

Twinning Project

PHARE RO/06/IB/EN/06

Romania - North Eastern Region

# School composting

## Setting up a school composting programme

Resource: A manual for Connecticut Schools  
Presentation based on Powerpoint materials from OVAM

# Content

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1. Reasons for composting
2. Video on school composting
3. Developing a plan
4. Forming a steering committee
5. School community involvement
6. Day-to-day composting
7. Monitoring & evaluation

# Integration in school curriculum

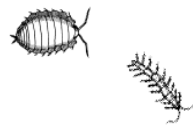
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- Video for secondary school (12-18 year):  
It's gotten Rotten
- Teacher's guide to video
- Composting: wastes to resources

# Printed resources

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- ▣ School composting – A Manual for Connecticut schools



# Reasons for composting at school

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- ❑ Reduce the school's solid waste stream
- ❑ Recycle natural resources
- ❑ Educate the school community about benefits of composting
- ❑ Create a useful product

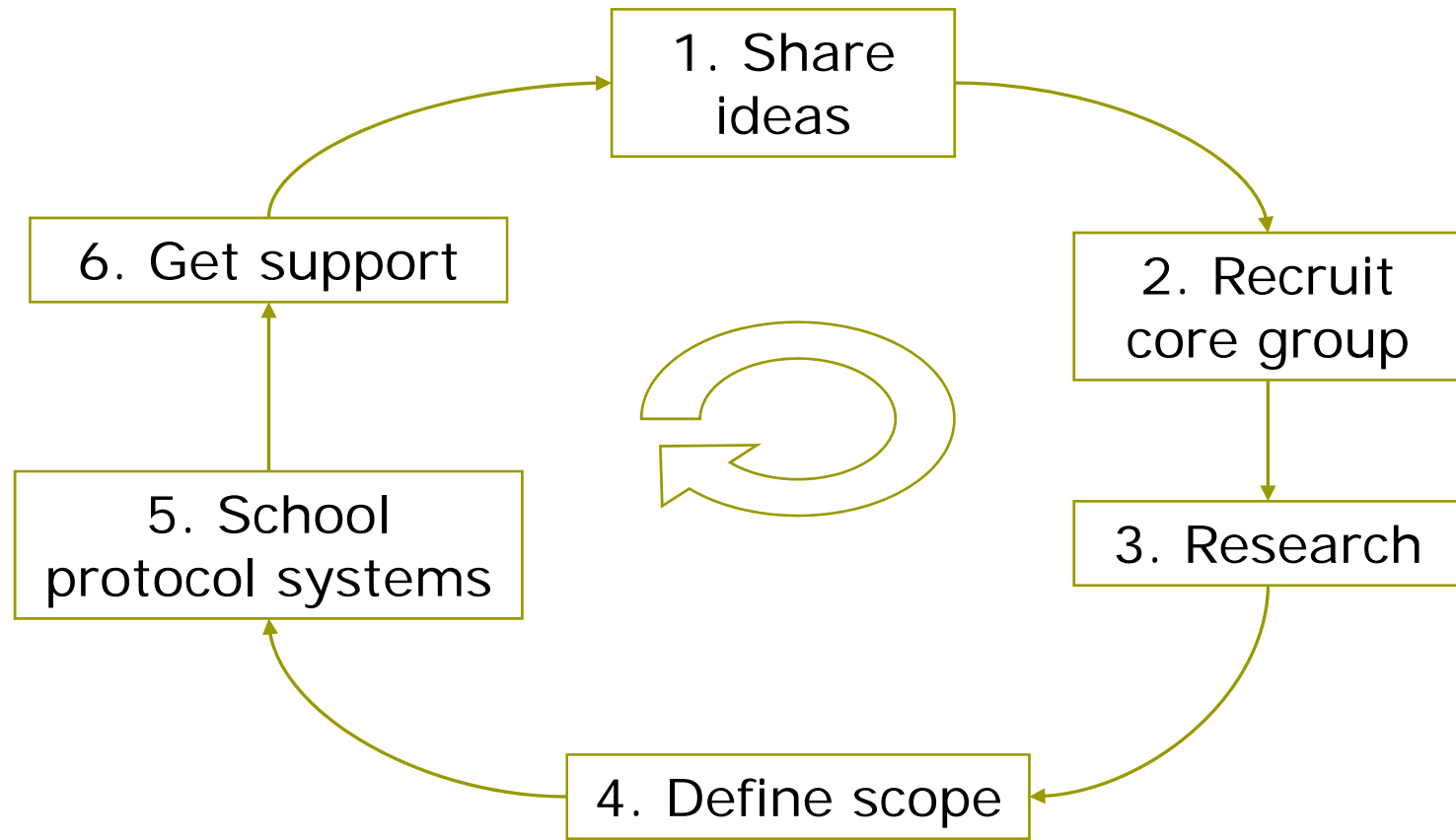
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- ❑ Integration in school curriculum
- ❑ Empowerment of students
- ❑ School pride
- ❑ Multiplication effect

