



GREENKIDS

CREATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS

Partnership Information Packet – updated 9.25.17

(The information in this packet is subject to change, please review most updated version before submitting your application)

Table of Contents

Program Overview	2
Your School's Commitment	4
What KIB Provides	5
Preparing to Apply.....	6
Frequently Asked Questions.....	7
Soil Testing	Appendix A



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

What is the GreenKids program?

Let's get outside and let's get learning! The GreenKids program is a two-year partnership between Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. (KIB) and your school. This partnership allows you to start your own after-school, nature-focused club where kids will get to learn about their environment and help build their very own outdoor classroom!

Why GreenKids?

Today, the average American child spends more than 50 hours/week using electronic media – that is more than 7 hours per day. This statistic is resulting in many disturbing childhood trends such as rises in obesity, attention disorders, and depression. By reconnecting children to nature, we help them to enjoy its many proven benefits. Research shows that when kids spend time outdoors they are:

- happier healthier and smarter;
- more self-disciplined and focused;
- confident, creative and cooperative;
- more physically fit, more optimistic and better problem solvers

(Indiana Children and Nature Network. 2015. <http://www.indianachildrenandnature.org/>)

Allowing your students time in nature to enjoy themselves will foster a deep and lasting connection to their natural environment so that they will want to care for it!

How do we create the next generation of environmental stewards?

KIB will help give your students the opportunity to experience, explore and care for nature right on school grounds. Together, students and volunteers will build an outdoor classroom that will consist of three major areas. Each area will be supplemented with environmental education programming:

- Native Plant Garden
- Fruit Tree Orchard
- Natural Play Area

Why These Three Components?

These three components help us reach KIB's greater mission of *helping people and nature thrive*. Each space helps to improve the environment and connect children to nature so that they may enjoy its many proven benefits while fostering an appreciation of the physical, social and psychological value of the natural environment when they are first forming critical life values.

The native plant garden will help sustain native wildlife such as monarch butterflies, promote biodiversity and will allow children to learn the importance of plants that support pollinators.



The orchard will allow students to grow and harvest their own food, understand proper nutrition habits, and learn about the many benefits trees provide to an urban environment.

The natural play area – A natural play space will provide students the opportunity to develop stronger cognitive, fitness and motor skills as they play on uneven surfaces made from natural materials. Most materials used to build the play area will be recycled or repurposed.





YOUR SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT

The Club – Each partner school will form an extracurricular club that has an environmental focus. The club will meet twice a month to participate in hands-on lessons and activities aimed at connecting students to nature.

School Staff – An adult Steering Committee will be formed to help facilitate and supervise the after-school club, as well as help maintain the outdoor classroom.

Maintenance – The students in the club and the Steering Committee will be responsible for maintaining the outdoor classroom (with the support of KIB volunteers) through tasks such as weeding and watering during the spring and fall months. If the school cannot maintain the first component implemented in the outdoor classroom, KIB **will not** install any additional components until the school can fulfill its maintenance commitment.

Education – While KIB staff members will lead many lessons during KIB Club meetings, the Primary and Secondary Facilitators of the club will be responsible for planning and leading lessons for the club when KIB staff is not able to attend club meetings.





PREPARING TO APPLY

Below are tips for you to know before submitting an application:

Soil Testing - When selected for a GreenKids grant, each school must submit soil test results for the area of the campus being considered for an outdoor classroom. The cost of soil testing through The Marion County Public Health Department is \$30.00. Detailed instructions outlining how to collect and submit a soil sample can be found at the end of this packet.

Form your Committee – The larger, more engaged group of people you have as a part of your Steering Committee, the higher marks your application will receive. Begin early by engaging fellow teachers, administrators, parents, and neighbors and get them excited about the benefits an outdoor classroom can provide your school and your surrounding community.

Adopt your Block - By signing up for our Adopt-A-Block Schools program, you will be able to participate in our native plant and tree distributions, as well as receive free tools for the school. Planting the trees and plants you receive from the distributions is a great way to start introducing your students to small maintenance tasks and will allow KIB to better evaluate your maintenance capacity. This will also increase your involvement with KIB and therefore add more points to your application score. Sign up through the following link:

<http://www.kibi.org/programs/beautification/adopt-a-block-schools/>

Great Indy Cleanup – Our GIC program is another way to begin your involvement with KIB. Join a neighborhood litter cleanup with your students to get them excited about helping to take care of our earth! Read more here:

<http://www.kibi.org/programs/beautification/great-indy-cleanup/>



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my after-school club meet more frequently than twice a month?

Yes. You can hold club meetings weekly if you choose, however your KIB representative will not be present for all of these meetings. It will be up to the Primary Facilitator of the club to either lead environmental education programming or maintenance activities during extra club meetings.

How long should a club meeting last? How many students should be a part of the club?

