

END PLASTIC POLLUTION

Teach-In Toolkit

2018



Educate



Internalize



Act



EARTH DAY NETWORK

Education is the foundation for progress. We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the issues of plastic pollution and aware of the unprecedented threat it poses to our planet. We need to empower everyone with the knowledge to act in defense of the environment and their own health and well being.

From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet. In response, Earth Day Network (EDN) is positioning Earth Day 2018 to be a pivotal moment in fundamentally changing the human attitude and behavior concerning plastics and catalyzing a significant reduction in plastic pollution.

Earth Day Network's strategy to *End Plastic Pollution* has the following goals:

- inform, mobilize and help activate citizens across the globe to demand governments and corporations control and diminish plastic pollution; and,
- to support institutions and individuals to take personal responsibility for plastic pollution by choosing to reject, reduce, reuse and recycle plastics.

Over the next three years, Earth Day Network will leverage the platform of Earth Day (April 22) 2018 and the growing excitement around the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day in 2020 to engage key actors, constituencies and influencers. We will mobilize our global network of NGO's and grassroots organizations, campus youth, mayors and other local elected leaders, faith leaders, artists and athletes, and primary and secondary students and teachers to build a world of educated consumers, voters and activists of all ages who understand the environmental and health consequences of using plastics.

Environmental education leads to an internalization of environmental values. A world inspired by environmental values will take local, regional, and global actions to safeguard the Earth and its inhabitants.

Earth Day Network believes that grassroots activism is the best way to build a world literate in climate and environmental science.

With this toolkit, you will be able to organize an Environmental Teach-In to bring environmental values and expertise to your community.

TEACH-IN

n. a series of lectures and discussions on a subject of public interest

History of the Environmental Teach-In

A teach-in is similar to a general educational gathering on any complicated issue, usually problems of importance to society. The main difference between a teach-in and a seminar is the refusal to limit the discussion to a strict academic scope. Teach-ins are meant to be practical, participatory, and oriented toward action. While they include experts lecturing on the area of their expertise, discussion and questions from the audience are welcome and at the core of the methodology.

Concerned citizens from all walks of life deployed teach-ins at the first Earth Day in 1970. Around the United States, they gathered to learn the facts about environmental degradation happening around them. Earth Day teach-ins helped educate and mobilize citizens across America to demand that Congress act to protect the environment. Ultimately, this activism led to the landmark Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and other groundbreaking legislative accomplishments.

What an **EARTH DAY 2018 TEACH-IN** can accomplish

Working within your community to develop the knowledge and skills to make a difference—otherwise known as **Collective Civic Action**—is needed to make real, lasting progress for our own wellbeing and for the environment. Holding a **teach-in** for your community will both educate others on the impact that plastic pollution is having globally, and provide your community members with the tools they need to make a personal commitment to reduce plastic pollution, and advocate for practices and policies that safeguard the local environment and their own wellbeing. Together, these actions will add up to substantive and lasting progress on a national and global scale.

The goal of an Earth Day 2018 Teach-In is to educate the members of your community about plastic pollution, how this problem impacts the local area, the country and the world, and empower and mobilize your community to take informed civic action to end plastic pollution. At the end of a successful teach-in, your audience should walk away committed to being involved and taking personal action.

As you read through this toolkit, think about the unique ways your community can accomplish these three objectives:

1

Get informed about plastic pollution and its impact on their own community, the country and the world.

2

Promote internalization of concepts and environmental values associated to the problem of plastic pollution.

3

Empower your community with the civic engagement skills necessary to take action to help end plastic pollution.

Teach-In Preparation

1

FORMING AN
ORGANIZING
COMMITTEE

2

RECRUITING
PROGRAM
SPEAKERS

3

SELECTING A
MODERATOR

4

CREATING
AN AGENDA

5

COMMUNITY
OUTREACH

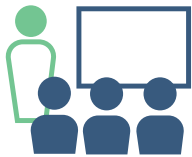
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PRE-EVENT
LOGISTICS

1 FORMING AN ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Depending on the size of the teach-in, you may need to create an Organizing Committee to support the event and facilitate logistics.

