



EcoMentors®  
EARTH DAY CANADA

***Self-Training Workbook***



**SAMPLE COPY**

To inquire about the full version of this document contact the EcoMentors Program Manager  
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## EcoMentors Self-Training Workbook

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## A Message from the EcoMentors Program Manager

Welcome to the EcoMentors program! We provide training, support and rewards for youth volunteers to facilitate environmental education activities with young people in communities across Canada. Youth gain valuable work skills and experience, fulfill volunteer requirements, explore career choices and get a cool reward package! The groups of peers and young people that you work with will receive fun, informative and engaging lessons, activities and workshops dealing with important environmental topics and issues. If your goal in becoming an EcoMentor is to work in solidarity with other young Canadians, in order to increase awareness and positive action around environmental issues... Then by completing this Self-Training Workbook, you will have taken your first step!

Generally, EcoMentors attend a 3 to 4 hour EcoMentors Training Session before they start their classroom visits. The training session provides EcoMentors with general program information, facilitation and classroom management skills, environmental issues, and ideas for activities that can be achieved with groups of young people. However, since you are unable to attend the face-to-face training, due either to geographical or scheduling limitations, we have developed this Self-Training Workbook to help you get started on your own. It is important to note that self-training isn't always the best option for people so we would encourage you to stay connected with the program and to take advantage of any future training opportunities that you can.

Also, you may want to consider two other options that could help you (and any interested friends you have) with some additional training and support as an EcoMentor:

1. *Start an EcoMentors club or group* – Some EcoMentors have very successfully organized small and large groups of people who are all interested in becoming EcoMentors. These groups are great because they offer a way for you to work with other people who are excited about the program. Together you can support each other in getting trained and becoming active EcoMentors, and you can also do lots of fun and beneficial things together to increase environmental awareness. The EcoMentors program has some resources available to help you out if you're thinking of starting a group like this – so let us know!
2. *Find an interested "supporter" who could help you with training* – the EcoMentors program is able to "partner" with teachers or other people who work with young people to offer training in locations across Canada. If you know of a teacher or another supporter who might be interested in offering the EcoMentors training to you and/or a group of

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youth, please encourage them to get in contact with the program about our “distance training” options.

To complete your Self-Training just follow these easy steps:

1. Read through the EcoMentors Program Handbook
2. Go through other materials: brochure & letter of introduction.
3. Complete the EcoMentors Training Kit in Microsoft Word by using a different color font (Go to Format, Font, Font Colour to select, use a bright bold colour such as red, blue, or green) – REMEMBER to save your work!
4. Send your completed EcoMentors Self-Training Workbook to [ecomentors@earthday.ca](mailto:ecomentors@earthday.ca) in a file attachment.
5. Once we receive your completed workbook we’ll review your work and offer you some additional feedback and information.

We strongly suggest that you find a partner (or group) that you can work well with to complete the Self-Training and to do your EcoMentors classroom visits with. Working with partners makes EcoMentoring twice as fun and engaging and will make it easier to meet the requirements of the program. The most important thing to remember when completing the exercises in this workbook is that the questions may have many correct answers – The best answer is the one that suits you best. Be thoughtful and have fun!

Please remember, as you go through your self-training process we’re always happy to hear about how you’re progressing and if you have any questions. So keep in touch! You can contact me at 416.599.1991 x 103 or email me at [ecomentors@earthday.ca](mailto:ecomentors@earthday.ca).

Greenest wishes!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Stevenson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

**Josh Stevenson**  
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## EcoMentors Frequently Asked Questions

### **How much time does it take to be an EcoMentor? – AND – Can my participation in EcoMentors contribute to my Community Involvement Hours for school?**

Being an EcoMentor is a relatively simple commitment and you can work at your own pace. In order to obtain your EcoMentors Certificate of Completion, your rewards package, and other benefits, we ask that you complete your EcoMentors Training and a minimum of 4 classroom visits to schools or other settings. Your participation is tracked and monitored by the EcoMentors program Manager using a few easy to use feedback/evaluation forms – it's very important to submit these forms in order to obtain your volunteer benefits/rewards.

If you're a high school student you may be required to complete a certain number of "community service" or volunteer hours. You may be able to count the time you spend EcoMentoring with groups of young people toward this type of requirement. Please double check with a teacher or someone at your school to make sure.