# Developing a plan & gathering support

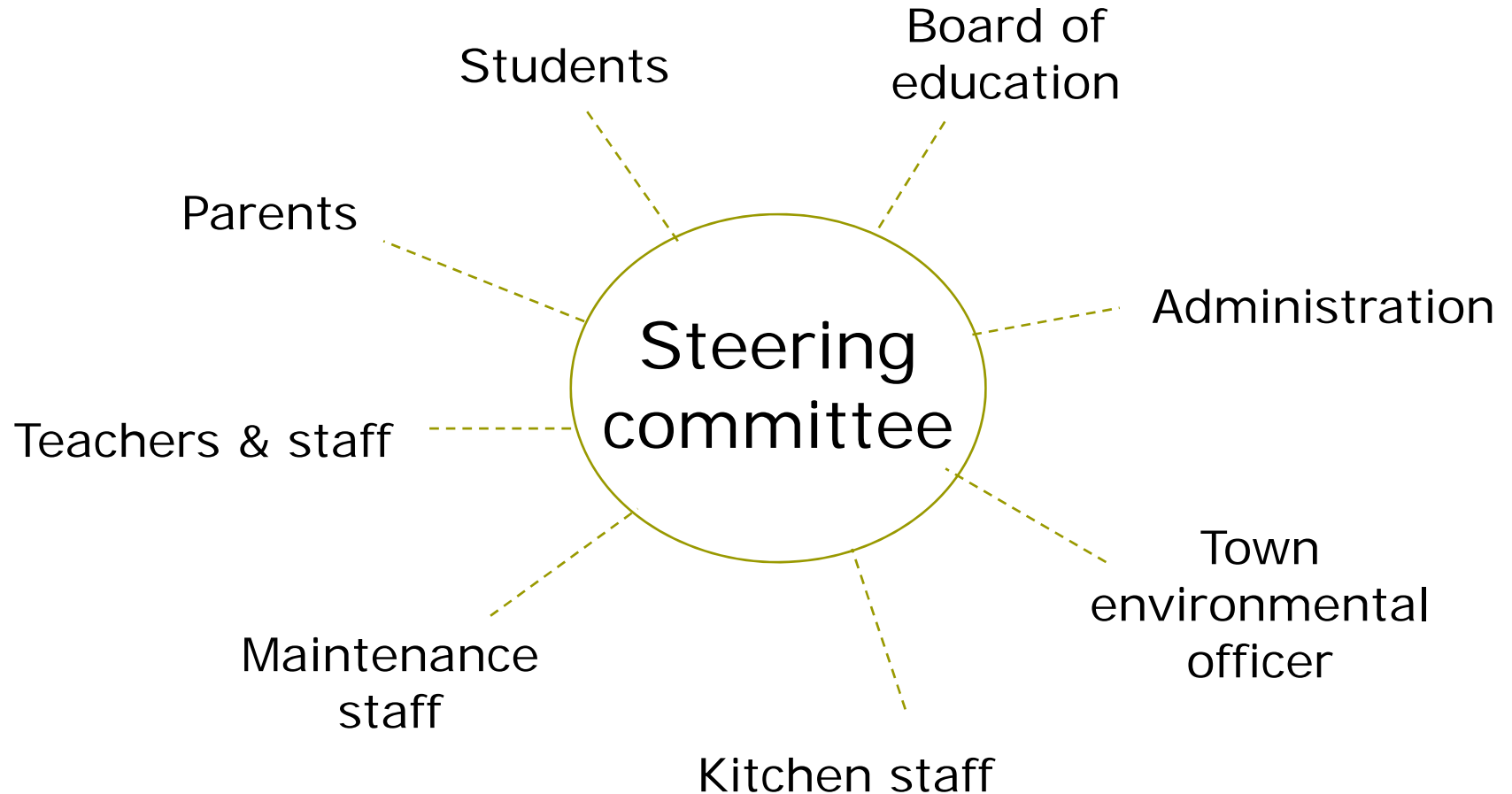
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## How to start?



