



*"As part of Intel's long-term sustainability efforts, the company will pilot a plan to 'catch' and donate a portion of the plastic bottle caps discarded at one of our Intel buildings to the Treasures 4 Teachers organization. This is just one example of Intel and its employees giving back to the community where they work and live." -Deb Schmidt*

approach to recycling and reusing. In a recent interview with T4T, we learn about a fantastic new concept aimed at gathering manipulatives for teachers near and far:

**What is the "Cap Catcher" idea and concept?**

The Cap Catcher™ is a simple concept but one that will make a difference in the world.

Keep a reused large, clean container in your kitchen, on your desk, in your car and wherever bottles are being recycled to "catch the caps" before the bottles go into the recycle bin.

These caps can be reused for games, art, manipulatives, math, language and many other uses by donating them to a teacher.

**Who came up with this idea and how?**

Barbara Blalock has been "catching caps" for over 20 years. She first started catching them as manipulatives for math

and art in the preschool she owned.

Barbara shares: "We collected the caps from water bottles, marker tops, shampoo bottles and any other cap you can imagine. The cap center was one of the most popular centers in the classroom for the children to visit."

Barbara was shocked to learn not long after that caps can't be easily recycled along with their bottles. Many end up in landfills, while others pollute rivers and oceans, where animals can choke on them.

**How does it all work from start to finish?**

Encourage anyone that you know to save their caps by collecting them in any old container. You might wonder what to do with the caps after the container is full since they can't be recycled. This is simple. If you have children let them use them for counting, sorting, art and any other creative uses they might come up with. If you don't have children all you need to do

is get them into the hands of a teacher. The teacher will appreciate this modest gift as a wonderful addition of creative, useful materials in his/her classroom.

**How is this going to help the environment?**

Encouraging and educating adults and children about the importance of reusing the caps will divert thousands, perhaps millions (if it "catches" on) from ending up in the landfills or in the stomachs of animals, not to mention cutting the high cost of processing them in recycling centers.

**Who does this concept benefit?**

The process of collecting caps can be highly educational for children...catching the caps while bringing to them an awareness of preserving the environment. It can also benefit the teachers who receive the caps as donations, of course, cutting down on their need to buy simple