BEHAVIOR CHANGE EDUCATION

Turning Energy Awareness Into Meaningful Action



Every meaningful change begins with understanding.

When students understand how energy works, why efficiency matters, and what they can do to make a difference, they gain more than knowledge. They gain the foundation for making informed decisions at school, at home, and throughout their lives.

During the 2025–26 school year, The National Theatre for Children (NTC) partnered with Eversource, Avangrid, and Energize Connecticut to deliver two complementary energy education programs across Massachusetts and Connecticut called *Energy Academy: The Power Squad* and *Energy in Action*. Through live theatrical performances, interactive mobile learning experiences, and supplemental educational resources, these programs brought energy and clean energy concepts to thousands of students and educators.

The results demonstrate the reach of this approach—and the importance of measuring what students learn.

2025–26 PROGRAM IMPACT AT A GLANCE

23,669 STUDENTS
reached across three program implementations

2,590 EDUCATORS
reached

254 SCHOOLS
engaged across Massachusetts and Connecticut

533 PERFORMANCES
and interactive learning experiences delivered

A FRAMEWORK FOR MEANINGFUL CHANGE

NTC designs educational experiences around a five-part Behavior Change Framework that connects attention and understanding with opportunities for action—and measures the results along the way.

ENGAGE → **EDUCATE** → **EQUIP** → **EXPAND** → **MEASURE**







This case study examines how that framework was applied across two energy education programs serving the same utility-sponsored initiative. By looking beyond participation numbers to pre- and post-program assessments, we explore what students learned, where knowledge improved, and how education can support the broader goal of building an energy-aware public.

Because meaningful change starts with understanding, measurement is essential to knowing whether that understanding is growing.



ENGAGE

MAKE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE.

Before people can change what they do, they need a reason to pay attention.

NTC's 2025–26 energy education programs used live performance, humor, audience participation, and hands-on exploration to turn an everyday topic into an experience students could see, question, and remember.

For students in grades 3–5, *Energy Academy: The Power Squad* brought energy efficiency to life through a 35-minute theatrical assembly. Students encountered foundational concepts, including what energy is, how it is wasted, and how it can be conserved—through a format designed to capture attention as a building block towards understanding.

The *Energy in Action* mobile learning experience offered another route to engagement for students in grades K–12. Through dynamic presentations, interactive exhibits, and hands-on activities, students explored how electricity is generated, how energy is wasted, and how renewable resources and everyday choices can contribute to conservation.

Across Massachusetts and Connecticut, the three implemented programs reported reaching **39,870 students** and **2,590 educators** through **533 performances** and booked interactive learning experiences. The reach demonstrates the scale of the effort; the engagement strategy shows how that reach began—with an experience designed to invite participation rather than simply deliver information.



EDUCATE

CLOSE KNOWLEDGE GAPS. BUILD PRACTICAL UNDERSTANDING.

Engagement captures attention. Education turns that attention into understanding.

Across NTC's 2025–26 energy education programs, pre- and post-program assessments examined whether students actually understood the key concepts related to energy, electricity generation, energy conservation, and the choices families can make to improve energy efficiency.

The results showed meaningful gains in knowledge across both program models. In *Energy Academy: The Power Squad*, students strengthened their understanding of foundational energy concepts, including renewable and non-renewable resources, electricity use, and the connection between conserving water and conserving energy. In *Energy in Action*, students reported greater confidence in identifying energy-efficiency habits, understanding how energy is produced, and recognizing opportunities for their families to use energy more efficiently.

"It was an absolutely fabulous program. It is important for young people to understand energy use. I would strongly recommend it to other schools."

Cheryl Anastasio, Middle School Teacher, All Saint's Catholic Academy, New Haven, CT

"We LOVED this program, it was fun and engaging. The students were laughing, answering questions and learning. This was evident by our post test."

Katie-Lynne Recinos, 3rd Grade Teacher, Smith Elementary, New Britain, CT

"Students "felt smart" when they were able to participate and know the academic vocabulary related to energy. It was a fun way to learn. (I think the teachers learned about how to bring excitement back into the classroom)"

Sharon DaSilva, 4th Grade Teacher, Thomas M Balliet School, Springfield, MA



EQUIP

TURN KNOWLEDGE INTO TOOLS FOR ACTION.

Understanding why energy efficiency matters is an important first step. Knowing what to do next is what makes that understanding practical.

NTC's energy education programs were designed to extend learning beyond the performance or interactive experience. Every student was sent home with a drawstring bag containing resources to reinforce key concepts, encourage continued learning, and bring the conversation into the home.



Inside, students found:

- **An energy-efficiency refrigerator magnet** — a visible, everyday reminder of energy-saving concepts, to be placed where families can see it and revisit the message.
- **A utility-branded notebook** — a practical item that connected students' learning experience with the utility sponsoring the program.
- **Educational materials** — supplemental resources that deepened the lessons and gave students additional opportunities to explore energy efficiency beyond the initial experience.