# Forming a Steering Committee

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# Steering Committee responsibility

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- ❑ Developing a clear plan of action
- ❑ Finding funding
- ❑ Promoting the programme
- ❑ Coordinating the actual work
- ❑ Evaluating what's working & what's not

- ❑ Identify each member's responsibility
- ❑ Ask for commitment!
- ❑ Meet once a month, later on a quarterly basis

# Steering Committee tasks

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- ❑ Identify concerns
- ❑ Communicate clearly
- ❑ Ask for input
- ❑ Ensure cooperative problem-solving

# School community involvement

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## Getting teachers on board

- ❑ Introduction of programme to students
- ❑ Integrating ideas & concepts in school curriculum
- ❑ Monitoring food-sorting at containers in cafeteria
- ❑ Supervise student compost-workers

- ❑ Make their job simple
- ❑ Keep a sense of perspective (nothing is perfect)
- ❑ Ask the teachers suggestions

# School community involvement

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## **Role of students**

- ❑ Students are the target audience
- ❑ Identify volunteers for compost team (10 to 12)
- ❑ 2 students a day for the daily tasks
- ❑ Make it an after-school club activity
- ❑ Initiate the youngest students also (role model)
- ❑ Give recognition to participants

# School community involvement

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## **Role of maintenance staff**

- ❑ Give input for box design
- ❑ Be consulted for the selection of the location
- ❑ Assemble bulking materials
- ❑ Give suggestions and feedback

# School community involvement

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## **Role of kitchen staff**

- ❑ Express their needs
- ❑ Be provided with a second barrel
- ❑ Be given proper instructions with regard to bio-waste separation
- ❑ Be asked for input & suggestions

# School community involvement

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## **Parent & parent school committee**

- ❑ Help supervise the programme once a week
- ❑ Be inspired by the project (as potential home/ neighbourhood composters)
- ❑ Provide incentives for student volunteers

### But should above all

- ❑ Be well informed about the goals of the programme & their possible involvement

