

"Know Where it Goes" Stormwater Game

Suggested Use: Play this game to teach children about the different pollutants that water "picks up" as it travels through the environment, and reinforce the steps that people can take to remove pollutants from the environment and thereby keep water clean. Developed for use with the University of Rhode Island Learning Landscapes Program in conjunction with RI Stormwater Solutions

Where to play: This game can be played indoors or outdoors, but requires an open space where the children can move easily between groups. The game is intended as a visualization of the stormwater concept to be played following a lesson on the definition, consequences, sources, and possible solutions related to stormwater pollution.

Participants: This game is intended for a group of 10+ children. A simplified version can be played with grades K-3 and a more challenging version for grades 4-8. Children will be broken into two groups. One group will pretend to be newly-fallen "raindrops," traveling through a typical home environment. The second group will play the role of pollutants that the raindrops meet in their travels.

Children playing the role of "raindrops" will be given BLUE laminated tags to wear around their necks.

Children playing the role of "pollutants" will each choose a different pollutant tag to wear. Pollutant tags will be color-coded and labeled to indicate different sources and types of water pollution.

To Start: "Raindrops" will stand together in the middle of the room. "Pollutants" will stand with their color-group, with each group occupying a different corner of the room.

GREEN = Lawn and garden pollutants (Grass clippings, Leaf litter, Animal waste, Fertilizer, Pesticides)

BROWN = Automotive pollutants (Car wash soap, Oil spill, Gasoline spill, Antifreeze)

WHITE = Trash (Soda cans, Plastic water bottles, Plastic bags, Paper trash)

An empty corner of the room will be designated the "stormdrain".

The moderator asks the group: "Would you drink or swim in this water?" referring to the raindrops in the middle.

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Play begins: "Raindrops" may begin by reading the water fact on the back of their tag out loud. One by one, each "raindrop" must visit all three sources of pollution. For each group they visit, they must link arms with one "pollutant," then take that person with them to the next corner. The game will continue until all of the pollutants have been "picked up" and each raindrop has a pollutant on each arm. When there are no more pollutants to pick up, the raindrops will move to the "stormdrain" corner, pollutants in tow.

The moderator explains that after rain enters the stormdrain, the raindrops and pollution rushes to our rivers, lakes and Narragansett Bay, untreated.

The moderator asks the group: "Would you drink or swim in this water?" referring to the raindrops at the storm drain, linked to the pollutants. Then, "How can we clean up this water?"

One by one, each "pollutant" must then read the back of their tag out loud, which gives one reason why their type of pollution can be harmful. Children must then give a suggestion as to what people can do to prevent their kind of pollution from ending up in the rainwater. Younger children can be helped with this part. For example: the child wearing the "Animal Waste" tag might say that people can pick up their dog's poop and dispose of it properly. More abstract examples can be used for older children, for example, a child wearing the "plastic shopping bag" tag could suggest that we switch to reusable shopping bags.

For each correct suggestion, the "pollutant" unlinks arms with the "raindrop" that they are attached to and goes back to their corner (or seat).

When all of the pollutants have been unlinked from the raindrops, the moderator once again asks the group: "Would you drink or swim in this water?"

For more information on stormwater pollution in Rhode Island and additional teaching resources please visit: <u>www.RIStormwaterSolutions.org</u>

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