

Environmental Justice Curriculum Overview



Overall Objective: Youth will explore what it means to be leaders for environmental justice. Youth will explore Memphis environments and define environment. Youth will explore how environmental benefits and burdens can be unequally distributed if we think of getting the best for our own community and not thinking of the larger Memphis community. Youth will explore case studies to see how environmental injustice affects communities in Memphis. Youth will identify ways community members have stood up to advance environmental justice. Youth will identify how they can become leaders to advance environmental justice.

Guiding Questions:

- What is environment?
- What is environmental justice?
- What are benefits and burdens?
- What are environmental justice issues in Memphis?
- Why is asthma an environmental justice issue?
- How do environmental justice issues affect individuals and communities?
- Why is it important to work with others to advance environmental justice?
- How can youth advance environmental justice?

Key Concepts:

- **Environment** is anywhere we live, work or play.
- **Environmental justice** is the equitable sharing of environmental benefits of our natural resources and burdens of our industrialized, urban environment, and when the entire community can depend on equitable protection under environmental laws and the right to participate in decision-making.
- **Environmental benefits** include clean air, natural resources and green spaces.
- **Environmental burdens** are things that pollute the environment and make it unhealthy or unsafe (potentially factories, landfills, car exhaust).
- **Environmental justice** often requires going up against large corporations so it is important to know your community assets and be able to activate them to advance justice.

CORE STANDARDS Alignment:

The BRIDGES Connect Curriculum has been aligned with the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCRAS). All learning activities within the Connect Curriculum support and assume shared responsibility for attaining the standards. While it is necessary for youth and educational leaders to devote significant time and effort in various educational settings to attain these standards, participation in the BRIDGES Connect Curriculum will enhance students' knowledge and skills necessary for success in this endeavor. In addition, since the Connect Curriculum is inextricably linked to social justice and action issues embedded within race, ecology, economics and education, the learning activities intentionally promote the following College and Career Dimensions and youth's ability to:

- *Comprehend and Critique Significant Human/Social Issues
- *Build Strong Content Knowledge
- *Gain Self-Awareness
- *Demonstrate Independence as well as Collaboration
- *Respond to Particular Audience, Task, Purpose & Discipline
- *Value Evidence as Basis for Analysis, Opinion, Implications, Action
- *Use Technology and other Digital Media Strategically and Capably

In addition, participation in the Bridges Connect Curriculum offers a unique and critical opportunity for urban youth to develop, make a commitment to and demonstrate community leadership through academic pursuit, advocacy, and activism.