

Education for sustainable development using indoor and outdoor activities

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Environmental education became an important part of our development in the last years. We put a lot of effort into a task how to improve students' values, skills, understanding and how to significantly enhance their learning and achievements regarding ecological problems.

At the same time we also know that environmental learning is easier when our students have the opportunity to feel, see, touch, taste and smell the nature. Therefore teachers in my school develop regular access to the outdoors as a learning resource. Students understand the impact of their activities on the environment and they also like to participate in the nature protection.

My school (Biotechnical Centre) is an example of educational centre where different research and development programmes are strongly oriented to the sustainable development. Students are educated to become experts in biotechnology, agronomy, food technology and horticulture. At the same time they are educated how to care for the nature. The institution itself cooperates with different fields of economy (farms, food – baker industry, floristry, country design etc.). For these reasons the environmental education is an essential dimension of basic education focused on a sphere of interaction that lies at the root of personal and social development.

We try to develop different outdoor activities through all the school year. These activities are: analyse the water quality; research waste water treatment plants; exploration of new food sources (like aquaponics - where fish and plants grow together); collecting plants with medical activities; care for the plants in the school yard; growing new plants in the poly tunnel; learning about unknown plants – especially when visiting national and regional parks; selling different things in the school shop – also for local citizens; participating in the world wide activity – “Keep the country tidy” etc.

Students and teachers enjoy to participate in different outdoor activities; we both understand the importance of nature conservation and sustainable development much better after some outdoor activities.