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# Educating the Youth in Recycling

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# Educating the Youth in Recycling

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Advised by Professors Marja Bakermans (BBT) and Beth Eddy (HUA)



**Problem:** There is a lack of education of proper recycling management for the youth in the elementary school system.

## Background

Most elementary schools have a recycling program and enough recycling bins. Despite this, about 80% of the items thrown in trash cans at elementary schools can actually be recycled. The problem is that there is a lack of education of proper recycling management in elementary schools. The youth is responsible for the planet's future, and if they do not care about the environment now, they will not care about it when they become adults. Thus it is crucial to educate children so they can contribute to greener communities.

## Goals

- Reduce the amount of waste generated in elementary schools
- Encourage the school faculty to be more involved in recycling
- Redesign how children learn about recycling
- Teach children how to reuse materials
- Increase children's interaction with nature



## Final Product

Our final product is a booklet with a recycling educational plan for elementary schools. This booklet will be distributed to Worcester Public Elementary Schools as a guide to implement or improve a recycling program.

## Contacts

Elizabeth Tomaszewski - *Associate Director of Sustainability*  
Kristen Bender - *WPI Green Team Secretary*  
Rich Dussault - *Senior Custodian at Elm Park Community School*

## Methods

Research about recycling in elementary schools

Identify the problems of current recycling educational methods

Interview Contacts

Build a recycling program booklet based on findings

### References

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## Schools' Profile

- Every room has one bin
- About 500 students
- Total of 50-55 bins
- No bins in the hallway
- 75% of staff is committed to recycling
- Kids lack knowledge on what can be recycled and the recycling process



## Solution

- Booklet with a program on how to educate children about recycling
- Main problems addressed:
  - Relationships with educators
  - Interaction with the environment
  - Dynamic learning
  - Familiarization with recycling
  - Faculty involvement



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