

Helping New York State Schools Buy More Green Products

The Healthy School Network (HS Network), founded in Albany, NY in 1995 strives to ensure every child has an environmentally healthy school. Recognizing kids' special vulnerabilities, HS Network has an emphasis on preventing exposures to harmful chemicals in schools by pressing for a range of pollution prevention measures. These measures include nontoxic supplies, green cleaning, safer pest control, and reduced, targeted disinfectant use. HS Network also pursues child sensitive standards for school siting, design, construction, new environmental public health services and interventions for children with suspected exposures in schools.

Challenge

With a state law in place, along with good experience using green cleaning products, New York State P-12 schools and districts still find themselves behind state agencies when it comes to purchasing other types of green products. HS Network's Buy More Green Products project aimed to inform school elected and appointed leaders, custodians, teachers, and parents of New York State's highly effective green procurement initiative and provide helpful workshops and webinars on how to find and use greener products in schools and at home.



Photo Credit: HS Network

Solution

HS Network's educational project continued to collaborate with several major school constituency groups such as the New York State Parent Teachers Association (NYS PTA), New York State School Facilities Association (NYS SFA) and New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) to raise awareness and promote behavioral changes. HS Network developed a presentation and handouts about acquiring greener products that reached 40 individuals (via webinar and in-person). Additionally, HS Network advised the New York State Association of School Business Officials (NYS ASBO) via an educational green cleaning policy paper and presented to the New York State Council of School Superintendents at its annual Leadership Conference in the fall. Educational flyers were also developed and use as tools to support this program.

Online Media

[Healthy Schools Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

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CHALLENGE

- Increase and expand the number of New York State P-12 schools and districts that meet state requirements when purchasing green products

SOLUTION

- Advancement with HS Network's Buy More Green Products project
- Development of resources such as: presentations, webinars, workshops and flyers to support the Buy More Green Products project

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TESTIMONIAL

“While there remains a need for schools and districts to further expand their green purchasing, this project allowed for additional outreach materials and opportunities to connect with key state partners, schools and parents. As a result of the support from NYSP2I, we were able to produce high quality materials that we will utilize in the future.”

- Claire Barnett, Executive Director
Healthy Schools Network

Additional Resources

[New York State Law \(P-12 schools\), New York State Executive Order \(state agencies\)](#)

[NYS Education Department, “Ed Management Services: Purchasing”](#)

[New York State Green Cleaning Program](#)

Offers training on cleaning, disinfecting and other informational materials, as well as lists of approved products.



In the Toolkit are free educational materials: Power Point presentations for general audiences and for custodial workers new to green cleaning; tip sheets for parents, teachers, vendors, and school checklists. Also free, a Cleaning for Healthy Schools poster, a poster from the National Association of School Nurses, guidance from NIOSH, model state/district policies, cost reports, and, for a healthier home, how to make your own nontoxic cleaning products for home use. The toolkit also includes the NYS ASBO green cleaning paper developed for this project.

HSN has additional materials available to schools in their Healthy Products for Healthy Schools Toolkit.

Reducing Risks to Children

“In 2016, the Coalition for Healthier Schools released a new national report and call to action to reduce environmental health risks to children in our schools and child care centers”, said Claire L. Barnett, Executive Director of the Healthy Schools Network and coordinator of the Coalition. “We urge the state and federal health and environment agencies to tackle the risks children face every day in every school in every zip code from lead, radon, PCBs, toxic chemicals, and disaster damages to schools.”

NYSP2I PARTNERS



10 Regional Technology Development Centers

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