Consult your school's current after-school program guidelines. A single after-school club meeting typically lasts around one hour. 15-20 students is a good club size.

We have an existing garden, can that be used as part of the outdoor classroom?

Yes. Depending on your school's existing space, it is entirely possible to include established areas in the design of the outdoor classroom.

Can we add more to the outdoor classroom in addition to the three main components?

Yes. You can advocate for additional components to be included in the outdoor classroom design, however KIB will not necessarily fund or implement all of them. The design will be yours to keep so you can continue to add to your outdoor classroom even when your partnership with KIB has concluded.

Our school is not ready for this long of a commitment but we still want to find ways to get our kids outside, how can we do that?

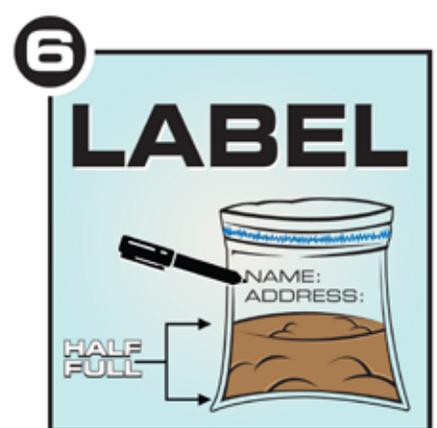
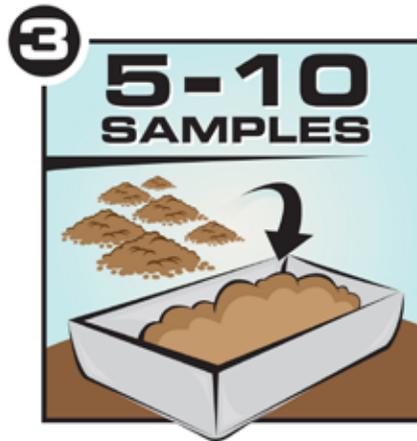
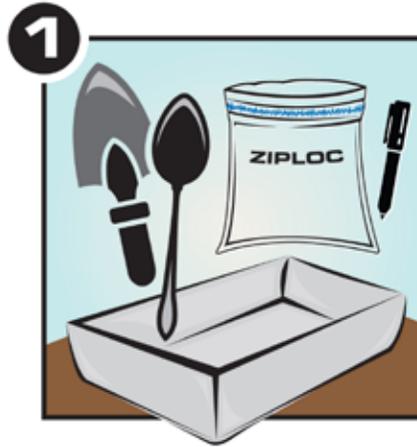
There are many ways to begin getting your students outside and exploring nature without becoming a GreenKids school!

- **Apply for a tree planting** – If you are not ready to take on maintaining an entire outdoor classroom, but would like to take care of some trees, consider applying for a Community Forestry Grant: <http://www.kibi.org/programs/planting-trees/community-forestry/>
- **Adopt your Block** – Start showing your students how to make a difference by adopting your school's block: <http://www.kibi.org/programs/beautification/adopt-a-block/>
- **Check out our resources page** for access to simple outdoor activities you can do with your kids: <http://www.kibi.org/programs/youth-programming/youth-education-resources/>
- **Join the email list** – To be alerted to additional youth and nature opportunities, email Heather Maurer at hmaurer@kibi.org and ask to join the mailing list.

For any additional questions, please contact Heather Maurer at hmaurer@kibi.org

Soil Sample Collection Instructions

1. Gather materials and select a clean container (not galvanized metal) to deposit soil samples. Use a clean trowel, spoon or spade to collect the samples.
2. Identify the sample collection site. Areas nearest to your house are likely to have elevated lead levels if your house was painted with lead-based paint at some point. However, if this is where you garden or plan to garden, the location may be appropriate. Consider drawing a sketch of the site and/or take a photo for future reference. Remove surface debris, such as plant residues, mulch or turf thatch, from the soil before inserting the spade or trowel.
3. Collect a total of five to ten soil samples (a few ounces) for a total of one cup from various areas of your yard or garden and deposit into your clear container; this will be a composite sample composed of multiple sites. Since only a very small portion of the soil is used for testing, it is very important that the sample be representative of an area. Discard any large rocks or debris.
4. If analyzing for gardening purposes, collect samples from roughly the root depth of the vegetable or plants you intend to grow. If you are concerned about exposure to surface soils (i.e. children's play areas, tracking soil into the house, bare soils), collect samples from the top one or two inches. Note: It is important to avoid areas where fertilizer or lime have been spilled or recently applied, fertilizer band areas of last year's crops, compost piles, field borders and poorly drained areas.
5. Mix the soil samples together thoroughly and place in a clean, re-sealable freezer or food storage bag labeled with your name, phone number and address.
6. Deliver the sample to the Public Health Laboratory at 3838 N. Rural St., Indianapolis, IN 46205.



MARION COUNTY
PUBLIC
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Prevent. Promote. Protect.