



# Environmental Education

The environment sustains all life on earth. It provides us with nourishment and inspiration. Our economy thrives on a healthy environment. A growing body of research tells us that time spent in nature provides physical and psychological benefits. Our personal and cultural identities are often tied to the environment around us. At the same time, it's impossible not to be deeply concerned about the unprecedented environmental, social, and economic challenges we face as a global society—from climate change and loss of species and habitats, to declines in civic engagement, decreasing access to nature, a growing gap between the haves and have nots, and other threats to our health, security, and future survival.

We are in the month of September, and that means Education Month in Guyana. The EPA takes this opportunity to shed some light on the topic of environmental education and the role of the EPA in promoting awareness and education among the Guyanese populace.

Environmental education is a process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions.

The components of environmental education are:

- **Awareness and sensitivity** to the environment and environmental challenges
- **Knowledge and understanding** of the environment and environmental challenges
- **Attitudes** of concern for the environment and motivation to improve or maintain environmental quality
- **Skills** to identify and help resolve environmental challenges
- **Participation** in activities that lead to the resolution of environmental challenges

Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. Rather, environmental education teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and it enhances their own problem-solving and decision-making skills.

## Environmental Education is More Than Information about the Environment

### Environmental Education

- Increases public awareness and knowledge of environmental issues

### Environmental Information

- Provides facts or opinions about environmental issues

## **Environmental Education is More Than Information about the Environment**

### **Environmental Education**

- Does teach individuals critical-thinking
- Does enhance individuals' problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Does not advocate a particular viewpoint

### **Environmental Information**

- Does not necessarily teach individuals critical-thinking
- Does not necessarily enhance individuals' problem-solving and decision-making skills
- May advocate a particular viewpoint

## **EPA and Environmental Education**

The Environmental Protection Act mandates the EPA to play a pivotal role in environmental awareness and education - promote public participation in relation to scoping of environmental impact assessments, and encourage a better understanding and appreciation of the natural environment and its role in economic development.

**The work of the Communications Department of the EPA lends to the Agency realizing this important mandate.**

**Environmental Communication** - Conduct meetings/consultations with communities/member of the public to address environmental concerns/conflicts and ensure the communication platforms and tools are upgraded;

**Environmental Education** - Conduct outreach to various stakeholders including organisations, businesses, developers, groups and schools and environmental issues and EPA's processes and procedures; and

**Environmental Awareness** - Develop materials on environmental issues in formats including publications, games, models, annual magazine and calendar; development of ads, vidoes, documentaries etc and utilisation of diverse media platforms.

## **Sources**

<https://www.epa.gov/education/what-environmental-education>

<https://naaee.org/about-us/about-ee-and-why-it-matters>

***You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O ECEA Programme, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at:***

***eit.epaguyana@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.***