

# RESILIENT NORTHEASTERN NEW JERSEY



**Grades 9 - 10**

## Introduction to Resilient NENJ

Today, let's delve into a program that's making a significant impact in our community: the "Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program." This initiative is more than just a plan; it's a strategic approach to fortify our region against the challenges of a changing climate.



You're likely aware of the concept of climate change, a global phenomenon causing shifts in weather patterns, rising temperatures, and more frequent extreme events. The Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program is our local response to these challenges, emphasizing preparedness and sustainability.

## Here are the key components of this program:

- **Protecting Natural Spaces:** The program focuses on preserving our natural habitats, like parks, forests, and wetlands. This entails the strategic planting of native species to serve as natural defenses against rising sea levels and to support our local ecosystems.
- **Reducing Carbon Footprint:** To combat climate change, the program encourages a shift toward cleaner and more efficient practices. This includes promoting alternative transportation methods, like biking and public transit, adopting energy-efficient technologies, and transitioning to renewable energy sources. Another part of this plan is educating community members on practices that reduce flooding, like keeping storm drains clean and removing litter from streets.
- **Preparing for Extreme Weather:** Our region is susceptible to extreme weather events. The program helps us adapt by developing robust emergency response plans, strengthening infrastructure, and educating our community on how to stay safe during storms and floods.



In essence, the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program is a multi-faceted strategy designed to ensure the well-being and resilience of our community in the face of climate-related challenges.

What's exciting is that you, as young leaders, have the potential to play a crucial role in this initiative. Learning more about climate change, conservation, sustainable practices, and community resilience will not only empower you to make informed decisions but also allow you to contribute to shaping a more resilient and sustainable future for our region.

# THE GREEN GUARDIANS' RESILIENT ADVENTURE



# Resilient NENJ: The Green Guardians' Resilient Adventure

Meet Alex, a 14-year-old with a passion for the environment. Living in Northeastern New Jersey, they were always inspired by the beauty of their town and the surrounding natural areas. Alex believed in taking action to protect their community, just like the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program encouraged.

One summer day, while exploring the local park, Alex stumbled upon an interesting event called the "Green Guardians Club." The club was made up of a diverse group of friends who were determined to make a positive impact on their community, aligning with the goals of the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program.

## The Green Guardians had three major missions:

### 1. Protecting Natural Spaces:

Their first mission was to preserve the natural beauty of their town. The club often organized clean-up events at local parks and trails. Alex joined their efforts, putting on gloves and picking up litter, knowing that keeping nature clean was essential for the town's resilience.

### 2. Reducing Carbon Footprint:

To tackle the goal of reducing the community's carbon footprint, the Green Guardians promoted sustainable transportation. They encouraged their fellow students to bike or walk to school, and they even set up a community bike-sharing program. Alex loved this idea and soon found themselves biking to school with their friends.

### 3. Preparing for Extreme Weather:

In preparation for extreme weather events, the Green Guardians partnered with local authorities to conduct emergency preparedness workshops. They taught their neighbors how to create emergency kits, develop family communication plans, and stay safe during storms and floods. Alex became the go-to person for emergency preparedness in their neighborhood.

As the months passed, Alex and their friends became known as the Green Guardians of their community. They had made a remarkable difference in protecting natural spaces, reducing their carbon footprint, and ensuring everyone was prepared for extreme weather. People admired their dedication, and more friends joined their mission.

Alex and the Green Guardians knew that their work was not just about following a program but about creating a brighter and more resilient future for Northeastern New Jersey. They continued to inspire others to join their cause, demonstrating that when young leaders come together, they can make a significant impact on their community and the world.

# Resilient NENJ: Short Story Exercises

## Workbook Exercise 1: Environmental Impact Analysis

**Objective: Encourage students to analyze the impact of the Green Guardians' actions on their community and understand the importance of protecting natural spaces.**

### Instructions:

1. Read the story "The Resilient Eco-Champions" with the students.
2. Discuss the Green Guardians' efforts to protect natural spaces and promote sustainable transportation.
3. Provide a list of environmental benefits achieved by the Green Guardians' actions (e.g., cleaner parks, reduced carbon emissions).
4. Ask students to choose one action from the story (e.g., park clean-up or biking to school) and write a short paragraph explaining how it benefits the environment.
5. Encourage students to think about how these actions might have a positive ripple effect on their community.
6. Discuss as a class the broader implications of these actions and how they contribute to community resilience.

## Workbook Exercise 2: Community Carbon Footprint Calculation

**Objective: Engage students in calculating and comparing the carbon footprint of different modes of transportation, as inspired by the story.**

### Instructions:

1. Discuss the Green Guardians' initiative to reduce carbon footprints by promoting biking and walking.
2. Provide data on the average carbon emissions produced by different modes of transportation (e.g., car, bicycle, walking).
3. Ask students to calculate the carbon emissions for a typical week of commuting to school using these different modes of transportation.
4. Have them compare the emissions for each mode and consider the environmental impact.
5. Encourage students to reflect on their own transportation choices and how they can contribute to reducing carbon emissions in their community.
6. Discuss as a class the environmental benefits of choosing eco-friendly transportation options.

# Resilient NENJ: Short Story Exercises

## Workbook Exercise 3: Emergency Preparedness Plan

**Objective: Teach students the importance of being prepared for extreme weather events, as demonstrated by the Resilient Eco-Champions.**

### Instructions:

1. Discuss the Resilient Eco-Champions' commitment to helping their community prepare for extreme weather events, including their workshops on emergency preparedness.
2. Ask students to create their own "Emergency Preparedness Plan" for their household. They should include the following:
  3. A list of essential items to include in an emergency kit (e.g., flashlights, first aid supplies, non-perishable food, water).
  4. An emergency communication plan, including a designated meeting place for family members.
  5. Steps to follow during a storm or flood, such as staying informed through weather updates.
  6. Encourage students to discuss their plans with their families and ensure that everyone is aware of the emergency procedures.
7. Have a class discussion about the importance of being prepared for emergencies and share any interesting insights or lessons learned from their plans.