

Girls Energy Conservation Corps: Study of a Girl Scout Program Focused on Energy Conservation

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Summary

This study presents outcomes data on knowledge, attitudes and behavior from Girls Energy Conservation Corps, a research and development project that produced a series of six patch activity guides for girls age 8-13 who are members of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. The program focused on integrating engaging online and real world activities that involved girls in learning about climate change and their role in it, in saving energy, in using new media creatively to educate peers about energy conservation, and in understanding the importance of collective goals and action to address climate change. The paper describes how the iterative design process was informed by formative evaluation data, and presents outcomes data from the final summative evaluation. Positive changes in knowledge, behavior, and attitudes suggest that a carefully designed program can address the challenges of educating children about energy conservation and climate change at this age, even if participant exposure to the program is brief. Findings also bring to light that developmental differences may be used when using adult-tested behavior change models and constructs for youth; these differences are important to deconstruct in future studies to apply to youth behavior change models and theories.

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