

### Setting Goals and Getting Started

- Train property management staff to serve as green champions at the site level
- Set measurable goals, communicate them with the residents, and track ongoing progress
- Survey your residents to structure the education program based on their interests
- Determine what types of tools and resources would work best to impact resident behavior
- Utilize residents who are already interested in sustainability as liaisons with the community

### Things to Consider

- Be flexible: adapt and re-plan to ensure an effective, successful program
- Customize lesson plans to the audience served to maximize learning opportunities
- Encourage interactivity: Turn lectures into workshops that encourage group discussions and provide participants a chance to share their own experiences and tips
- Use visuals such as videos as a tool to promote learning
- Make it FUN – serve refreshments and award prizes to encourage participation
- Employ resident surveys to track learning outcomes
- Establish an economical and easy-to-analyze data tracking process
- Motivate residents with positive feedback
- Reach outside your organization to partner with other experts in the field

### Integration and change take time

When implementing a new organizational protocol and engaging residents of various cultural backgrounds, it is critical to set realistic, achievable goals. Gaining residents' attention is easier with a well-designed system that allows committed staff to deliver information in an interesting yet simple way.

### airLab Workshop



Childhood asthma rates in Humboldt Park are some of the highest in Chicago. The Sinai Improving Community Health Survey has found that as many as one in three children in Humboldt Park may have asthma, which far exceeds the city average of 13 percent.

At the Rosa Parks Apartments in Humboldt Park, youth participating in the airLab Workshop play a leading role in measuring and assessing indoor air quality, and educating residents on how air quality affects their lives.

The study will help determine healthy construction materials for future developments by creating an Indoor Air Quality Profile and Management Plan to address any IAQ complaints and problems, documenting lessons learned for architects and building owners/operators.

*(over)*

## Best Practices

- Listen to residents: Ensure that materials are relevant to them, and engage residents in the creation of programs, events and communication materials to generate buy-in.
- Staff buy-in: Getting staff trained and supportive of resident education is critical to success.
- Simple is better: Given diverse resident populations, graphics are an extremely effective method for communicating information.
- Repetition is key: Reinforcing information in ongoing flyers, monthly newsletters and regular resident meetings will yield savings and behavior change.
- Get youth involved: Young people are a natural vehicle for sustainable change and influence when it comes to introducing new behaviors within families.
- Provide on going recognition as a way to build leadership.
- Translate materials to appropriate literacy levels to address multiple cultural backgrounds.
- Consider recording presentations to ensure that materials can be accessible and useful for developments through an entire portfolio.
- Use an interpreter when working with populations with limited English abilities.
- Home visits can be an excellent way to engage families where they live.
- Create a theme or brand for your program and market it widely.
- If applicable, utilize graduates of the program to encourage participation.



*Children from Abode Communities' Ivy Terrace clean up a local watershed.*



*Farmworker Housing Development Corporation taught residents to make and use their own green cleaners.*

For more information on Enterprise Green Communities Resident Engagement Tools, please visit: [www.EnterpriseCommunity.org/residentengagement](http://www.EnterpriseCommunity.org/residentengagement)

*A note of thanks to Eden Housing, Foundation Communities and Aeon for providing insight in developing this document.*