



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2012 Volume VII: Energy, Environment, and Health

School Redesign with Environmental Health in Mind

Guide for Curriculum Unit 12.07.10, published September 2012

by Sara Stillman

As residents of Emeryville, my high school students have an amazing opportunity to participate in the redesign of our school and construction of a new center for community life. With this opportunity I am hoping to teach my students that there is also a great responsibility to design a center that contributes to the environmental health of Emeryville. This unit focuses on four health issues facing urban environments: Obesity & Absence of Physical Activity, Air Pollution and Respiratory Health, Safety and Personal Security, and the Absence of Green/Recreational Space. Students will begin the unit learning about these four issues and begin making connections to their own urban environment. Then students will gather in groups based upon interest in a particular urban health issue, develop an inquiry question related to our city and center for community life, and research possible solutions to their inquiry questions. The third phase of this unit involves a design challenge, where students use the data from their inquiry research to redesign a space within the center for community life. The design challenge will engage students in model making and designing and building large scale structures.

(Developed for 3D Design and Sculpture, and Visual Arts, grades 11-12; recommended for 3D Design and Sculpture, and Visual Arts, grades 9-12)

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