

the staff as well. With a small grant from a local firm, we employed a part-time high school environmental education teacher to provide resources for the teachers and conduct two after-school clubs for interested students. In addition, the teachers adopted as one of their yearly goals "furthering environmental awareness," pursuing it by assigning novels with relevant themes, examining the oil spill in Alaska, and investigating the role of people in hastening the natural erosion of Cape Cod.

In midyear, one teacher (a former GreenPeace worker) helped her students make daily informational announcements over the public address system about energy use and waste, the effects of the Amazon forests on our climate, and the like. About the same time, we included home audit forms in our newsletter for parents, and each class completed an audit of their use of resources. Recycling receptacles appeared in all classrooms, in offices, and in the cafeteria. And, as part of their fundraising efforts, the PTO conducted several successful bottle drives.

From kindergarten on, students must begin the process of internalizing good environmental practices.

In late May we celebrated with a spring gala, including performances of students' original plays, a chorus program featuring songs about Mother Earth, and displays throughout the school. The most dramatic event occurred when all the students, accompanied by the band, marched to the center of town with each class representing—through costumes, hats, masks, or floats created in art class—concerns such as acid rain, endangered species, or the rain forest.

More Work to Do

Now we realize that some of our efforts can't be accomplished at the building

level alone: we need districtwide commitment. From kindergarten on, students must begin the process of internalizing good environmental practices. To get the ball rolling, our cabinet has met with their counterparts from other schools to establish a district committee.

We have taken the first steps, and our awareness levels are high. Now students are beginning to ask uncomfortable questions: *Why are the cafeteria hamburgers wrapped in aluminum foil? Why do we need plastic bags in every wastebasket? Why are there unoccupied expensive condominiums when families of fellow students must move out of town for lack of low-cost housing?* They are beginning to realize their generation has a major responsibility ahead. However, changing habits of waste will be difficult in a society that encourages that waste. Now we need to confront our bad habits, sharpen our critical thinking, and resolve the conflicts between human needs and shrinking resources. □

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K. LYNNE MAINZER, PATRICIA BALTZLEY, AND KATHLEEN HESLIN

Everybody Can Be Great Because Everybody Can Serve

With the help of cooperative learning and the Maryland Student Service Alliance, teachers at Francis Scott Key High School in Union Bridge, Maryland, helped at-risk teenagers transform themselves into school leaders.

Imagine the 150 lowest-achieving students in a large rural high school—every special education student, students who have been retained one or more times, students who are in trouble with the school system or with the law, and students who are waiting to be 16 so they can drop out. We might describe these

students as "at-risk," in need of special programs or special help. In short, we might think of them as victims, and many of them might agree they are.

Yet, at Francis Scott Key High School in Union Bridge, Maryland, at-risk students are not victims; they are valued resources for the school and the community. They live and work according

to Martin Luther King's statement "Everybody can be great because everybody can serve."

Last year, these 150 at-risk students produced 600 lunches, each consisting of a sandwich, an apple, and a note of greeting for homeless people in Baltimore. They designed and produced 100 holiday placemats for nursing home res-

idents and led the school through the collection of relief funds for victims of the Armenian earthquake, Hurricane Hugo, and the Bay Area earthquake. They also linked with an inner-city school to provide encouragement and friendship to younger students and create rewards to inspire better school attendance. They hosted the first community service conference in their school's history, paving the way for the rest of the student body to see the value of helping others and to actively engage in community service.

These students became leaders in their school and community, grew in self-esteem, learned to care about others, and improved their academic achievement. What was the impetus for this remarkable transformation? It all began with cooperative learning.

