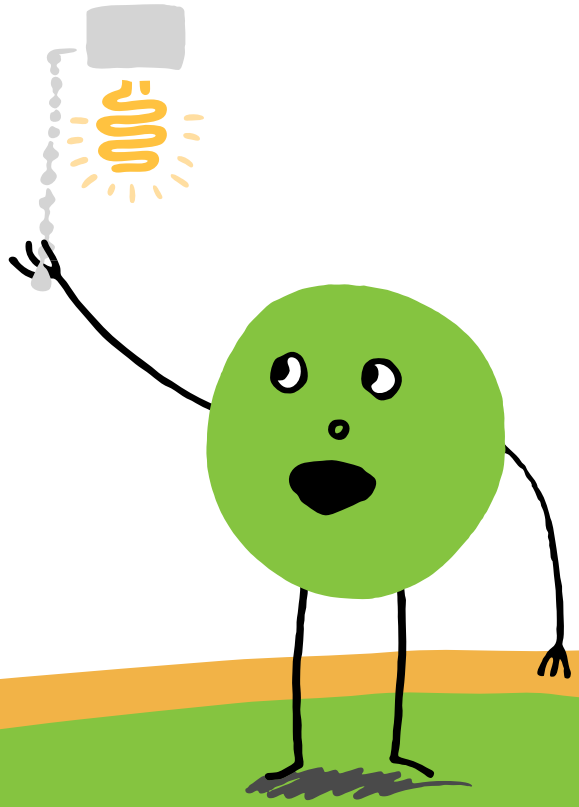
GREENSPOT KIDS

CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

www.GreenKids.Columbus.gov

CONTENTS

Introducing GreenSpot	2
Joining GreenSpot	3
Tool kit	4-5
Website	4
Posters	4
Children's book	4
Walking map	4
Guest presentations	5
Local resource guide	5
Awards	5
Suggested Implementation	6-7

PRODUCED BY

City of Columbus
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THANKS TO PARTNERS:

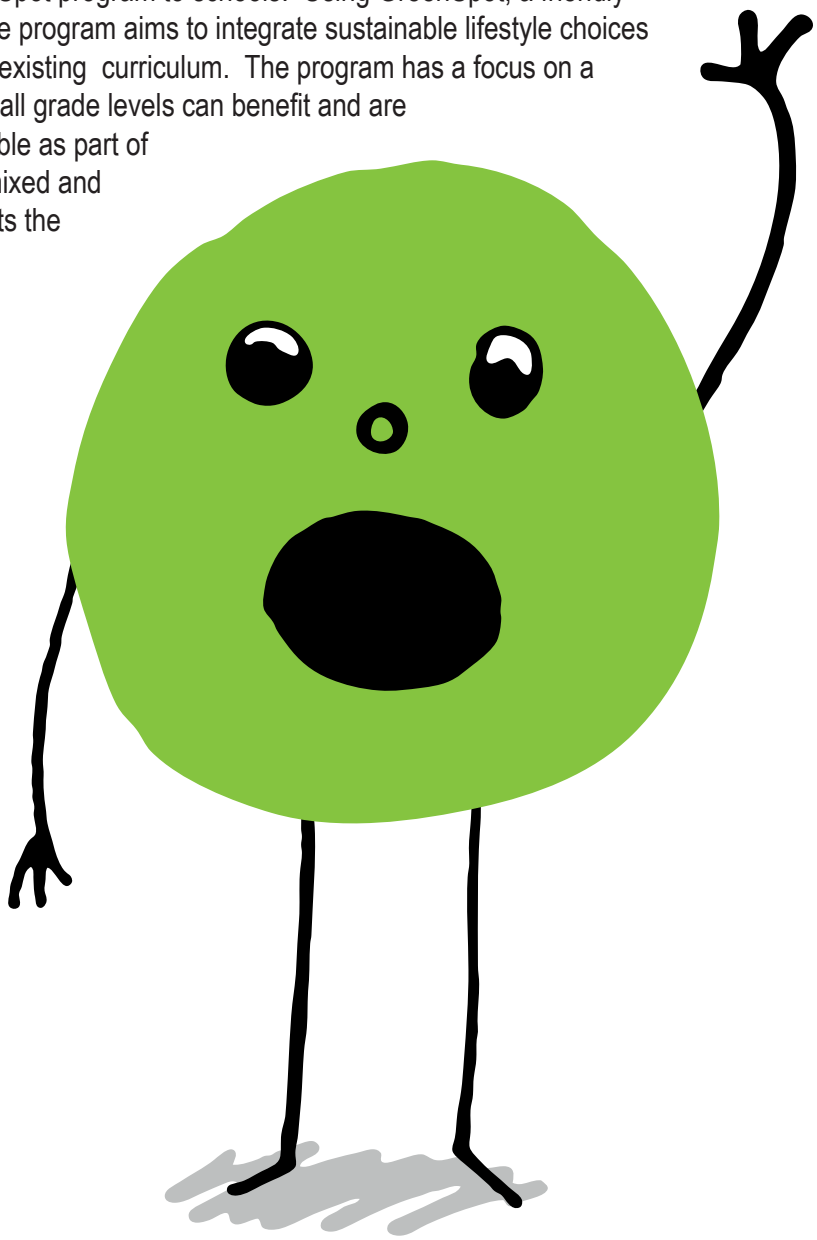
- Ohio Environmental Education Fund
- Columbus City Schools
- Mayor Coleman's Green Team
- Columbus Department of Public Utilities
- Columbus Department of Public Health
- Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks
- Ologie Inc.
- Columbus Metropolitan Library
- The Ohio State University
- Leave No Child Inside Central Ohio Collaborative
- Franklin Soil & Water
- Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio
- MORPC
- Ohio Department of Transportation