A sample Organizing Committee could include:



Coordinator

Tasks include coordinating support, meetings, and internal communications.



Engagement & Outreach Team

Tasks include crafting key messages about the event, working with local press to promote event coverage, sharing and posting on social media, and building attendance for the event. This group should have strong writing skills, preferably have or can build contacts in the local press, and have skills using social media.



Logistics Team

Tasks include securing a venue; equipment; transportation; signage; accessibility; and recruiting day-of volunteers to help direct attendees, set up equipment and more.



Program Team

Tasks include planning and setting the agenda, finding and securing speakers, identifying and securing a moderator, and planning moderator questions.

Consult Earth Day Network's Earth Day Action Toolkit for guidance on developing a team and media campaign, recruiting additional support, and more.

Earth Day Action Toolkit available at earthday.org/toolkits

TIPS ON RECRUITING SUPPORT

- Engage with local community organizations or businesses that have the skills needed for the tasks outlined above.
- Advertise a sign-up form for recruiting volunteers.

2 RECRUITING PROGRAM SPEAKERS

Recruiting engaging, inspiring and knowledgeable speakers for your event is critical. Ideal speakers are respected subject-matter experts that are active in the community. These could be heads of local organizations, teachers and professors, and/or local elected officials.

Refer to the “What an Earth Day 2018 Teach-in Should Accomplish” section on Page 3 to frame your recruitment of ideal speakers.

Ideal number of speakers: 3 to 5

Too many speakers will leave little time for audience participation.

Be intentional and strategic with whom you invite.

Create an ideal list of speakers with a few back-up names in case some of your first asks are unavailable.

Invite speakers who can bring concrete tasks for audience members to accomplish through civic action.

VIP speakers and local elected officials can draw larger audiences.

EDUCATE

Seek experts on plastic pollution that preferably know what has been done in your city or community

SAMPLE SPEAKERS AND TOPICS:



Environmental professor speaking on local environment issue



Government or civil society organization staff member presenting on plastic pollution

EMPOWER

Seek experts on civic action

SAMPLE SPEAKERS AND TOPICS:



Political science professor training the audience on civic engagement



Advocacy organizations presenting ways the audience could participate in their campaigns



Local or regional elected leadership addressing opportunities for public engagement

SPEAKER RECRUITMENT PITCH

Earth Day 2018 teach-ins will be occurring simultaneously around the world. Speakers will be taking part in an international movement to promote the end of plastic pollution and spur action. This is an unprecedented time for action. People not previously engaged in making their voices heard are looking to participate. Now is our chance to provide them with that opportunity.

3 SELECTING A MODERATOR



The role of the moderator is to:

- Keep the program on schedule
- Field and manage questions from the audience
- Contribute questions to stimulate discussion with the audience



Your moderator should:

- Have strong public speaking skills
- Be knowledgeable on the discussion topics
- Be generally informed on the expertise of the speakers
- Have a deep understanding of the Teach-In's goals and the event itinerary to properly facilitate discussion



Good potential moderators include:

- Professors (especially in environmental science or government)
- Heads of local environmental/civic/faith organizations, or student leaders
- Respected, charismatic individuals not directly aligned with environmentalism but influential in your community
- Public officials from your local waste management department

4 CREATING AN AGENDA

The purpose of the agenda is to keep the teach-in on schedule and goal-oriented. The Program Team can take the lead in developing the agenda. Your moderator will follow the agenda to ensure the teach-in is proceeding as planned.

Utilize the 'What an Earth Day 2018 Teach-In Should Accomplish' section found earlier in this toolkit for reference. The important difference between a teach-in and a conference is its focus on educating, in this case about the problem of plastic pollution and civic action training.

TEACH-IN

n. a series of lectures and discussions on a subject of public interest

The agenda can largely be up to you, but be sure to include the following:

- 1 An introduction speech explaining “why are we here?” with an overview of the concept and goals of the teach-in. This speech should also introduce the Program Speakers.
- 2 A discussion educating the audience on the environmental and health issues facing the world and the local community related to plastic pollution.
- 3 A discussion of civic action skills and methods
- 4 A closing speech addressing the question, “What are the next steps?”