FROM LESSON TO LIVING ROOM

By sending every student home with these resources, the program created an opportunity for learning to travel beyond the classroom. Students could share materials with family members, revisit energy-saving concepts, and introduce ideas about energy efficiency into everyday conversations.

EXPAND

TAKE LEARNING BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

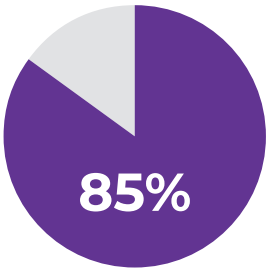
A single experience can spark curiosity. Reinforcement gives that curiosity room to grow.

NTC's energy education programs were designed to create opportunities for learning to continue beyond the initial performance or interactive experience. Through supplemental educational materials, classroom discussion, and take-home resources, students could revisit key concepts, connect lessons to everyday life, and share what they learned with others.

FROM STUDENT TO CLASSROOM

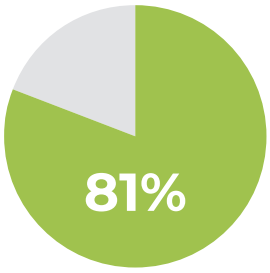
NTC's energy education programs were designed to create opportunities for learning to continue beyond the initial performance or interactive experience. Through supplemental educational materials, classroom discussion, and take-home resources, students could revisit key concepts, connect lessons to everyday life, and share what they learned with others.

Educator feedback showed that these resources were being used beyond the initial program:



of Massachusetts educators

surveyed reported using the supplemental print or digital materials following *Energy Academy: The Power Squad*.



of Connecticut educators

surveyed reported using printed supplemental materials following *Energy Academy: The Power Squad*.

These findings point to an important part of effective educational programming: the experience can capture attention, while teachers and supplemental resources help keep the learning active.

FROM CLASSROOM TO HOME

Learning about energy efficiency becomes more personally relevant when students can connect it to the choices they make in their own homes.

Take-home materials provided a tangible bridge between school and family life. Students could share what they learned, revisit energy-efficiency concepts with family members, and introduce questions about everyday energy use into household conversations. The goal is to make energy education more than a lesson students remember at school. It is to give them concepts and resources they can bring into the places where daily habits take shape.

BUILDING A PATHWAY TO ACTION

Extending learning creates more opportunities for awareness to turn into practical understanding—and for students to bring that understanding to the people around them.

Classroom reinforcement, supplemental materials, and family conversations are all meaningful parts of that pathway. They help connect a structured educational experience with the real-world decisions the pursuit of energy efficiency asks people to consider.



MEASURE

MEASUREMENT BEYOND THE TEST

Student assessments are one part of the evaluation process. Educator feedback provides another perspective on whether the program supports classroom learning and engagement. Across the three program implementations, educators reported strong educational value and interest in continued participation:

IN MA:

6.5/7
average educational value score given to *Energy Academy: The Power Squad*
(1 being lowest value and 7 being highest value)

99%
of surveyed educators wanted to host the *Energy Academy: The Power Squad* again at a future date

IN CT:

100%
of surveyed educators wanted to host the *Energy Academy: The Power Squad* again at a future date

6.7/7
average educational value score given to *Energy in Action*
(1 being lowest value and 7 being highest value)

100%
said they would recommend *Energy in Action* and participate again

KNOWLEDGE GAINS, QUANTIFIED

Across the energy education assessment results featured in NTC's annual impact reporting, students demonstrated percentage point gains in four key areas:

+37.1 students who could name at least three energy-efficiency habits

+34.2 students who understood how the time of day affects how much energy an appliance uses

+31.2 students who could identify at least three ways energy is produced

+31.2 students who could identify at least one way their family could improve energy efficiency at home

These results show progress in students' knowledge and awareness across energy concepts, and point to an important connection: **students were able to recognize not only how energy works, but where it intersects with everyday life.**



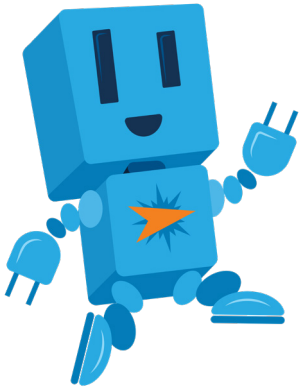
THE NEXT CHAPTER OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY STARTS WITH EDUCATION.

Meaningful change begins when people first understand why it matters—and then feel equipped to make a difference.

Through engaging experiences, practical resources, and measurable learning outcomes, NTC and its utility partners are building a foundation for greater energy awareness among students, educators, and families.

The results demonstrate that energy education can close knowledge gaps and connect complex concepts to everyday choices. The next opportunity is to continue to build on that foundation: reinforcing learning, supporting action, and measuring what changes over time.

Because when education leads to understanding, and understanding creates opportunities for action, we begin to build a future where energy efficiency becomes more than a lesson, it becomes a way of life.



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