



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Henrico County

Program Title: Who is Littering Henrico County?

Program Category: Environmental

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: John A. Vithoukas

Title: County Manager

Signature: 

1. Short Overview of the Program

In the spring 2013, the Keep Henrico Beautiful (KHB) program developed a brand new initiative to debut at the County of Henrico Recreation and Parks’ teen summer programs. The initiative involves a series of puzzles, riddles, and activities that help educate the children on the recycling process specific to our locality and anti-litter programs. Teens visited each station set up on tables throughout the room with a small group to solve the mystery of “Who is Littering Henrico County.” Everyone enjoyed themselves while using their creative thinking and learning to be environmental stewards. Each station provided a different way to process the information so that all learning styles were incorporated. Further, all of the materials were laminated so that they may be reused each time, thus creating no waste and keeping costs down.

2. Problem/Challenge/Situation

Keep Henrico Beautiful is a program under the Henrico County Department of Public Utilities comprised of a volunteer citizen advisory committee and a full-time County employee who serves as Executive Coordinator. The KHB program is the County’s initiative to prevent litter, promote recycling, and supply related environmental education to residents of all ages. Like other environmentally focused organizations, KHB constantly looks for new and innovative ways to reach all County residents with good news about environmental stewardship. KHB takes care to meet the needs of our younger citizens by focusing on and supporting programs directed at school age citizens. It is our belief that a strong foundation in environmental stewardship, if nurtured at an early age, will last a lifetime. KHB historically has not developed educational programs for the teenage age group. In years past, recreation staff approached the KHB office with complaints that teens were littering and not taking care of their sites. They specifically put in

a request for the KHB office to implement a program that would relate to teenagers and encourage environmental stewardship.

3. How the Program Was Carried Out

The objective of “Who is Littering Henrico County?” is to target an audience that had previously been underserved by KHB. Not only was the Executive Coordinator looking to target teenagers, but she was also looking to debut an educational program in a recreational setting. This was a challenge because the subject matter of litter and recycling needed to be turned into a fun game. Thus, the idea of a mystery game complete with puzzles, riddles, and other challenges was born.

The Executive Coordinator worked over several weeks developing the program. The stations were created, edited, and practiced until they were ready to be finalized. Supplies that could not be found were purchased, and everything was put into an organized notebook with detailed instructions so that the program could still be implemented without the presence of the Executive Coordinator. Upon completion, a trial run occurred with part-time staff from Recreation and Parks to work out any final kinks before taking it to the teens.

Prior to scheduled visits, the Executive Coordinator lead a portion of the staff training for the Teen Scene camps through Recreation and Parks. She educated the staff know that they would have responsibilities during the program and instructed them on how they would be able to help. Staff was educated on the specific litter and recycling information so that they would be able to guide the campers just as much as she would be able to help. Teens rely heavily on the influence from their counselors, so in order for this program be successful, the counselors needed to be well-versed and invested in the program. Once the staff was excited about the activity, the teens were more willing to hear the message.

To begin the visit, the Executive Coordinator gathers the group and goes through a quick five-minute lesson on our local recycling and anti-litter practices. The teens are given a heads-up to pay close attention as the information they hear will be very important during the activity. The lesson includes what may or may not be recycled, where the recycling and refuse goes once it leaves the curbside, and why this benefits the environment. The final point of discussion is to have one of the teens define litter. The teens hear that someone has been littering Henrico County, and they have been tasked to solve the mystery!

The large group is split into smaller groups and given a score card. This card is laminated and the teens are instructed to use a dry erase marker to write. This process was chosen so that no waste is created from this game as it would defeat the purpose of the message. The score card has a place for the students to visit eight stations. At each station, the students solve a riddle, puzzle, or complete another activity in order to receive a letter. They will write down one letter from each station. After collecting all eight letters, they unscramble them to come up with the answer.