Here's a typical breakdown of how many hours an EcoMentor could gain by actively participating in the program:

- 2hrs – EcoMentors Self-Training (or 3 to 4 hours for a "live" training session)
- 3hrs per Host Group Visit
  - 1hr preparation
  - 1hr Host Group Visit
  - 1hr travel & feedback
- EcoMentors that complete 4 classroom visits gain:
  - 15 community hours
  - EcoMentors Certificate of Completion
  - A work/school reference
  - Resume job skills (Working with youth, Organized and Punctual, Environmental Education, Interpersonal Communication)
  - EcoMentors Reward Package (Mountain Equipment Co-op Day Pack, Earth Day Canada T-shirt, carabineer and reusable water bottle)

### **I'm in school all day, when can I find time to EcoMentor?**

By thinking creatively and working with people in your school/community there are lots of ways that you can EcoMentor without having to take time off school.

1. Late Start days



2. PD Days
3. Free periods
4. Offset lunchtimes/end of the day
5. Talk to your teachers, they may be able to make an exception and give you some free time
6. After school or weekend programs at schools, community centres or faith-based groups

### **Where can I EcoMentor? Do I have to work with elementary school students?**

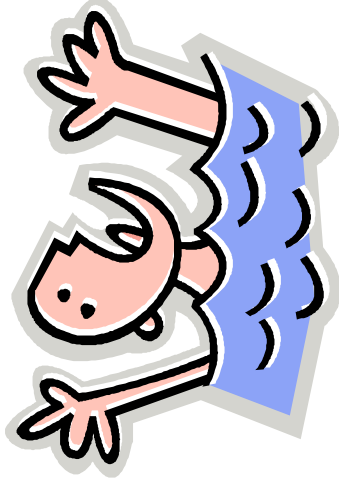
You can EcoMentor wherever you want! We encourage you to be creative about finding places to do your visits and groups of people to work with. Classrooms are great, but it can be difficult finding time during your school day to EcoMentor. Other options you might want to consider are local scout or guide groups (e.g. Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Beavers, Brownies, etc.), afterschool programs, day camps, recreation programs, youth groups... **WHEREVER!** Be creative! Use your contacts or, just call someone up and tell them what you're doing... the possibilities are endless.

### **In what language should I EcoMentor?**

Any language you want! French, Hindi, Cantonese, Russian, English... whatever language you are most comfortable with. In fact, you can even communicate environmentalism in body language – through swimming lessons, ski lessons... wherever you work with other people and teach them something, there are opportunities to put an environmental slant into what you talk about. We consider that EcoMentoring!

## Task 4: The River - “Upstream/Downstream” Environmental Action

You and a friend are standing next to a river, and you see someone drowning as they float downstream. You and your friend jump into the river and pull them ashore. As soon as you've done that, you see another person in trouble, again floating downstream, and you both rescue this person as well. Every time you've saved one person, you see another, and another. After you've dragged yet another drowning body out of the river, you realize that your (much stronger) friend would be able to rescue the drowning people alone, so (being the smart cookie you are) you decide you must go upstream to find out what is causing these people to end up in the river. You want to address this problem at its source. You get upstream, and see a bridge. Upon careful inspection, you find that there is well-concealed, yet sizeable hole in this bridge that is causing people to fall in. What do you do? You do what makes the most sense – you work to repair the bridge!



While it might be a bit grim to think about drowning people floating down a river, there's a lot for environmental educators to learn from this story. As an EcoMentor your goal is to raise awareness and promote positive action around a range of environmental issues, but remember, just like in the river story, while it's important to work “downstream” to deal with the aftermath of an environmental problem (e.g. cleaning-up after an oil spill), we also need to take action “upstream” to deal with the sources of a problem (e.g. government policies and industry standards around transporting oil) to prevent problems from occurring in the first place, or to stop something bad from continuing to happen.

In the following activity you'll be asked to think about different positive actions that people can take both “downstream” and “upstream” around an environmental issue of your choosing.

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### Here's an example...

