

# The It-Kit Program

## Innovative Program for Choices Into Action!

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Collecting glasses for World Vision, building an 'endangered animal zoo' to create awareness and getting mail from politicians in response to a students' animal rights petition, are just three of twenty-nine different community out-reach projects carried out by one class over one school year while using a program called the it-Kit.

This is my second year using this program in my Grade 6 classroom at Regent Park/Duke of York Public School in inner city Toronto. I've found that the best way for students to 'get' from the community is to 'give' to it!

Students have *experienced* how helping others also helps themselves! They have used a simple method to find their personal interests and abilities and then applied the curriculum to real-life activities that exercise responsible citizenship and build character.

Posters, pictures, a 3-D 'collage' documenting each student's efforts and a scrapbook with stories and pictures captures this year-long project helping students take action locally, nationally and globally - exercising equality and celebrating diversity.

The *it-Kit* is a program for Grades 1-8. This program makes a difference because it allows each individual student to:

- make personal decisions,
- develop personal skills,
- experience personal success and then share these experiences with their peers. This allows students to understand and appreciate their

own as well as their classmates' strengths and identify real-world activities that stimulate more learning - putting Howard Gardner's 'Theory of Multiple Intelligences' into action.

This program is designed to fit into existing programs by:

- being easy to set up and maintain with ready-to-go resources and poster-based lessons
- linking to cross-curricular expectations in:
  - Guidance & Career Education (Choices Into Action)
  - Language
  - The Arts
  - Health & Physical Education
  - Learning Skills
  - An additional subject chosen by the student
- creating opportunities for students to exercise the philosophies and skills from existing Safe Schools programs, so they can personally experience what they've learned.

*What other people have said about The it-Kit Program:*

"The *it-Kit* is a very creative program that uses an action approach to character education. This low-maintenance, high-impact prevention program benefits both students and the greater community. Having students discover

their interests and abilities by using the curriculum to practice social responsibility develops student, interpersonal and career goals, and gives students a sense of purpose and belonging."

– **Charles E. Pascal**, Former Deputy Minister of Education, Ontario & Professor, University of Toronto

"This experience has not only increased their awareness of some serious issues, it has empowered the students to make changes and to recognize that they alone can and do make a difference. This has been transmitted throughout the school by these children and their teacher. The wave has begun! I would recommend the *it-Kit* to every school in Canada!"

– **G. Hillier**, Principal, St. Peter Catholic Elementary

*For more information about the it-Kit Program, please contact Kelly Clark at info@onebackyard.com.*



*Students participating in the it-Kit Program: collecting cell phones to be recycled, with proceeds going to the food bank*