# School community involvement

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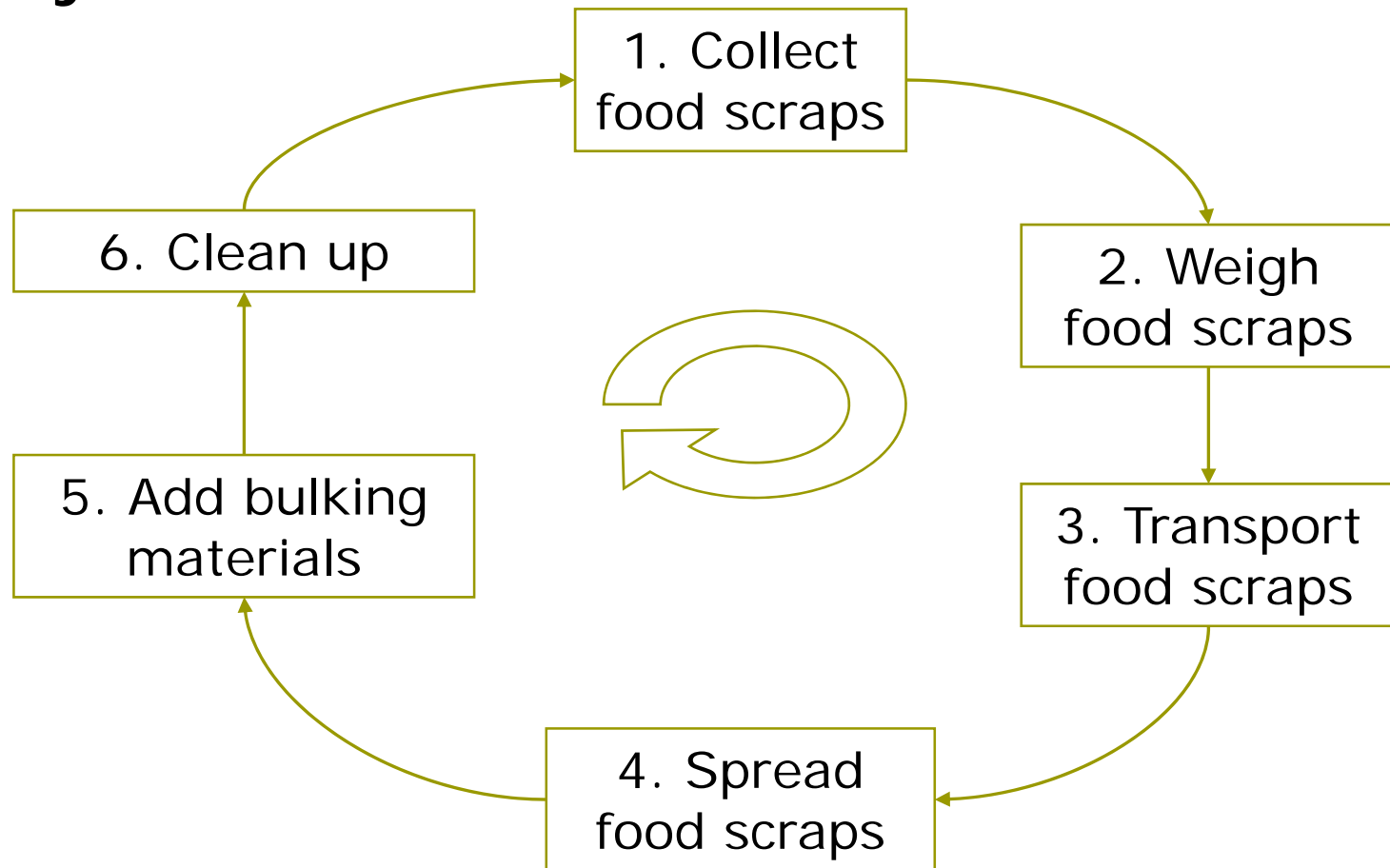
## Promotional activities

- Compost awareness week at school
- Events related to:
  - Earth day (April 22)
  - International compost awareness week (1<sup>st</sup> week of May)
- Compost poster contest
- Compost advertisements
- A special trip for compost team
- ...

# Day to day composting

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## Daily tasks



# Day to day composting

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## **Tasks as needed**

- ❑ Checking & maintaining boxes
- ❑ Measure temperature
- ❑ Turning the pile
- ❑ Troubleshooting
- ❑ Acquiring bulking material

# Programme Monitoring & Evaluation

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- Who?      Steering Committee
- When?     Regularly
- Why?      To address various issues

# Questions

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# School composting



Working with children 6-12 year  
Primary school

# Preparation

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- Take contact & make an appointment
  - With school direction
  - With teacher(s)



**TIP!** Take personal contact, people do not always respond to letters/mails.



**TIP!** Respect agreed upon engagements. Even if the engagement is rather small, be happy with what you achieve, do not force!!