Since each station will take the small groups a different amount of time, there are three optional bonus stations for the groups to visit. At the bonus stations, the teens do not get a letter, but instead they will get a clue in the form of a sentence. Each one of these clues will help them solve the riddle of “Who is Littering Henrico County?” If a group does not have time to get to the bonus stations, they will still be able to solve the riddle. The bonus stations are available to help maintain organization should some groups finish earlier or have a moment when there are no available stations for them to visit.

The eight stations are as follows:

- 1) An instructor-led riddle. An instructor will have the teens participate in a game similar to 20-questions. The teens are trying to figure out “Who am I?” They may ask only yes-or-no questions for the instructor to answer. The answer is that they are a “Trash Truck Driver.” The instructor tells the teens that their letter for this station is the third word- fourth letter (V)
- 2) Puzzle - Put together the sturdy wooden puzzle of a forest scene. The instructions tell you that you need to flip the puzzle over upon completion where you will find a recycling symbol. It also asks you: “What does this symbol stand for?” The answer is recycling, and their letter is the second letter in that word (E)
- 3) Decode Me! The teens will use the decoder rings to find out their next letter! The answer to the secret message is: YOUR LETTER WILL BE THE END OF ME. Their letter will be the last letter in the word “Me” (E)
- 4) An instructor-led riddle: An instructor will have the teens answer the riddle to receive their next letter: If a plane crashes into a landfill, where do we bury the survivors? Answer: You don't bury survivors! Once they answer, tell them that the seventh letter in survivors is their letter (O)
- 5) Origami. Follow directions of how to fold the paper into a heart. The teens will be told that the second letter in the name of the shape will be their letter. (E)
- 6) Put pictures in order to get a clue: The teens are told that they drink soda from a can and decide to recycle the aluminum! Good job! Where does the can go next? (Answer: Curbside/Drop-off Recycle bin-MRF-Factory-Store-Home) As a safe-guard, the instructors know the trick to check the upper right hand corner of each picture. If the letters spell out a word

(green), they are in the correct order. Your letter is the last letter of the first picture title:

Curbside/Drop-off Recycle Bin (N)

7) Trash Sort- The teens are to dump out the contents of the trash bag onto the table and sort into a pile for recycling and a pile for trash. Each piece of trash/recycling will have a letter on the side on a sticker. They will then unscramble the letters on the back of your recyclables and trash to spell words to make sure that you have done it properly! The word on the trash unscrambles to say “Reduce” and the word on the recyclables unscrambles to say “Better.” The teens are told that first letter of the word made by trash (Reduce) and the last letter of the word made by recycling (betteR) is their letter (R)

8) Letter Grid: To begin, answer the question: In what County do you live? The answer is Henrico. From there, cross off all of the letters that are in the word to the answer to this question. After you cross off all of the letters H, E, N, R, I, C, and O in the grid, you will be left with three letters. Unscramble the remaining letters to form a word: FLY The last letter in unscrambled word is your clue (Y)

The three bonus stations are as follows:

1) Picture scramble. There is a picture that needs to be put together. Once it is put together, it will give you the first bonus clue: “All letters form to make one word.”

2) The Letter Box and Cut-Out. Have the teens position the cut-out block over the letter box so that it reveals a hidden message. They will have to twist, turn, and flip it over so that a message is revealed. Once it is revealed, it will say “Feel Under the Table.” Once they feel under the table, they will find a card with the clue listed: “The word starts and ends with the same letter.”

3) Data and Charts: The teens may look at a graph of the recycling trends in Henrico for the last year. They will find out exactly how many tons of recycling Henrico was able to divert from the landfill. After doing a simple math equation, teens will get their final clue: “Take ONE minute to think about the answer.”

Ultimately the answer to the riddle is “EVERYONE.” From there the Executive Coordinator talks about how everyday people make choices that impact our environment and our home. We discuss how everyone may do their part to help make sure that Henrico is as clean and beautiful as possible. The Executive Coordinator discusses ways that the teens might get involved with our organization and simple things that they may do in their everyday life to help out. No one wants to be part of the problem, so they are left with viable ways to be part of the solution.