Downstream Action	Environmental Issue	Upstream Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clean-up of affected area</li><li>• Rescue and rehabilitation of animals</li></ul>	Oil spill in an area inhabited by wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lobbying of government officials and oil industry for improved oil transport policies and standards</li><li>• Awareness-raising/education around alternative energies and fuels to decrease dependence on oil!</li></ul>

### Now you try...

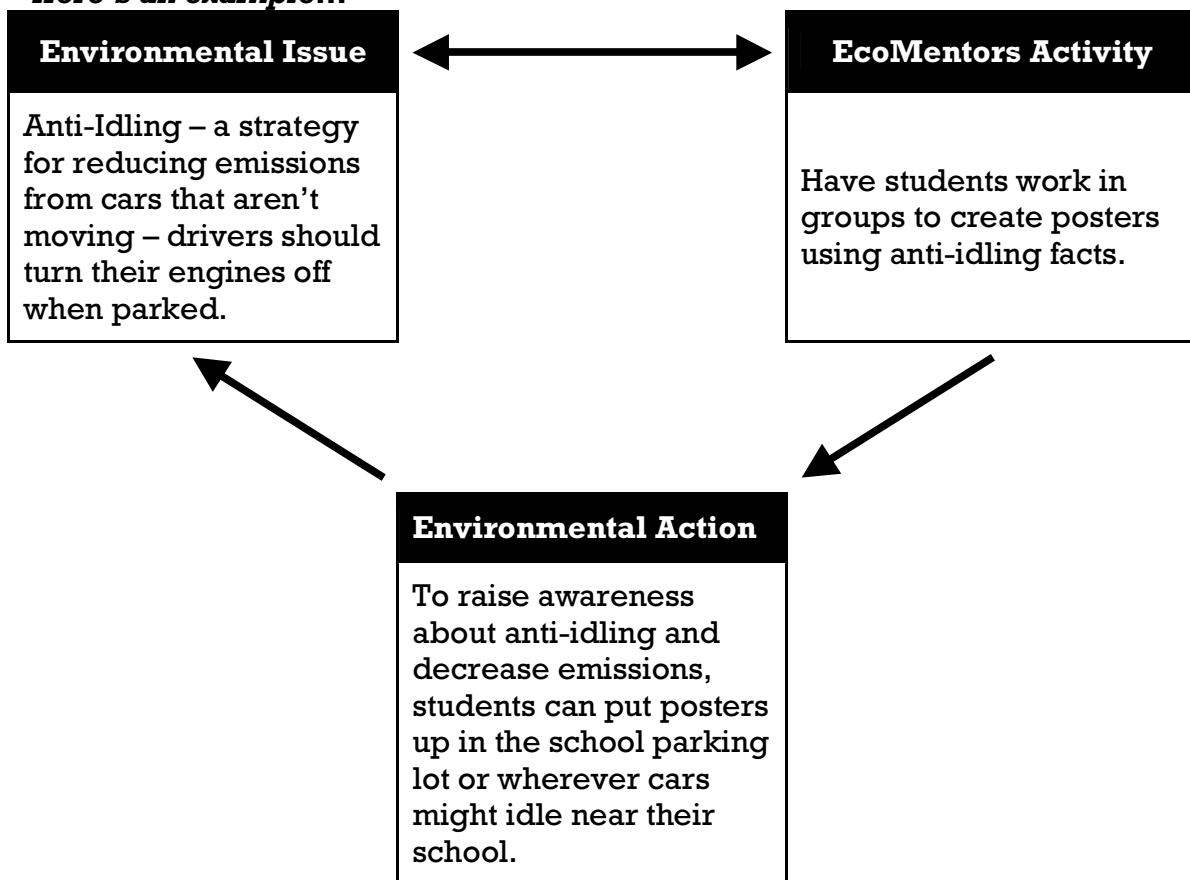
Downstream Action	Environmental Issue	Upstream Action
Type text here.	Type text here.	Type text here.
Downstream Action	Environmental Issue	Upstream Action
Type text here.	Type text here.	Type text here.

## Task 5: Education to Action

Now that you've thought about the different types of positive action that people can take to address environmental issues, the next step is to consider how you can use EcoMentoring as YOUR positive action. By EcoMentoring you will be contributing to positive environmental change by raising awareness and encouraging action among the groups of young Canadians that you work with... An important part of the larger environmental movement!

In this activity you'll be asked to identify 2 different environmental issues, for each of these issues think of actions that can be carried out by young Canadians that would have a positive effect on the issue (remember: think "downstream" and "upstream"). From there, the third step is thinking about an EcoMentoring activity that will both allow participants to share and learn with each other about the issue AND encourage them to carry out a positive action.

*Here's an example...*



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*Now you try...*