SAMPLE AGENDA

15 mins	Introduction by the Coordinator of the Organizing Committee
1 hr	Education & Program Speakers: Plastic pollution and what it means for our community
30 mins	Q&A
30 mins	Break
1 hr 30	Community engagement and civic action panel
30 mins	Q&A
15 mins	Closing Speech and call to action by the Chair of the Organizing Committee or other leader

5 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The effectiveness of your teach-in depends on attendance. Reach out to your entire community – not just environmentalists – to ensure an inclusive and diverse event. Here are some suggestions for attracting attendees:



Start advertising early. More time means more opportunities to spread the word.



Utilize social media platforms to promote the event. In addition to creating an event page, be sure to craft content and updates to regularly post. Diversify your use of platforms. When posting, be sure to tag us @EarthDayNetwork and use the hashtags #EarthDay2018 and #EndPlasticPollution.



Utilize active advertising. Create a flier with a logo or image and the details of the event. Hand out fliers in high traffic areas and consider going door to door in your communities.



Build partnerships with local businesses who can advertise the teach-in or provide sponsorships or products.



Build partnerships with local leaders who can endorse the teach-in on social media and in the press. Ask them to use our hashtags and to tag @EarthDayNetwork, #EarthDay2018 and #EndPlasticPollution.



Inform school/college administrations who can pass along information to students.



Advertise to community clubs and other local organizations



Ask your Program Speakers to advertise on social media and in the local press.



Register your event with Earth Day Network and we will help you spread the word.
www.earthday.org/register

6 PRE-EVENT LOGISTICS

When choosing a venue, consider:

Expected attendance

Refer to similar events that have taken place in your area to get an idea of how many people might attend.

Infrastructure

Consider locations that already have in place some of the infrastructure you will need such as large monitors or projector screens, sound equipment, and seating for large audiences.

Weather

Outdoor events need a contingency plan for inclement weather.

Audio

Pick a venue where your attendants will be able to hear speeches and discussions. Avoid venues with frequent noise pollution

Accessibility

Event attendees may require wheelchair ramps or other accommodations.

Location

Some possible event locations might include:

- Lecture hall or auditorium
- Library
- Concert venue
- Town park or field
- Sports stadium or arena
- Theater or amphitheater
- House of worship

Equipment

Possible equipment needs:

- A projector, mics, and chairs for speakers
- Chairs and mics for the audience
- Tables for signing in and food and water
- Name tags
- Signage at the venue to direct attendees

Registering attendees

There are plenty of online registration options the leadership team should research and consider using. Use social and traditional medias to market the teach-in, but be sure to have an official registration tool so that you can follow-up with guests about moving forward with your planned local action.

Plastic Free!

Be sure there are zero single-use plastics at the event! Instead of offering bottled water, provide water coolers to refill reusable water bottles. Invite vendors who can showcase a variety of plastic-free alternative products. Coordinate with your campus solid waste entity to ensure that recycle bins are prominently featured and there are also trash bins and, if possible, compost bins for food waste.



EARTH DAY NETWORK

Earth Day Network's mission is to diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide.

Growing out of the first Earth Day, Earth Day Network is the world's largest recruiter to the environmental movement, working with more than 50,000 partners in nearly 195 countries to build environmental democracy. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world. We work through a combination of education, public policy, and consumer campaigns.

The first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. The passage of the landmark Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and many other groundbreaking environmental laws soon followed. Twenty years later, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage.

As the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day approaches, the time is long overdue for a global outpouring of energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to create a new environmental paradigm.

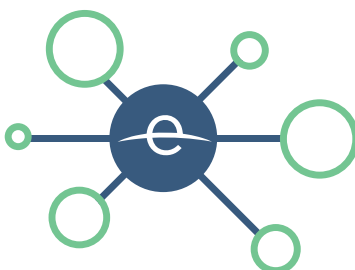
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Use #EarthDay2018 to share your event with the world. You might even get a shout-out!

STAY IN TOUCH



Contact Earth Day Network with any additional questions, and be sure to Register your Teach-In at earthday.org/register to add your community's voice to the worldwide movement of Earth Day 2018 Teach-Ins.