

It's your planet



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For each generation, it's our job to take care of our planet in order for our kids and grandkids to have this beautiful world to enjoy.



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Today, more than ever, environmental issues are top of mind. But how do we communicate the goals and values to our kids, and get them to take part in helping care for Mother Earth?



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Recycle.

It's something we take for granted, throwing the plastic milk jug into the recycling container and putting it on the curb once a week. But knowing what you can recycle isn't really that intuitive.



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Sit down with your kids and have a fun little class on what can go in the tub and what can't. Plastic gallon containers (milk, orange juice, water) can, those heavier juice and Gatorade containers can, even 2-liters of your favorite soda. But not those plastic yogurt containers or tubs filled with butter. And be sure to take the lids off!



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Add in some fun facts about why it's important to recycle:

- * Recycling 1 ton of plastic save 7.4 cubic yards of landfill space.

- * More than 2.4 billion pounds of plastic bottles were recycled in 2008.

- * Even with all the convenient ways to recycle, the recycling rate for plastic is a lowly 27 percent.



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Water fun fact: A short, 10-minute shower, even with a low-flow shower head, uses 25 gallons of water. The average tub filled halfway holds just about 20 gallons. And who ever fills it half way for a kid?



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Take walk in the woods.

If you're lucky enough to live near one of the creeks and streams running through our neighborhoods, spend some time with your kids walking alongside. You can pick up some trash while you're there, and talk about where the water's coming from and where it's going.



Once they realize that eventually we're drinking that water, it will make them think twice about what chemicals and cleaning products go down the drains at home. You can take it a step further by heading out of town to a state park or natural area. There you not only get a chance to see a great waterway, but also the fish and wildlife that depend on it for their livelihood.



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