



The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CLOTHING RECYCLING LESSON PLANS HUGE HIT WITH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Students Learn Benefits of Clothing and Textile Recycling, Participate in Poster Design Contest

Bel Air, Maryland (June 18, 2013) – The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) reports that more than 12,000 elementary school teachers visited the “Wear It? Recycle It!” program hosted on the SMART website this past school year; the “Wear It? Recycle It!” program allowed teachers to access and utilize lesson plans designed to promote clothing and textile recycling. The program's creators say this is one of the strongest responses they have ever seen to a newly developed lesson-plan program. The “Wear it? Recycle It!” lesson plans were introduced in October 2012, the same academic year.

SMART officials estimate that a “better-than-expected” 323,400 students and 12,900 teachers were impacted by the “Wear It? Recycle It!” lesson plans and 90 entries were received in a related poster design contest. The entire program, including online micro-website, print and digital promotion, generated a total of more than 2,546,000 impressions during the duration of the program. SMART developed the “Wear It? Recycle It!” educational program in conjunction with The Education Center to present information on clothing and other textiles as recyclable products. The grade-appropriate educational materials showed students that clothing and other textiles can be recycled just like items in their homes they currently recycle such as paper, plastic, glass and aluminum.

“Our class used the lessons during a week-long session that went along with the environmental education unit in our science classes. We discussed recycling your typical items (glass, paper, aluminum). Learning about the recycling of our clothing was an added bonus that fit perfectly into the lesson,” said Margaret Lasee, 3rd grade teacher at Phillips Elementary School, Phillips, WI. “We also did a number of the worksheets to reinforce the lesson. The wrap up of the unit was the poster contest.”

The supplemental lessons are a comprehensive program that teaches students they can recycle more than just their old jeans and t-shirts and that many items they use every day are made from recycled clothing and textiles. The free materials were promoted on a website and through the various outlets of The Education Center.

“We are thrilled to see the number of teachers and students who took advantage of the “Wear It? Recycle It!” program,” says Jackie King, Executive Director of SMART. “The curricula not only supports the overall educational effort of the teachers, it also delivers an impactful message to the students which encourages the recycling of clothing and textiles. The program highlighted everything SMART stands for from an environmental perspective.”

In addition to the lesson plans, the “Wear It?, Recycle It!” educational program also included a poster design contest. SMART received 90 entries from schools across the U.S. created. The posters showed the benefits of textile recycling, especially recycling their used clothing. First-grader, Islam Hassan, from AQSA Elementary School in Bridgeview, IL, was named the winner of the Kindergarten – 2nd grade division. Traley Haubert, a 3rd grader at Phillips Elementary School in Phillips, WI, won poster design contest in the 3rd-5th grade division. The objective of the poster contest was for the students to depict what “Donate, Recycle, Don’t Throw Away” means to them after learning more about textile recycling.

The winners received 10 t-shirts and 10 posters with their winning drawing on it for their family and friends, one t-shirt and one poster for the principal and one t-shirt and one poster for the teacher. The t-shirts used in making the shirts were made from 100% recycled textiles. SMART’s President, Lou Buty, and Vice President, Jeff Pearl, selected the winning poster entries.

The educational materials remain available to teachers and the public and can be accessed via the SMART website at www.smartasn.org/educators-kids.

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About

Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles (SMART) is an international nonprofit trade association that strengthens the economic opportunities of its diverse membership by promoting the interdependence of our industry segments and providing a common forum for networking, education and trade. Since 1932, SMART has been at the forefront of recycling. SMART members use and convert recycled and secondary materials from used clothing, commercial laundries and non-woven, off spec material, new mill ends and paper from around the world. SMART member companies create thousands of jobs worldwide. SMART members prove each day that you can make money by being socially responsible. For additional information on SMART, visit the association’s website at www.SMARTasn.org. The following link will take you directly to informational videos on textile recycling <http://www.smartasn.org/about/videos.cfm>.

To download the iRecycle app visit www.Earth911.com. The app allows users to find clothing and textile recycling drop-off locations in their area.