4. Financing and Staffing

In making all of the supplies reusable, the materials only had a one-time cost associated with its development. Secondly, by Recreation and Parks allowing the Executive Coordinator time during their staff training, there was no need to bring along any staff to aid in the program’s execution. Further, the program was developed so that a recreation instructor or a teacher would be able to conduct the program without the Executive Coordinator being on-site which has been utilized successfully. Overall, the program saves funding in both materials and personnel costs.

The Executive Coordinator made every effort to keep the costs of this program to a bare minimum. The score cards and station/bonus clue cards were all printed on card stock left over from another project. All of the trash/recycling sort items were gathered in the office break-room and cleaned prior to utilizing for the project. The decoder rings were already the property of

KHB. Laminating was done in-house by Recreation and Parks at no fee as a trade-off for implementing the program at their camps. All program development and labor was done by the Executive Coordinator during regular work hours.

The costs for this program fall in the following areas and amounts (rounded to the nearest dollar):

Notebook/Organizational Dividers:	\$13
Puzzle	\$8
Origami Paper	\$4
<u>Dry Erase Markers/Erasers</u>	<u>\$12</u>
Total Cost of Materials	\$37

5. Program Results

“Who is Littering Henrico County” turned out to be a tremendous success. Informally we polled Recreation and Parks staff after our visit about how the teens responded. At every site, they noted a reduction in litter. As this was one of the main reasons the program was developed in the first place, we consider it to be a success with just that information. The teens realized that their littering was having a direct impact on the environment, and they did not want to be the one littering Henrico County!

Aside from the direct reduction in litter, we had an anecdote that spoke to the success of the program. It shows how the teens were thinking about the KHB message long after our program visit:

One group of teens went as far as developing their own recycling initiative. The counselors helped them accomplish this task by taking the recycling in their personal vehicles to a drop-off location, but the initiative was taken by the teens. They brought in boxes from home, made signs of what can and cannot be recycled, and decorated the receptacles to put in the lunch

area. The campers monitored each other to make sure that the entire site was recycling as much as possible!

The Executive Coordinator visited 12 teen sites over the course of the 2013 summer educating 374 teens. The program was presented at the Environmental Educators Workshop in 2013, '14, and '15 so far to a total of 47 teachers and has been administered by 19 educators without the coordinator on site. The Executive Coordinator has taken this program to 6 schools herself, and given the lesson in 34 classrooms, educating 714 teens.

6. Brief Summary

“Who is Littering Henrico County” is a successful program that reaches a previously underserved age group. Through KHB’s extensive environmental education program, the glaring gap for teenagers became apparent. With such importance on educating future generations, the program was given a high level of importance. The lesson proves to be successful in instilling environmental values in teenagers. We have a plethora of lessons and activities for elementary-aged children, and this program reaches an age group that unfortunately had been lost in the shuffle. Hands-on education adds an experience that will have a lasting impact as the teens get to personally relate to the message.

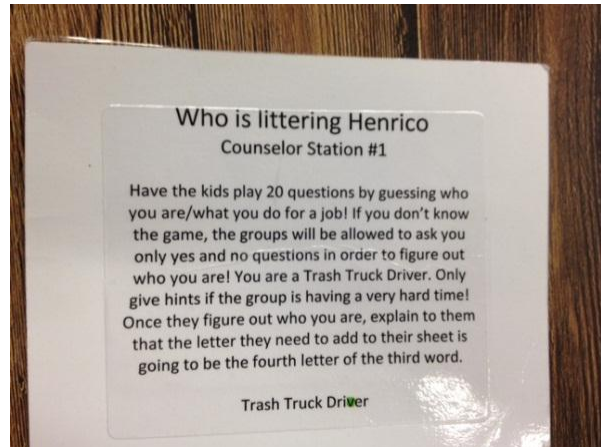
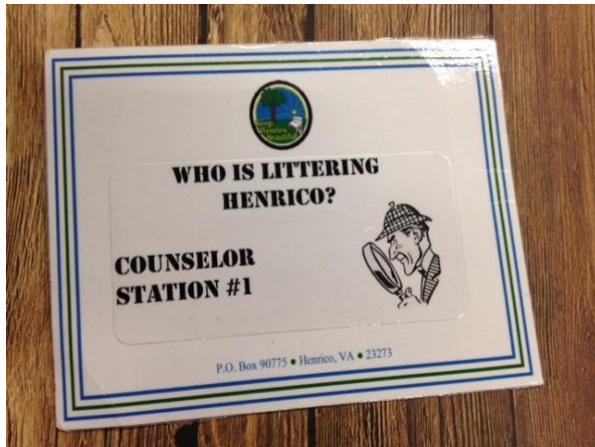
This program is innovative and unique from any other program that the Executive Coordinator has seen before. It takes a different approach to delivering the same message, and therefore is more effective. The teens have heard this information prior to the lesson but this new program reinforces environmental stewardship into a behavior. It is the hope that this activity provides enough challenge, fun, and excitement so that the educational lessons will stick with them into adulthood.