# Preparation

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- Ask yourself the following questions
  - Who does what? *School direction, teachers, yourself,...*
  - What is the target audience? *Age, number,...*
  - Where? *At school: inside, outside, both,...*
  - What do they know?
  - What do they expect? *Lesson, do-activity, game, start a compost project,...*
  - What learning tools are available?
  - When? *Season, for how long (50', half a day,...), starting hour*
  - Why? *Initiation, start of own compost system,...*



**AIM!** Acquire knowledge & skills and sensitise on waste prevention, - recycling,...

# Preparation

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- ❑ A good preparation is essential
- ❑ Write the basics of what you want to say
- ❑ Time is limited! 50 minutes are quickly gone!
- ❑ Bring as much as possible 'show materials'
  - Finished compost
  - Half ripe compost
  - Compostable materials of all kinds
  - Compost beasts
  - Magnifiers
  - ...
- ❑ Act: puppet show... hand puppet... compost song

# Good to know!

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- ❑ 5 to 7 year olds ask for a clear way of working (do activities, active involvement), insight in 'why's'
- ❑ 8 to 10 year olds want to know how things are working. They are impressed with what they see, they want to test things
- ❑ 11 to 12 year olds can listen to a simple scientific explanation, want to know a lot and will test you in order to see whether you know even more



## NOTICE

- ❑ Children do not have bad habits
- ❑ Children's expectations are high
- ❑ Children love new, uncommonness challenges

# Lesson – basic principles

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## □ Basic principles

- Every communication form has at least **four elements**:
  - Speaker
  - The audience (children)
  - The message
  - The transfer (presentation)
- The speaker, message and presentation should be adapted to the children



# Lesson – basic principles

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## □ Speaker

- Express enthusiasm
- Be energetic & dynamic
- Have self-confidence
- Be as a friend, not a distant teacher
- Show interest through eye contact, by listening to them
- You are happy to be there,... so show it or say it



# Lesson – basic principles

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## □ Children are amazing!

- They have self esteem: use this 'you can...'
- (young) Children have a positive attitude
- Children are creative & active
- Learn through sense perceptions
- Playful: learn easier through games
- Specific attention for the unknown
- Focused on practical, useful information



## □ **But**

- Have difficulties in following, if not demonstrated clearly
- Difficulties in placing the missing links
- Do not cope with long concentration efforts
- Do not have right judgement of some of their actions (risks)

# Lesson

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## □ Welcome

- Short presentation of each other
- Tell them **what** you will do
- Tell them **how** you will work
- Start **slowly** (rhythm, tone)
- Speak clearly with a **good articulation**
- Avoid long, complicated sentences
- Pay attention to **accents, rhythm and pauses**
- Avoid difficult & technical words
- **Body language**: stand up, sit,...
- Use your **hands** to stress what you want to say
- Tell a joke, something that happened, anecdote,...
- Ask a few **questions** to get an question/answer session
- Use **variation**: slides, demonstration, search for compost beasts

# Lesson

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- ❑ Lesson/ demonstration/ do-activity
  - **Start** with distinction between organic and non-organic
  - Get **attention!**
  - Educative act – you will get **interaction!**
  - Build your story on what can be **shown** on the spot
  - **Demonstrate** as much as you can and say what you do while demonstrating
  - Let children **do things** themselves



- ❑ Use part III & annexes of the **School Composting Manual** for selecting lessons/ activities/ demonstrations

# Lesson

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## ❑ Lesson/ demonstration/ do-activity (continued)

- Not only listening but also use the senses:
  - ❑ Smell: forest ground, mature compost
  - ❑ Feel: brushes of worms, crumbliness of the soil
  - ❑ Look: small compost beasts in half mature compost (use magnifier)
  - ❑ Taste: of the fruits of compost like garden cress grown on compost
  - ❑ Listen to the brushes of an earthworm on a piece of cardboard and then a compost worm. You hear the difference?
- Finish with planting a flower or plant in a compost mix, in the school garden or in small pots



# Lesson

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## □ Close the lesson

- Repeat the most important things, close with what you started with
- Ask a few questions using posters and do-activities, a game, a quiz,...
- Do you want to compost as from now or volunteer at school?
- Would you like your school to compost as well?
- Would you participate?
- Give them something: a suggestion, a souvenir, ...
- Give the teacher the necessary background information using copies, materials
- Ask if further assistance is required to set up a compost system



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