Learning Confidence

To meet the academic needs of these students and to nurture their self-worth, leadership skills, mutual concern, and good citizenship, teachers at

Francis Scott Key developed a multi-disciplinary cooperative learning program. Using student team learning methods (Slavin 1986) and simple cooperative learning structures (Kagan 1989), teachers instructed the student teams on the standards, procedures, and rules for the cooperative class. They emphasized that evaluating "how" the assignments were completed was as important as actually completing the task (Johnson and Johnson 1984). Every day, each team assessed their level of preparation and how well they executed their activities, and targeted areas they thought they could improve. This process, along with a reward structure that gave daily points to teams reinforced the importance of "working together."

To promote positive interdependence, a basic principle in cooperative learning (Kagan 1989), teachers established a caring support system not only *within* the teams but also *between* teams. They succeeded in establishing a sense of community in the class by using the team and class rewards, jig-

sawing class activities (Dishon and O'Leary 1984), and constantly reminding the students that *Together Everyone Achieves More* (TEAM). Soon these students began to realize that they could perform successfully in school and that they had the talent to help others.

First they helped their teammates, then their classmates, and then they wanted more. . . . They wanted to help their neighbors in the world outside the school walls. So their teachers began to collaborate with the Maryland Student Service Alliance¹ to design a structured community service program.

Community Service

The Alliance advocates a cycle of *preparation, action, and reflection*. This model was the framework for the cooperative learning classes' community service project.

Preparation. Teachers used an interdisciplinary approach to prepare students for their community work projects. In their English class, students brainstormed a list of possible community service projects in their own community, the state, and the world. Teachers in social studies classes added a historical perspective by discussing community services projects from the time of Thomas Jefferson through John F. Kennedy to the present. This sense of history helped students get a perspective on their own contribution. Then, their math teachers helped the students use their problem-solving skills to plan and design the actual products for their projects. For example, they helped students determine the size and pattern of their holiday placemats. Then students calculated the amount of materials, time, and labor needed for the production of the placemat.

Action. Students continued their brainstorming and development activities, and they helped plan the first Youth Education in Service (YES) conference. This event sparked in students a realization of what community service entails and how much can be done. Within a week of the conference students initiated a lunchtime money collection for the relief of the Armenian earthquake victims. Excited about their participation in the community

Photograph courtesy of the Maryland Student Service Alliance



At-risk students can achieve high levels of self-esteem through structured community service programs like the one offered by the Maryland Student Service Alliance.

service projects, they hosted nursing home residents for lunch and presented them with holiday placemats they had made. They invited the handicapped high school students from the countywide special education school to a "school tour and luncheon" at Francis Scott Key. These students, once awkward and unsure about themselves, now graciously welcomed these senior citizens and handicapped teenagers with enthusiasm and compassion.

Reflection. After these events, a sense of teamwork was not enough for these students. Talking it over in classes, they found their sense of community had assumed a new perspective: they could meet the challenge of community service outside their school. Their cooperative learning teams had helped them prepare for, act on, and reflect about community service.

Schoolwide Effects

These socially responsible students made a place for themselves in their

school and community. Within one year, they made a proclamation of dedication to community service at an all-school assembly that led Francis Scott Key High School into a new era of student involvement, inspiring their fellow classmates to active citizenship and community service. Who had altered the outlook of an entire school to achieve new heights of service? The answer is simple—these emerging leaders at Francis Scott Key High School. □

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¹The Maryland Department of Education established the Student Service Alliance in 1988 to help schools set up their community service programs. In addition to materials, the Alliance offers teacher training and technical assistance. For more information, write to Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Director, Maryland Student Service Alliance, Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore, MD 21201.

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BARBARA STANFORD

My Air, Your Rain Forest: An Experiment in Global Responsibility

U.S. and Latin American teachers met and learned about each others' cultures and environmental problems, then brought their insights back to their classrooms.

The high school cafeteria in Hot Springs, Arkansas, has turned into a tropical rain forest. Students in the ecology club and the foreign language club are making multidisciplinary, multisensory presentations of their rain forest research. They speak of the rain forest's dramatic impact on our climate and air. But when the program ends, the students cram their crepe paper rain forest into plastic bags to join the mountains of trash



Photographs by Israel Perez

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