

Teens Reaching Youth (TRY) Program

TEENS REACHING YOUTH FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



*A program model to engage teens, develop leadership & life skills,
and reach new audiences.*

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Renewable Energy

Food Systems

Waste Solutions

Informed and Engaged Citizenry = Better Policies & Solutions

TRY stands for Teens Reaching Youth and it is a teen-led environmental education program designed to teach environmental literacy and responsibility to younger youth. Research shows that fostering greater environmental literacy increases knowledge and awareness of the issues as well as prepares future generations to be socially responsible environmental stewards by strengthening critical thinking, problem-solving and effective decision making skills.

TRY for the Environment includes three program areas - renewable energy, waste solutions and food systems - to connect young people to real-world environmental problems in which they can be key change agents helping to create real-world solutions.

Example of the impact these teens make....

The TRY Renewable Energy program, in partnership with the Vermont Energy Education Program, has trained 125+ teen teachers since 2014. TRY teams teach a 6 lesson curriculum focused on solar and wind energy to classrooms and afterschool programs all over Vermont. To date, they have reached over 1200 students in grades K-3. The teens' cumulative volunteer hours preparing for and delivering the lessons is almost 1200 hours each year. This impressive group of teen teachers has inspired and continues to inspire our youngest students to think about wind and solar as a renewable energy source and has also taught them some key foundational concepts related to energy.

The teen teachers also gain much from this experience. Not only do they gain a greater understanding of solar and wind energy they also improve their leadership and life skills (problem solving, leadership, teamwork, conflict resolution, planning, communication, self-responsibility, organization, and others). One TRY Renewable Energy team even started advocating for divestment of Vermont's pension fund from fossil fuels – taking the knowledge and awareness gained from TRY to the political realm.

The other TRY program areas are equally strong and impressive: TRY Waste Solution teens teachers educate our youngest students about the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle), composting, and Vermont's Universal Recycling Law. TRY Food Systems teens help educate younger students about where food comes from and the importance of protecting the environment (soil, pollinators, climate). TRY teams in these programs reached almost 400 students in 2016.

This increase in environmental literacy and responsibility of Vermonters, especially our young people, is important and leads to a greater understanding and awareness of our planet and its finite resources so that the complex environmental issues of the 21st Century can be debated intelligently and holistically. An informed and engaged citizenry leads to better policies and solutions.

For More Information Contact:

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