SERVICE LEARNING

Heal the Bay's Service Learning Mission:
Heal the Bay's service learning resources are available to assist students in solving problems within schools and communities and to help make meaningful connections between community health and environmental health.

Heal the Bay would like to assist in preparing your students for their Service Learning experience. Please contact our Speakers Bureau program and arrange for a free speaker to visit your class in order to provide background information that will connect your school and community to the health of our rivers and ocean. To find out more and request a speaker go to www.healthebay.org/education/speakers.asp

In order to achieve our Service Learning mission, we have recommended five options to help students get involved and take action:

Heal the Bay's Service Learning Options:
Option 1: Adopt-A-Beach/ Adopt-A-Stormdrain
The Problem: Marine Debris. Pollution on our beaches creates an unsightly coast and endangers public health and marine animals. We all want to enjoy clean and healthy beaches and we love the animals that live in the ocean, so now we have to do our part to ensure the beaches remain safe for people and marine life.
What you can do: Identify one or more catch basins near your school. Set up a monitoring program to study the types of trash getting in the system. You can use our Adopt-a-Beach data card to help keep track of the types of trash. After you make note of the types of trash do a mini cleanup to keep the area around it clean of debris. Make sure all those picking up trash know what is safe to pick up (wrappers, plastic bags, cigarette butts, etc.) and what is NOT safe to pick up (sharp items, items that look like they come from a doctor's office, weapons, glass, etc.) Remember to recycle whenever you can, and to put any leaves or organic matter in a green bin. If the catch basin becomes clogged, call in and report it to your local city. See Resources for contact information. Finally, think of a campaign to educate fellow students on the most common trash types and what happens when it end up in the stormdrain.
Resources: Adopt-A-Beach/ Beach Cleanup program – www.healthebay.org/volunteer/aab/default.asp
Heal the Bay online Trash Database – www.healthebay.org/BeachCleanUp
To report a clogged catch basin in your city visit www.healthebay.org/waystoheal/reportpollution.asp
In the Los Angeles area, call the City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, and Bureau of Engineering at 1 (800) 974-9794.

Option 2: Watcha Gonna Do With All That Trash? Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!
The Problem: Trash is everywhere. It ends up on our streets and makes its way to the ocean through our stormdrain system. Even trash that is disposed of properly goes to landfills that are quickly filling up. The charges for dumping into a landfill, called a tipping fee, are also increasing. We need to reduce the amount of trash we create; reuse items over and over again; and recycle.
What you can do: Have students examine how much excess packaging they have in their lunches. This activity will help to reinforce our need to reduce, reuse, and recycle. This can be done by weighing all the trash left over after lunch. Remove what can be reused or recycled, and then weigh remaining trash. Compare weights and discuss the changes. This works for other materials in the class as well. Have them consider how they can reduce, reuse, and recycle the amount of paper they use in class. Have the students pick a commonly used product and write letters to the manufacturer suggesting ways to reduce packaging or suggest using more environmentally friendly packaging.

Resources: Information about starting a waste reduction program is available at http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Schools/WasteReduce/default.htm .
Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance: Whata Waste K-6 Waste Management Education Curriculum. www.greenschools.net/CurriculumIdeas2.html

Option 3: Environmental Friendly Cleaners for your home or classroom.

The Problem: Harsh cleaners often have ingredients that are hazardous or toxic. Besides being dangerous for your family and pets, these chemicals do not get filtered out during the sewage treatment process. They pass through to the ocean and can harm marine animals.

What you can do: Make a "class brand" of environmentally friendly cleaners and promote the use of safe alternatives to hazardous products. Here is a recipe for Spray Disinfectant Cleaner to get you started. Spray Disinfectant Cleaner:

½ cup borax and 1 gallon hot water

Dissolve borax in hot water. Wipe down areas to be disinfected.

Resources: Here is a list of recipes for environmentally friendly cleaners http://ladpw.org/epd/hhw/alternative_recipes.pdf
To learn more about Household Hazardous Waste go to www.888cleanla.org .
To find environmental curriculum and teacher workshops addressing these topics go to Heal the Bay's Key to the Sea program (k-5th grade) at www.healthebay.org/key2sea

Option 4. Tell the Story: Environmental Awareness Campaign!

The Problem: Many residents in Los Angeles County are unaware of the causes of ocean pollution. Ocean health starts at your doorstep no matter where you live. Communities as far as 60 miles away are directly connected to the ocean through the stormdrain system. Education is needed to create change and inspire others to become active within their own communities.

What you can do: Use multi-media to get the word out about ways to have a clean and healthy community. Create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) for YouTube or a comic book, skit, mural, or song. Read a book with an appropriate environmental theme to younger students, family, or community members. Ask your local librarian for suggested titles, use the books listed below, or write your own story!

Resources: Free speaker with Heal the Bay's Speakers Bureau www.healthebay.org/education/speakers.asp
Books: **All the Way to the Ocean*, Joel Harper **Is this a House for Hermit Crab*, Megan McDonald

Option 5: Permeable Places – Go Native!

The Problem: Most of Los Angeles is paved over with impermeable or nonporous surfaces like concrete. These surfaces don't allow the water to soak into the earth. Rocks and soil are very good at cleaning the water of contaminants as it passes through layer after layer. It finally reaches the ground water that in many communities is a primary source of drinking water. Water that lands on impermeable surface travels along our streets and gutters picking up trash and other contaminants like dog waste and motor oil. It gets carried down the storm drain system and out to rivers, creeks, and the ocean where we swim an catch fish.

What you can do: By creating more permeable surfaces, you can help recharge our ground water and prevent trash from going out to the ocean! Identify an unused or underused plot of land at the school. If space is not available then use containers- any bucket will do. Replace existing concrete or vegetation with native plants or edible plants. Have students work together to research procedures for converting an area to a native plant garden, as well as those plants that they would like to use. See Resource list below.

Resources: Heal the Bay Stream Team & Creek Restoration, How to Start a School Garden Guide www.ciwmb.ca.gov/schools/gardens/default.htm, California School Garden Network http://www.csgn.org , Los Angeles County Gardening Instructional Guide http://www.csgn.org/pdf/CSGNLAresourceguide.pdf , California Native Plant Society www.cnps.org/cnps/horticulture/nurseries.php, Be Water Wise- The Garden Spot www.bewaterwise.com, A Garden of Learning - NSTA Article