

**Best Education Practices (BEPs) for Water Outreach Professionals**  
**Defining BEPs, Refining New Resources and Recommending Future Actions**

**RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION**

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**Presenter(s): Anita Kraemer, eeEvaluations and University of Michigan**

**Title: Evaluation of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Conservation Education Programs**

**Abstract:** We conducted an evaluation of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's conservation education programs to determine to what extent they promote participants' environmentally responsible behavior and reduce teachers' perceived barriers to teaching about the bay. We assessed outcomes of five youth- and two teacher-education programs through pre-, post-, and retention tests and mail questionnaires from samples of current and past participants. Based on improvements in characteristics that promote environmentally responsible behavior, such as perceived knowledge of issues and actions, environmental sensitivity, and—particularly—intention to act, we concluded that the education programs increased some youths' and many teachers' environmentally responsible behavior. We also concluded that the teacher-education programs facilitated teaching about the bay by reducing teachers' constraints. As a result of our evaluation, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation implemented several changes that administrators of other similar conservation education programs may also want to consider. These changes include focusing programs to target specific, suitable goals; coordinating programs to provide experiences that build on one another; and conducting periodic evaluations.

**Target Audience(s):** Youth (grades 6-12) and Teachers

**Educational Purpose:** Education (formalized process with a goal)

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