INTRODUCING GREENSPOT

GreenSpot is a program of Mayor Michael B. Coleman's Get Green Columbus initiative. GreenSpot launched in 2008 in response to a growing curiosity local residents and businesses expressed about what 'going green' really entails. Since that time over 3500 residents and businesses have become a member of the GreenSpot program.

GreenSpot is a web-based program available online at www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org. The user can join the program as a household, a business or a community group as each has a separate, targeted application. The application prompts the user to make a series of commitments that will have a positive impact on the environment. Each member receives a window decal as recognition for the steps they are taking to promote a sustainable future.

With support from Columbus City Schools, the City of Columbus received a grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) to expand the GreenSpot program to schools. Using GreenSpot, a friendly mascot to deliver the GreenSpot message, the program aims to integrate sustainable lifestyle choices into everyday classroom life while supporting existing curriculum. The program has a focus on a first grade audience, although, classrooms of all grade levels can benefit and are welcome to participate. The resources available as part of GreenSpot Kids were designed to be easily mixed and matched by the teacher in a way that best suits the unique needs of their students. The following pages explain the new GreenSpot resources and provide recommendations on how to implement the program in your school's classrooms.



JOINING GREENSPOT

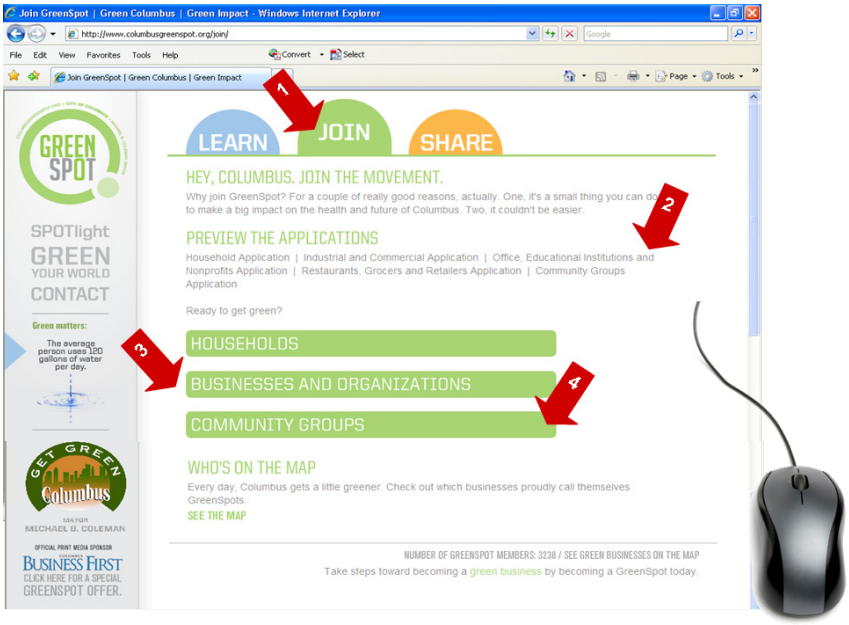
There are two ways in which schools are encouraged to join GreenSpot.

SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM

The first is for the school (or classroom) to become a member. Doing so will convey that caring for the environment is considered a priority and part of the school's culture, setting a positive example to all who pass through the school's doors.

In order to register, please visit www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org and select the Join tab (1). For a printable preview of the application click 'Office, Educational Institutions and Nonprofits Application' (2). Schools are asked to register by submitting their application online using the "Businesses and Organizations" category (3). You will see that the school must make selections from a list of options in each of five categories: Inform & Engage; Reduce, Reuse & Recycle; Conserve Energy, Conserve & Protect Water; and Travel Green. If time and care are taken during this process, you may find that going through the membership process is valuable tool serving as a self-audit to gauge your current progress and to guide your efforts into the future.

If you would prefer for your classroom to join the program in exchange for, or in addition to your school membership, please select the Community Group category (4) for a simplified application. In order to complete this registration you will be asked to specify the three things your classroom will do within the next year to protect our air, soil and water.



HOME

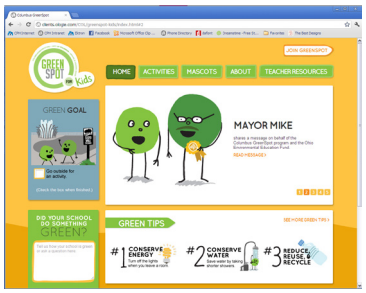
Additionally, teachers are encouraged to give students an assignment to go home and log onto GreenKids.Columbus.Gov to register their home as a GreenSpot with their parents. For students without access to the internet or for those who prefer not to submit their information to the GreenSpot program, a printable version of this form is available for distribution. Each child who submits an application will receive a welcome letter from the Mayor and window decal in the mail.

This activity will have multiple benefits as the student learns about his or her personal impacts on other living creatures and parents also receive this message which helps to reinforce lessons learned at home.

TOOLKIT

Now that your school is a GreenSpot member and students have had a chance to join at home, there are a series of tools available that can be mixed and matched in order to bring the message of sustainability into your classroom year round. A suggested implementation is also available in the following pages.

WEBSITE



Fill gaps in your class schedule with the enriching activities available on the GreenSpot Kids website GreenKids.Columbus.gov. Here kids can test their knowledge with an interactive quiz, play a game, read the book GreenSpot and the Dots and more. There are resources for teachers too including links to websites with lesson plans, electronic copies of GreenSpot worksheets and more.

POSTERS

A poster featuring GreenSpot, the program's friendly environmental ambassador, serves as a reminder to recycle encouraging children to make sustainable behaviors a way of life. This poster is available for download at GreenKids.Columbus.gov.

A separate laminated, reusable poster allows classrooms to graph progress in adopting sustainable behaviors. Each child's name can be written on the poster using a dry erase marker. Students can then check off a square after their name each time they have earned recognition for practicing a sustainable behavior. A general list of behaviors to reinforce have been printed on the chart, but teachers can add their own that are specific to the school or classroom. Posters must be requested online at GreenKids.Columbus.gov.