“Who is Littering Henrico County” was designed in such a way that all components would be able to be reused. In doing so, almost all costs for the program are one-time, and were kept to a bare minimum. Utilizing cooperation between agencies helped tremendously, and both parties benefitted from its success. After the initial implementation, this program has grown in popularity, and the lesson has been proven effective across different educational mediums.

Supplemental Information

Station #1: Counselor Station- Who Am I?

Have the teens play 20 questions by guessing who you are/what you do for a job! The groups will be allowed to ask you only yes and no questions in order to figure out who you are! You are a TRASH TRUCK DRIVER. Only give hints if the group is having a very hard time! Once they figure out who you are, explain to them that the letter they need to add to their sheet is going to be the fourth letter of the third word: V



Station #2: Puzzle

Put together the puzzle. Once it is together, the teens are instructed to flip it over and figure out what the symbol means (Recycle). The second letter of that word is their letter from this station: E



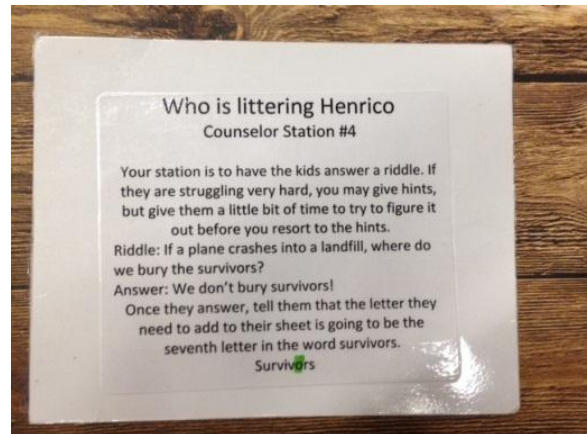
Station #3: DeCode Me

Use the decoder ring to solve the riddle. The answer to the secret message is "Your letter will be the end of me. Their letter will be the last letter in the word "ME" E



