

News Release

November 13, 2008

Cutting through the garbage—Green initiatives at The Children’s House show immediate results

TRAVERSE CITY, MI — Energy efficient light bulbs. Local-only diets. Ethanol-powered cars. Now add a new one: call it “extreme recycling.” Except this isn’t a fad for one group of area students—it’s a school-wide effort that’s literally so easy a child can do it *and* is actually producing positive and measurable results right away.

“Since the start of the school year, we have managed to cut our garbage output by more than half,” says Michele Shane, Head of School at The Children’s House. “In about four weeks we’ve traded down from a four-yard to a two-yard dumpster per week. The students are so excited about it that our new goal is to get rid of the dumpster entirely and have a single garbage tote for the entire school.”

In the first of The Children’s House new green initiatives program started last September, the entire school—from the office staff to the classrooms—began composting ALL food and organic waste (and recycling nearly everything else).

“Every classroom—from toddlers to six-year students are involved,” says Shane. “At this rate, by the end of the school year, we expect to compost about four tons of garbage that would otherwise be headed to the landfill.”

The Children’s House regularly puts on earth-friendly collection drives for everything from disposal batteries to wire coat hangers.

“You’d be surprised at how many wire coat hangers are out there,” says Shane.

Earth science, conservation, and stewardship have always been an integral part of The Children’s House curriculum. The on-campus green house, for instance, is an extensive, diverse, and totally hands-on classroom. Students not only learn to grow and tend various vegetables and herbs, they also learn about basic commerce by harvesting and selling the greens to area families. Students also harvest the things they’ve grown and take them to the campus kitchen—another working classroom—where they turn the food into meals shared by the entire student body.

“From the collecting of the material that enriches the soil, to the final result of having a meal you grew and prepared with your own hands, our green initiatives teach children that everything in life is connected,” says Shane. “And with just a little effort and fun you can actually have a huge impact.”

For more information and/or interviews please contact Missy Russell, Advancement Director at The Children House, by phone 231.929.9325 or via email at missy@traversechildrenshouse.org.