

# LIVING AND MOVING GREEN - SUPPORT PACKAGE



## Tree Planting

Trees provide abundant ecological services that can be measured in energy savings. These amazing plants provide shade in the summer and block cold winds in the winter. According to the TD Economics Report from 2014, "[The Value of Urban Forests in Cities across Canada](#)," Halifax has canopy rate that was the highest across Canada at 41%. The annual energy savings provided by trees in Halifax is an estimated \$12.4 billion dollars and \$4.28 billion dollars for carbon sequestration. A healthy and well-maintained tree is equivalent to 10 room-sized air conditioners running 20 hours per day. Trees in Halifax remove 120 tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere, which is equivalent to the emissions of 80 thousand cars.

Planting trees is a great way to help to sustain and protect the environment. Schoolyards, trails, public spaces such as parks, or even in our own yards can be enhanced by adding trees, which sustain habitat and biodiversity. After selecting a planting site, there are a few steps that must be taken. This support package will act as a guide on the journey to add trees to a landscape as a school or community project.

## Action Plan

**Step 1-** Get in touch with Administration and Operations staff at your school. Work together to determine a planting site and decide how many seedlings or trees will be needed for this space. Seedlings are best planted in the spring after the ground has thawed and is workable. Conditions are cool and trees can absorb the spring rains. Roots can get established before the summer sun stimulates new top growth. Mature trees can be transplanted in the spring and early fall.

**Step 2-** Research the opportunities to obtain trees. Seedlings and saplings can sometimes be obtained as donations from local nurseries or forestry businesses. Some companies will supply as many seedlings as requested, which makes tree planting more obtainable. Contact your local [Home Hardware](#) because they often take part in the [Tree Canada Partners in Planting Program](#). Seedlings can also be purchased from the Department of Natural Resources in the spring and fall. Their order form is found [online](#), but please contact your local DNR office because your organization may get them cheaper or for free. If your school is planting mature trees for National Tree Day, DNR might be interested in an opportunity to speak during this event and may give a seedling to each student. Check out the successful tree planting stories from Green Schools below to learn more. Find and contact a seedling donor, inform them of how many seedlings, and offer a timeline for your planting project. A Green Schools NS Engagement Officer can help make connections so keep in touch!



Figure 2 Tree seedlings

**Step 3-** Once the seedlings and planting location are confirmed, it is important for the Green Team to share this event, whether by making posters, sharing via social media, the school website, or school newsletter. You may want to provide some education about why trees matter [or show some videos](#). Spread the invitation to



the whole community because the more helping hands, the better. If you are doing your planting during [National Tree Day](#) be sure to register your planting to join the larger movement.



Figure 1. Common style of planter

**Step 4-** A sponsor who donates seedlings can often provide some “planters,” the tools that create the perfect hole in the ground for the seedlings. If more students join, or if planters are not available for the planting events, garden spades and other similar tools can be brought from home. Mature trees require a large hole. If you have rocky soil you may need equipment such as a backhoe. Do staff members or parents have the equipment needed to dig a hole for free? Extend a huge thank you to all!

**Step 5-** Before the planting takes place, participants should visit the location to mark the locations for the day of planting. Permission from the school and parents may also be needed. It is important for students to pick a date where most of the students and staff can participate. See suggested dates below. For mature trees that may need large equipment, it is best to schedule the planting outside of school time, and plan a ceremonial throwing of the dirt with the whole school.

**Step 6-** Plant seedlings and trees with care. You will want to loosen the soil around the roots and add high-quality soil to the hole. Make sure air pockets are eliminated and roots settle by gently raising and lowering the tree while gently packing the soil.

**Step 7-** Once the trees are in the ground they need 2-4 inches of [mulch](#). Remember to leave a space between the tree’s trunk and mulch. Mulch will help keep the soil moist but if you don’t get 25mm of rain every week, the trees will need to be watered. The easiest and best way to water mature trees is the [bucket method](#). Maintaining soil moisture is essential from spring to fall for the first three years after planting. Read through [Evergreen’s Keeping Your Trees Healthy Guide](#) for support.



## Resources

[Green Schools NS Lessons for the Garden Support Package](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Yarmouth Consolidated High School.](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Chedabucto Education Centre](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Annapolis West Education Centre & Clean Foundation](#)

[QCCR Radio Facebook Story: Dr JC Wickwire & Sponsors Tree Planting](#)

[Green Schools NS Facebook Story: Coxheath Elementary](#)

[Tree Canada's TLC: A Guide to Community Tree Planting Booklet](#)

[Tree Canada's Tree Planting Guide](#)

[Tree Canada - Edible Trees Grant](#)

[Arbour NS Guide to Planting a Tree](#)

[Department of Lands and Forestry Offices Contact Information](#)

[Department of Natural Resources Field Offices](#)

[International Day of Forests](#)

[National Volunteer Week](#)

[International Mother Earth Day](#)

[Earth Day Canada](#)

[Earth Day Network Reforestation Project](#)

[Canadian Environment Week](#)

[World Environment Day](#)