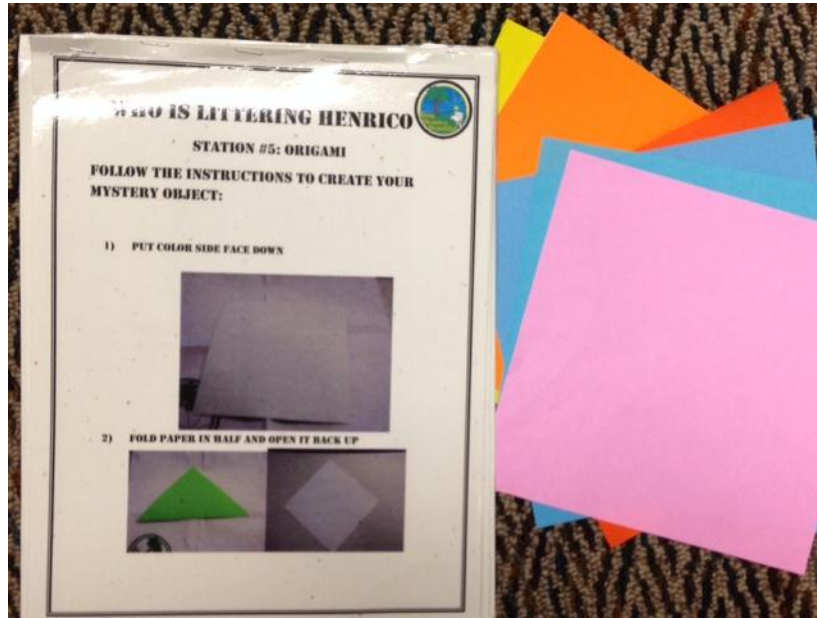
Station #4: Counselor Station: Riddle

Have the teens solve the following riddle: If a plane crashes into a landfill, where do we bury the survivors? The answer is that you don't bury survivors! Their letter is the seventh letter in the word survivors: O



Station #5: Origami

Teens will follow directions of folding the paper and will create a heart. Their letter will be the second letter in the name of the shape: E



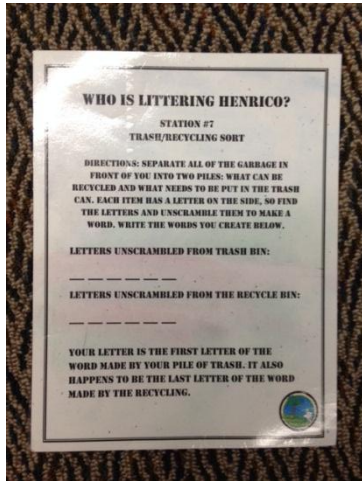
Station #6: Putting Picture in Order

Teens will pretend they are on a journey as an empty soda can. The first step is that someone decides to recycle them! They are to put the rest of the pictures in order of where they will go on their journey through the recycling process. The letter will be the last letter in the title of the first step: N



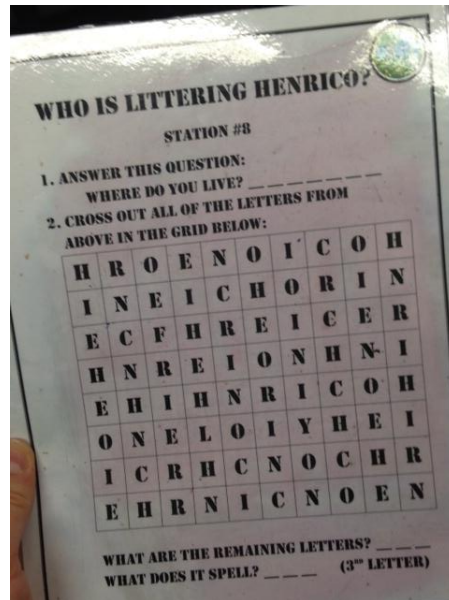
Station #7: Trash/Recycling Sort

Teens will separate out materials that are able to be recycled, and materials that are not able to be recycled. Each item has a letter attached. Once the items are sorted out, the teens unscramble the letters to make a word both for the trash pile (Reduce) and the recycling pile (better). The letter they take from this is the first letter in the trash pile word and the last letter in the recycling pile word: R



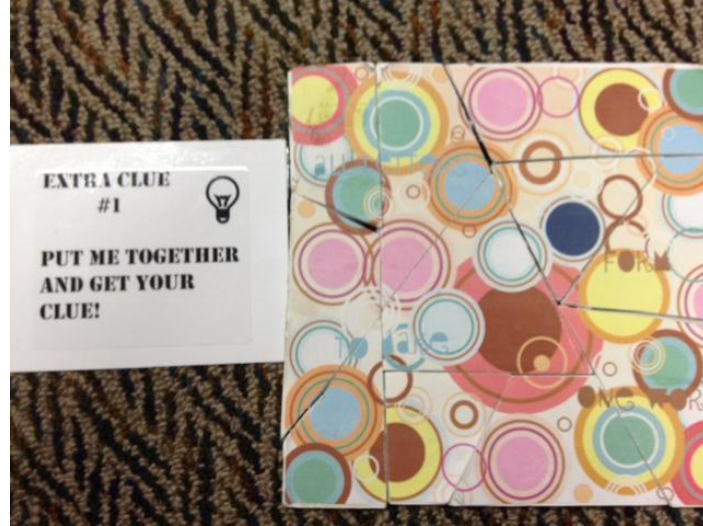
Station #8: Letter Grid

The answer to the question of where we live is "HENRICO." From there, teens will cross off all blocks in the grid containing letters from that word. The remaining letters are unscrambled to form the word FLY. Your letter is the last letter of that word: Y



