

**Steffan  
Soule**



**A Touch  
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**Waste Prevention and Recycling Entertaining-Fun-Magical Assembly Program  
By Steffan Soule, A Touch of Magic, Inc.**

**Background**

Steffan Soule performs magic shows and magic seminars nationally for corporate events, schools and trade shows through his company, A Touch of Magic, Inc. ("ATOM"). Since 1990, ATOM has provided Steffan Soule's educational assembly programs such as "The Magic of Recycling" and "The Magic of Our Water" for schools and educational events every year. Steffan Soule's magic is part of a Kennedy Center Award for the arts and is highly integrated with the curriculum he presents.

Steffan has performed his show entitled "The Magic of Recycling" for Seattle Solid Waste Utility, Seattle Public Elementary Schools, Snohomish County Solid Waste, Spokane Solid Waste, The Washington State Department of Ecology, The Bend Oregon Recycling Group, Oregon Green Schools and many more. The show has enjoyed an overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, educators and administrators alike as measured by the highest rankings it received from hundreds of evaluation forms. Yakima County even reported a significant increase in the amount of recyclable materials collected after a tour of Steffan's show in their area.

Steffan Soule and his partner, Barbara Halliday have scheduled and performed between 150 and 500 magic performances every year since 1998. Barbara Halliday, Business Manager for ATOM and formerly an elementary school librarian, schedules ATOM's performances and performs in Steffan Soule's Grand Illusion stage shows.

**The Magic of Recycling**

The goal of this show is to educate elementary school children about recycling and waste reduction by giving them an entertaining program with a message about recycling. The message includes specific information about what each individual can do to be a recycler, why recycling is important and how each school is recycling and reducing waste. The information from the assembly program is reinforced through experience as each student begins or continues to recycle at home and at school.

Steffan, the performer on stage, motivates the children in the audience to be recyclers by presenting an image they can identify with. The image is tied into the magic he is demonstrating: When the students see amazing and magical transformations that resemble the transformations that occur through recycling, they become the magician every time they recycle. Because Steffan is enthusiastic and excited about his magic and recycling, the students have a chance to relate to the value of recycling through the image of Steffan, the Recycling Magician. So, the students enjoy waste reduction because it helps care for our natural resources, and because they are like the Magician when they recycle.

Steffan customizes his show for every client to make the presentation pertain to specific ways to reduce waste in the community in which the audience lives. By contracting a proven successful show and customizing it to deliver the message, Steffan's clients make the most

efficient possible impact on the students and contribute a top notch professional and polished experience for the teachers, the press and the community.

It takes years to refine a show to this level. This show combines every moment of important information with an incredible, magical, memorable effect. It moves at a fast pace with no down time: every idea connects to the next, and every visual effect ties into the ideas of waste reduction. This can only be achieved through repetition and refinement or continuous improvement over time. Steffan has performed the recycling show an aggregate of over 250 times to over 80,000 school children over 15 years.

### **Additional Information**

Follow up materials can be provided at the assembly performance. These materials help the teachers and students connect the ideas in the show with the study of the curriculum. Steffan Soule's follow up worksheets consist of magic tricks that the students can make in class. By providing magic effects as activities on the handouts with themes that relate to the content, the students are motivated to continue learning and connecting with the handouts.

The Magic of Recycling (script and effects) works equally well for any combination of grades and audience sizes in schools of K-5. Steffan adapts his presentation style to thoroughly engage audiences of any combination, even grades K through 8 at alternative and private schools. This gives schools more options which helps with the scheduling and booking of performances.

The show requires one hour to set up, 40 minutes to perform and one hour to take down. It comes complete with a high quality sound system and Magic of Recycling backdrop. Two performances can be given per day at two different schools or at the same school.

There is a multi dimensional, interdisciplinary aspect of the assembly program. The fact that the show is a theatrical magic show performed by a professional magician/actor has educational value. In other words, the school is also getting a performing arts experience.

### **Additional Experience / References**

Steffan organized a recycling program while he was in the 8th grade. Steffan has studied recycling and waste reduction in order to prepare his shows on recycling, however, in 1989, owing to personal interest, he began creating a theme show on recycling prior to any requests by potential clients for him to do so. He does recycle at home and at the office.

Barbara Halliday, Business Manager, manages the operations and productions for A Touch of Magic. Barbara Halliday has worked for ATOM since 1995. Prior to this she was a Children's Librarian with Northshore School District for 11 years. In 1995, Barbara managed the fundraising for the Magic Fund at Seattle Children's Theatre (SCT) which raised \$70,000 to build the magic in the Kennedy Center Award winning play based on Steffan's original magic illusions. Barbara Halliday has since managed the operations of ATOM's magic for five world premiere shows for young audiences. These shows are now published, and produced nation wide while ATOM holds the copyright to the magic.

Below are Magic of Recycling Show Projects / References:

Jetta Antonakos, Assembly Coordination and Development, Seattle Public Utilities – Currently in Maine. Jetta.Antonakos@gmail.com (First developing client for this show. We stay in contact and have not worked within the past 5 years on this show.)

Terri Washburn, Solid Waste Specialist and Education Outreach Coordinator, Kitsap County Public Works Solid Waste Division / Twashbur@co.kitsap.wa.us / 360-337-4472 (Ongoing performances annually since 2002. Managed by Steffan Soule and Barbara Halliday. Steffan prepares and performs the shows. Barbara manages scheduling. Terri contacts the schools.)

Here is what Kitsap's website says at [http://www.kitsapgov.com/sw/re\\_special.htm](http://www.kitsapgov.com/sw/re_special.htm):

The Magic of Recycling, performed by Steffan Soule a professional Northwest magician, is an award winning show aimed at student audiences learning about recycling and waste reduction. Steffan tears a piece of paper into pieces then instantly "recycles" it while he explains the process and benefits of recycling. "It takes 17 trees to make one ton of paper. Every time you recycle a ton of paper you are saving our forest and our environment," he says while unfolding the torn paper into one whole piece.

The interactive performance gets students involved as he requests student volunteers to help him recycle a glass bottle by magic and to balance a student in mid air while expressing the need for us to balance our use of resources. Recycling seems magical as the show inspires wonder, curiosity, and encourages learning. Children have been captivated by Soule's magic for several years at the Kitsap Water Festival, and relate to his message because they identify with the ability to make a change.

Ann Murphy, Recycling Education Specialist, Spokane Regional Solid Waste System / [AMurphy@SpokaneCity.org](mailto:AMurphy@SpokaneCity.org) / 509-625-6535 (Over 50 performances in 2003 and 2004. Managed by Steffan Soule and Barbara Halliday. Steffan prepared and performed the shows. Barbara managed scheduling. Ann contacted the schools.)

Dennis Durbin, Solid Waste Supervisor, Stevens County Public Works / [ddurbin@co.stevens.wa.us](mailto:ddurbin@co.stevens.wa.us) (509) 738-6106 (Six performances in 2004.)

For more information and additional references, visit us world wide at [www.steffansoule.com/recycling](http://www.steffansoule.com/recycling).