CHILDREN'S BOOK

A locally specific children's book has been developed as a means to integrate sustainability into reading curriculum. The book features GreenSpot, a character inspired by the drawings of central Ohio students, who helps to transform the City of Columbus by showing his friends how to live a little greener. The book is written for the average reading level of a first grade student with subtext included to tie the storyline to science curriculum. Teachers can request a classroom set of these books for free along with another copy of the book to be kept in the school library. All Columbus Public Libraries have also added this book to their collections in order to ensure the book is available into the future. Additionally, the book is available for print online at GreenKids.Columbus.gov.

WALKING MAP

Walking is a source of physical activity and when used for transportation to the library, the store, or other errands, it reduces trips made by cars which pollute the air. The Columbus Green Walks map provides a treasure hunt adventure for children and adults. Based in Whetstone Park, the map provides clues and a route for the user to follow to a series of destinations. At each destination, the user calls a toll free, local number to receive interpretive audio information at each site. Sites selected for the Columbus Green Walk map are all natural or environmentally significant features. Maps have been distributed to Columbus City Schools, Columbus Public Libraries, and Whetstone Community Center. Additionally, maps are available by request online at GreenKids.Columbus.gov.

If your class can't make it to Whetstone Park, a worksheet is available to create a customized Green Walk on your school's property. For example, a stop at power lines allows an opportunity to discuss how electricity is generated and transported to area buildings. A look at a curbside storm drain provides the opportunity to talk about where water goes when it rains and how to prevent pollution from making its way to our streams. A bus stop provides an opportunity to talk about how modes of transportation impact the air we breathe. Geology and native tree species shared in common are other items presented on the document.

GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Professionals from the City of Columbus can be scheduled to visit your classroom for a fun 45 minute presentation. Staff will work with each teacher to ensure the presentation is appropriate for students.

Staff will discuss presentation options with each teacher upon request of GreenSpot Kids materials online at GreenKids.Columbus.gov.

LOCAL RESOURCE GUIDE

A locally specific resource guide has been compiled for teachers looking to further implement environmental education beyond the GreenSpot Kids program in Columbus and surrounding areas. The guide provides information including the following:

- Presentations & field trips
- Lesson plans
- Grants
- Supplies & services
- Further reading (for kids)
- Events

AWARDS

Each year Mayor Michael B. Coleman presents the GreenSpotLight Awards to local businesses. New in 2013, the Mayor will present an award to an exceptional GreenSpot school. A reporting document may be requested from your school once a year for the purpose of determining a winner. In order to be eligible to win, schools must be a GreenSpot member located in the City of Columbus (register online at www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org) and have completed the classroom pre-test/post-test evaluation. Factors determining the award winner may include the amount of GreenSpot members per school, activities undertaken to change behavior, facilities and operations of the school administration, faculty and students. Schools can increase their chance of winning by having students participate in online activities at GreenKids.Columbus.gov. The classroom in the winning school with the most GreenSpot members will also receive water bottles, rain gauges or other items for each student as a reward for their accomplishment.

Schools are also encouraged to create their own award. Art classes can create a trophy using recycled materials. Judged by the school principal or Green Team, the trophy can be awarded to the greenest classroom once per month in order to maintain enthusiasm for the school's green effort and reward the efforts of individual classrooms.

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION

GreenSpot was designed such that teachers have the flexibility to mix and match the resources available to design a customized program for their unique classroom. However, suggested implementation guidelines have been developed for teachers who prefer to follow the program as recommended. Ideally, the steps below will be spread out across the span of a school year to remain a consistent part of classroom life.

STEP 1: MEMBERSHIP

School registers as a GreenSpot location– this is a great task for a Green Team or Environmental Club, if your school has one. Involving students in the application process helps them feel responsible for follow-through and empowered to make a difference. As an alternative, you may prefer to register your classroom as a GreenSpot . After registering, you will receive a window decal in the mail to display your commitment, post this decal in a visible location with the help of your students.

STEP 2: EVALUATE

In return for the free materials provided through GreenSpot Kids, we hope to gain data on the effectiveness of the program in your classroom. Please use the pre-test/post-test forms to evaluate your class's understanding of sustainability and submit the data via email to lrstrader@columbus.gov or by mail to Mayor's Office of Environmental Stewardship, C/O Leslie Strader, 90 W. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215.

