green Guardians
- Green Brigade
- Conserver Crew
- Save the Earth Squad
- Environmental Council
- Or keep it simple and just call it "Green Team"!

ENLISTING SUPPORT:

It's always best to share your vision for a green team with your peers and administrators and see if you can identify some individuals to help support or sponsor your team.

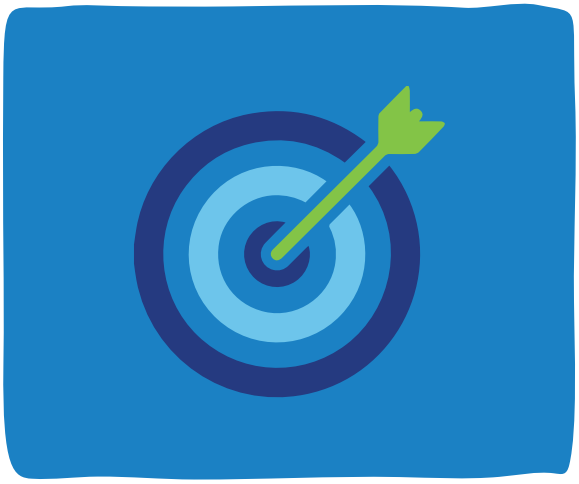
The following will help you enlist support in establishing a Green Team and can be found inthe Green Team Toolkit Supporting Resources folder on the Recycle Rally website:

- Informational email template: customize and send to other faculty and staff to help you explain why your school should create a Green Team and why students should join

Potential talking points and key messages:

- You are hoping to **enlist approximately XX students** to join your Green Team
- You plan on making it free and **open to students who meet _____criteria**. (Determine the criteria for participation – e.g., grade level, interests, minimum academic standing or GPA, etc.)
- The Green Team will take advantage of **rewards from Recycle Rally** (and possibly other programs) to operate with a minimal or negligible budget
- This can be a great way to engage students and help **reinforce some of the things they're learning in the classroom** so they could potentially improve their academic performance while also developing leadership skills and helping to improve the school and planet
- The Green Team will **take minimal time before, during, or after school** (average of _____ hours per month) with flexibility to fluctuate activity level throughout the year. (Determine how many hours the students will meet each month. If you're unsure of how muchtime to suggest, start with two to six hours per month.)
- The Green Team is led by [INSERT STAFF NAME] and meets regularly at [INSERT TIME] on a [WEEKLY, BIWEEKLY, MONTHLY] basis

RECRUITING STUDENTS TO JOIN



WHO TO TARGET

- Groups of anywhere from **five to 30 students** (or more if you think you can manage them!)
- Students who have a **passion for the environment**
- Students you've noticed are **keen to recycling**
- Students who have an interest in making a positive impact on the people around them
- Students who are **looking to get involved** in a fun school club
- Students who are **natural leaders** and can help recruit others

SUGGESTIONS HOW TO INVITE THEM

- **Talk it up** in classrooms and at school assemblies, events, sporting events, morning announcements, etc.
- **Host a "call-out" meeting to explain how it works** for those who are interested in learning more but not sure if they want to commit
- **Position the opportunity** to join a Green Team **as a privilege or special opportunity**
- Send home fliers with students so they can talk to their parents about it
- **Promote the benefits of participating** by hanging posters or sharing your own custom-made creative materials

TOOLS FOR SPREADING THE WORD

The following tools will help you recruit and spread the word and can be found in the Green Team Toolkit Supporting Resources folder on the Recycle Rally website:

- **Poster:** print out and hang up around the school in popular, communal areas
- **Handout:** turn this into a flier and pin it up on classroom boards
- **Email:** send to faculty so they can encourage their students to join the team
- **Social media:** if appropriate, upload the suggested social posts to your school's social media pages to spread the word about your school's Green Team

ENGAGE STUDENTS WHO ARE READY TO GET INVOLVED

ASSIGN ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Establish a list of roles for Green Team participants to help give students direction on how to participate in the Green Team and also hone in on specific interests. Roles could include, but are not limited to:

Potential Officer Positions

- **President:** The President will run Green Team meetings and likely be an older, more experienced participant. They'll help band the Green Team together.
- **Vice President:** The Vice President will help support the President in running meetings and promoting unity amongst Green Team members.
- **Secretary:** The Secretary will take notes and attendance during Green Team meetings. He or she will keep track of upcoming Green Team outings and events.
- **Treasurer:** The Treasurer will keep track of all Recycle Rally/Green Team funds or rewards points, supply inventories, and progress toward related goals.
- **Recycling Handler(s) / Tallier(s):** The Handlers and Talliers will help keep track of all bottles and cans that are brought to the school, sort them, and assist the Recycle Rally Leader with keeping track of the amounts on the online leaderboard.
- **Promoters / Advocates:** All students should serve as Promoters and Advocates for the Green Team, spreading sustainability practices and recycling tips and tricks to their peers, teachers and community. Designate a few 'Leader Promoters' to rally the group.
- **Artist(s) / Designer(s):** Enlist the help of artistic students to make posters to hang around the school, as well as design creative elements for recycling bins to help them stand out and get used more often.
- **Writer(s):** Students who are interested in writing can write articles about what the Green Team is doing for the school newspaper or newsletter.
- **Technology Gurus:** Create social media accounts for your school's Green Team and enlist a group of students run them.
- **Photographer:** Have a student or two take photos at Green Team events.

Establish a routine: Create a meeting agenda before each Green Team meeting. This will help guide the meeting, keep things organized and ensure all important topics are covered.

MEETING WITH THE GREEN TEAM FOR THE FIRST TIME? SOME SUGGESTED MEETING AGENDA TOPICS INCLUDE:

- **Green Team 101:** Give background on the club and provide an overview of what you expect the group to be doing during the school year.
- **Introductions:** Invite team members to introduce themselves.

ICE BREAKER ACTIVITY:

To help the students build a rapport, introduce an ice breaker activity.

Can toss example: Arrange the group in a circle and invite one student to start off by sharing why they were interested in joining the team and then saying the name of another student and tossing an empty can [or bottle] to them. That student then does the same thing and passes it on to another student who hasn't received the can yet. Continue until everyone has received it once, but if the can is dropped before everyone gets a turn, then start over, going back through each of the names until it gets back to where the can was dropped.

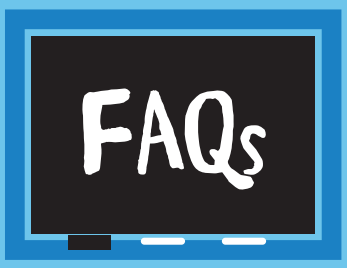
- **Brainstorm goals:** Brainstorm goals and ask students to share what they would be motivated to work on—that way the team can work toward these goals throughout the year.
- **Discuss possible team roles:** Talk about what roles are available for students to fill. Have students write down what roles they may be interested in. Assign roles during your next meeting.
- **Develop a campaign:** Develop plans for a campaign to communicate your goals and key messages.
- **Set the stage for the next meeting:** Provide details on upcoming outings or meetings so Green Team members know what's happening in the future.

NOT YOUR FIRST GREEN TEAM MEETING? SUGGESTED MEETING AGENDA TOPICS INCLUDE:

- **Introduction:** Introduce any new Green Team members and give them a warm welcome.
- **Recognition:** Show your gratitude to any team members who have accomplished a goal or been giving it their best effort.
- **Status Updates:** Discuss any ongoing projects and give an update on where they stand.
- **Stand up to the challengers:** Have any of your members been told that one person or one small group of people can't make a difference? Are there any naysayers telling you that your efforts are not worthwhile? Spend some time brainstorming solutions, responses and/or researching indisputable facts!
- **Upcoming events/meetings:** Provide details on upcoming outings or meetings so Green Team members know what's happening in the future.
- **Discuss potential projects, activities and events:** Think about events, field trips or ways to "give back" that the Green Team can do throughout the year to help promote recycling and sustainability. Giving the Green Team things to look forward to will keep participation rates and excitement levels high. Some ideas to get you started:

PROJECT, ACTIVITY AND EVENT IDEAS

- **Develop a "tip-of-the-day"**, "tip-of-the-week" or "tip-of-the-month" campaign to help peers take simple actions and collectively make a big impact
- **Set up a meeting** to propose new ideas to administrators or relevant staff members
- **Network with Green Teams from other schools** via Skype or in person if possible
- **Develop a capstone experience**: organize an environmental fair or assembly, or work with your school's Facilities, Operations or Purchasing department to implement a major new project on the school campus



Create a bulletin board with answers to frequently asked questions about relevant topics in your school (e.g., what's recyclable and what's not)

WASTE REDUCTION IDEAS

Organize a recycling drive to increase awareness and magnify the impact of your efforts

- **Tally your recycling totals** through the Recycle Rally portal on a weekly basis so that you can continually work on increasing your recycling rates throughout the year
- **Make recycling available at all school-related events,** such as sporting events, concerts, school dances, fairs, etc.
- **Encourage individuals** or other groups within your school **to sign a pledge** that they will recycle consistently
- **Make notepads by collecting scrap paper** that has not been used on one side and gluing it together into pads
- **Campaign to convert your cafeteria trays and flatware to compostable or recyclable** ones if not already using them
- **Develop a composting station** in your cafeteria that will benefit a school or local garden (if possible)
- Review the supplies commonly provided by your school to **determine if there is an opportunity** to work with the administration **to replace these items with those that are more recyclable** or include more recycled content and contain less hazardous materials, etc.