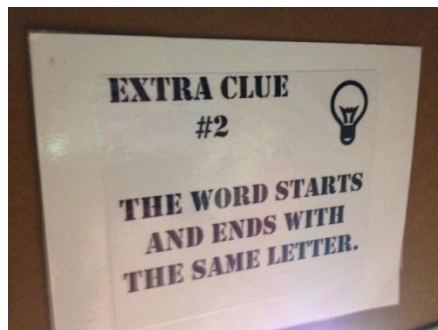
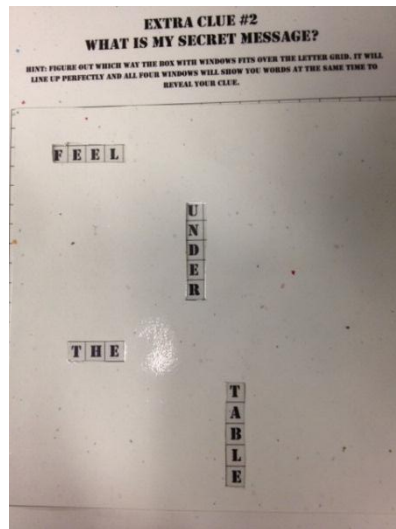
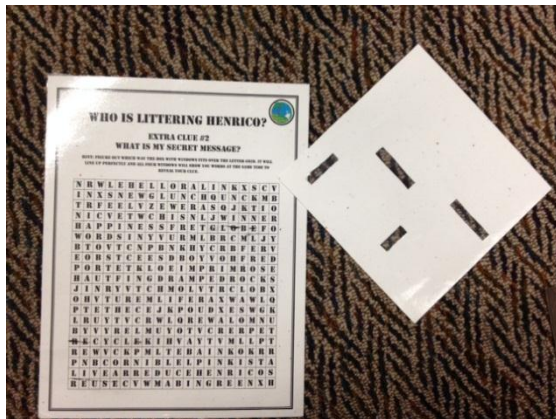
Extra Clue #1: Picture Scramble

Put together the picture. The phrase on the picture will be the clue. "All letter form to make one word."



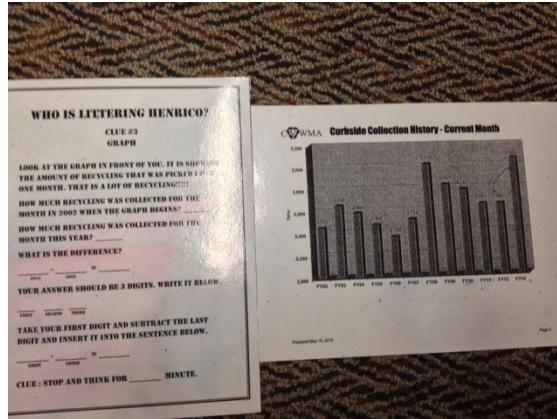
Extra Clue #2: The Letter Box and Cut Out

Teens position cut-out block over the letter box so that it reveals a hidden message. They will be instructed to feel under the table. There they will find their clue: "The word starts and ends with the same letter."



Extra Clue #3: Data and Charts

The teens will look at a graph of the recycling trends in Henrico for the last year. They will find out exactly how many tons of recycling they were able to divert from the landfill. After doing a simple math question, they will get their final clue: "Take ONE minute to think about the answer."



With all of the information at hand, the teens will have completed their answer cards. They now may unscramble their collected letters and solve the riddle. They now know who is littering Henrico County!

