

# COMPOST KIDS

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Springhurst is proud to be one of many schools across the nation that is demonstrating their commitment to a more sustainable Earth, stronger communities, and healthier, more productive learning environments for students.

We are happy to be launching our fifth year of **COMPOST KIDS**: “Growing Soil to Growing Food: Composting and Us”, taught by Pamela Davis<sup>[1]</sup>. **COMPOST KIDS** helps students understand what it means to close the loop on the food cycle. By diverting food waste from landfills and turning it back into soil, healthy plants will grow.

This will serve to support the organic garden in the Outdoor Classroom which provides great opportunities to instill lifelong environmental and nutritional literacy among all K-5 students. The compost generated through **COMPOST KIDS** will continue to nurture plant growth and support our garden’s stability.

Our annual Soup and Salad Days have become an integral part of the Springhurst community, and celebrates the Outdoor Classroom and collaboration with students, faculty and parents.

The six kindergarten lessons conducted monthly from January to June teach the fundamentals of composting and soil care as they relate to growing food in a sustainable way. Each lesson will complement the existing Science 21 and social studies units of study and connect hands-on learning to the Springhurst curriculum and Common Core State Standards. This program also provides project based learning opportunities for young scientists to conduct research in a living environment within their own

school. Students understand that we don't feed our plants, but instead we feed the *soil* in order to grow our own healthy food.

In addition to enhancing the classroom curriculum, the program inspires personal and social responsibility. Students with a wide variety of learning styles and abilities obtain life skills through their collaborative and cooperative hands on group activities. They have an opportunity to give back to their home and school community by educating others on the value of composting and the importance of responsible waste reduction. One of our objectives is to teach our children that we do not live a single-use, disposable lifestyle.

We look forward to sharing **COMPOST KIDS** with you!

Sincerely,

Sara Sellitti

Outdoor Classroom/Garden Coordinator

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1 Pamela Davis, an instructor for Teacher professional Development at New York Botanical Gardens (NYBG), provides educators with the tools and training needed to enhance their students' understanding of ecology, plant science and the world around them. Her concentration is soils and composting as it relates to plants. She is a Master Composter with NYC Compost Project, an outreach program funded by the Dept. of Sanitation of NYC and hosted by the NYBG. Her passion is to educate the public about their environment through recycling and composting (indoor and outdoor). She has worked as a garden instructor at the Ruth Rhea Howell Family Garden for the past 4 years, served as USDA Garden Coordinator, received her Gardening, Horticulture and Flower Design certificates through NYBG Continuing Education and is a Master Food Preserver (Orange County) and former Master Gardener (Westchester County).

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