WATER CONSERVATION IDEAS

- Walk through the school and **determine all the points where water is consumed**
  - Work together to **estimate the quantity of water consumed** in each of these locations
  - Establish a simple, ongoing program that would **enable students to report leaking faucets or toilets** so that they may be fixed
- **Propose and implement adjustments to the landscape to increase absorption;** consider planting native plants or a rain garden in strategic locations
- **Create a mural, poster or 3-D display to engage** other students and staff in your water conservation campaign

- **Harvest rainwater** to minimize water runoff
  - Implement rain barrels if you have a community garden or other use
  - Plant trees where possible

ENERGY CONSERVATION IDEAS

- **Organize a Walk, Bike, or Carpool to School Day**
- Develop a campaign to **remind people to turn off lights**, computers, etc. when not in use
- **If enough natural light is available, use it and turn off the lights**
- **Use the "off" button on power strips** to ensure all equipment is turned off at the end of the day (as long as it is not important to leave on overnight)
- **Conduct an energy assessment** to determine the areas you can make the biggest impact
  - **Purchase an inexpensive power meter** from a local hardware store or read the power labels on the backs of your electronics. Use the figures to **estimate the power consumption of common items**, such as computers, projectors, tablets, etc. in your school.
  - **Look at the wattage rating on your light bulbs** and count how many of each item are in use. Multiply by an estimated number of hours per year to **estimate your annual energy consumption** in kilowatt-hours.
  - **Contact your local power company for assistance;** they may even help conduct an energy assessment or audit for free!
  - **Make announcements to the whole school** to share your top opportunities for making an impact
  - **Present your findings** to school administrators or relevant staff members and **persuade them to investigate options to improve your energy usage**

TOOLS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS:

The following tools will help you engage students and can be found in the Green Team Toolkit Supporting Resources folder on the Recycle Rally website:

- **Swag:** create and hand out swag to students when you've hit a goal! Includes examples for Green Team mechanical pencils, flash drives, hats and lunch bags
- **Social media images for students to post on their own channels:** encourage students to share images with their social media followers to broaden your reach and encourage others to join

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS OR TIPS? VISIT ANY OF THE LINKS BELOW.

- **PepsiCo Recycling:**
  - www.pepsicorecycling.com
  - Facebook: www.facebook.com/PepsiCoRecycling
  - Twitter: twitter.com/PepsiRecycling
  - Instagram: www.instagram.com/pepsirecycling
- **Keep America Beautiful:**
  - www.kab.org/resources
  - Ways to improve recycling, end littering and beautify communities
- **US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Sustainability:**
  - www.epa.gov/sustainability
  - Sustainability resources
- **US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recycling:**
  - www.epa.gov/recycle
  - Reduce and reuse basics and benefits
  - Recycling basics and benefits
  - Resources for students and educators
- **US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Students:**
  - www.epa.gov/students
  - Homework help, awards and activities for K-12 students
  - Classroom resources and project ideas
  - Additional resources for educators and education professionals
- **Earth Team:**
  - www.earthteam.net
  - Resources for teachers and educators to empower teens to becoming lifelong environmental stewards
  - Curriculum programs for middle and high school teachers
  - Ideas for projects and experimental education activities
- **Greenspan World Environmental Club Network:**
  - www.greenspanworld.org/environmental_club_network.htm
  - Network and organize with other environmental clubs around the world
- **Nature Works Everywhere (presented by The Nature Conservancy):**
  - www.natureworkseverywhere.org
  - Interactive lesson plans and videos that help you teach students how nature works for us

YOU'RE READY

Now it's time to make your school a greener place and teach students about how they can make a positive difference in the world. Remember, simple acts can lead to big impacts!

Need assistance? We're here to help!
Email: support@PepsiCoRecycling.com | Ph: 888.875.6555
Web: www.PepsiCoRecycling.com/Programs/RecycleRally