STEP 3: KICK OFF

From choosing to recycle to packing your lunch using reusable containers, making sustainable lifestyle choices are an everyday occurrence. For this reason, GreenSpot was designed with the intention to have a presence in the classroom everyday. To introduce this new presence in the room, kick off the GreenSpot program do by leading an outdoor activity using the Green Walk worksheet. Using clues, and audio interpretation, the activity will lead small groups of students around school property to learn about significant environmental features (such as: air quality, water quality, energy, recycling). The activity will help students to acknowledge the role the environment plays in their lives and, vice versa, the role they play in impacting the environment. Students will then suggest ways the classroom can help the environment.

STEP 4: HOMEWORK

Assign students the task of educating their parents about going green at home by visiting GreenKids.Columbus.gov. For students without access to the internet or for those who prefer not to submit their information to the GreenSpot program, a printable version of this form is available for distribution. Parents and children will sit down together to register their home as a GreenSpot member by selecting a series of behaviors they believe they can commit to at home. Each child who submits an application will receive a welcome letter from the Mayor and window decal in the mail.

STEP 5: PROGRESS (WEEKLY)

Each week, track your classroom progress with the help of students using the laminated Accomplishment Tracking Chart and dry erase markers.

STEP 6: READING

The GreenSpot children's book is a fun, positive and light hearted story with a message reinforcing sustainable lifestyle choices. Integrate the book or others suggested in the Resource Guide into an existing reading

assignment. For example, children can take home the book to read at night with their parents, read it in class, or you can read it to them. Use the worksheet provided as follow up to further enhance reading and writing skills. Each teacher may request a classroom set of the book GreenSpot and the Dots as well as another copy to be cataloged in the school library.

STEP 7: COMPUTER

Fill gaps in the classroom schedule with the enrichment activities available on the GreenSpot Kids website. Students can take turns or visit the computer lab as a group to explore the activities online including quizzes and games. Participating in online activities can help your school win the GreenSpot Light Award!

STEP 8: EXCURSION

Reward student's effort by scheduling a fun and educational field trip or in class presentation. Field trips and classroom presentations can help students gain new perspective. For example, students may be wondering what happens to trash after it is set out for collection. A visit to the Franklin County Landfill provides an eye opening experience for children and adults as they realize the cumulative impact of our actions on the environment. Other field trip and classroom presentation options are listed in the Resource Guide.

STEP 9: CELEBRATE ALONG THE WAY!

Join in the celebration as the City of Columbus recognizes significant environmental events. Information on these events are available in the Resource Guide.

STEP 10: LESSONS

Recommended lesson plans highlighting environmental education are provided in the Local Resource Guide.

STEP 11: RECOGNITION

Go above and beyond the recommended GreenSpot programming and stand out to win a GreenSpotLight Award. In order to be eligible to win, schools must be a GreenSpot member located in the City of Columbus (register online at www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org) and have completed the classroom pre-test/post-test evaluation. Factors determining the award winner may include the amount of GreenSpot members per school, activities undertaken to change behavior, facilities and operations of the school administration, faculty and students. Schools can increase their chance of winning by having students participate in online activities at GreenKids.Columbus.gov. The classroom in the winning school with the most GreenSpot members will also receive water bottles, rain gauges or other items for each student as a reward for their accomplishment.

STEP 12: EVALUATE

After implementing the GreenSpot program for approximately 8 weeks, once again, please submit a post-test evaluation form. Forms can be submitted via email to lrstrader@columbus.gov or by mail to Mayor's Office of Environmental Stewardship, C/O Leslie Strader, 90 W. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215.

STEP 13: CONTINUE ON

With the resources provided, it is possible to continue on with your sustainability programming beyond the recommendations set forth in the GreenSpot Kids program. For example, organize a volunteer litter clean-up at school or plant a community garden. The possibilities are endless. Find what fits with your school, have fun and get green!