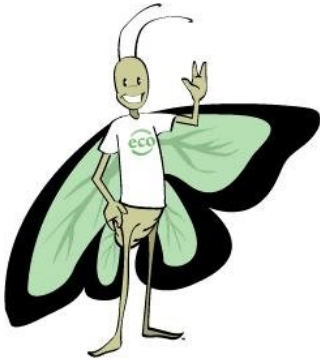


REDUCE ... LESS IS MORE!

by Eco the Butterfly



Hi, everybody! It's me, Eco the Butterfly. I want to talk to you about things we can all do to keep the world a beautiful and healthy place. Kids are an important part of keeping the world clean and teaching grown-ups about good eco habits. You guys are the best at setting an example for your families and sharing your knowledge about reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Reusing and recycling are both important parts of helping the environment. But the first step is reducing. Reducing waste can sound like a complicated idea, but what it really means is using and buying less and using what you have as long as you can so there is less waste at the end.

Kids can do a lot to recycle and reuse, but what can they do to reduce?

Well, two the big parts of reducing are buying less and taking care of the things you have.

When you buy something at the store, like a toy or a snack, the wrapper or the box generally gets thrown away. Even if you recycle the wrapper, that takes energy, too.

When you are shopping, look for things that have less packaging or packaging that is easily recycled. A stuffed animal with a small tag, for example, has less waste than a stuffed animal that is in a big box covered with plastic. A snack in a plastic wrapper has more waste than an apple. (Plus, an apple core will turn back into dirt while a plastic wrapper will be a piece of garbage forever!)

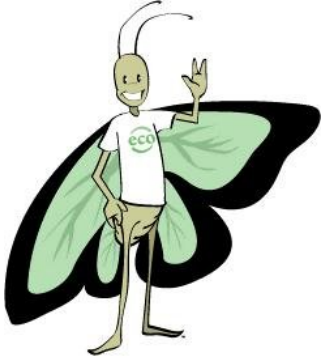
Once you have something new, take care of it so it doesn't become waste. Putting away toys, crayons, books and clothes keeps them from getting broken or ruined. The longer they stay new, the longer you can use them and the less waste you have created.

Reducing also means using fewer resources such as electricity and water. Turn off the TV or video games and read or play outside instead to save electricity. Turn off the water while you brush your teeth or soap your hands to save water.

Try to reduce the amount of garbage you create every day and the amount of energy you use every day. By making thoughtful choices in the beginning, you can reduce the amount of waste in the end. If everyone uses less, there will be more for everyone to share!

REUSE YOU IDEAS

by Eco the Butterfly



Hey everyone! It's me, Eco the Butterfly.

Kids, I need you to put your brains to work because we are going to talk about reusing. Reusing means getting the most out of everything you buy before you decide to recycle it or throw it away. It can be a really fun way to help the planet.

There are rules about what can be recycled at the recycling plant, but there are no rules about how you can recycle and reuse the things in your own home. When you reuse something, you are not only preventing something from going into the trash, you are also saving the energy, time, materials and money it would take to make or buy something new.

Making changes can be a fun challenge! You can be really creative and find all kind of ways to reuse stuff that you would usually see as junk.

That can mean something as small as coloring on both sides of a piece of paper. Or you can use paper or plastic grocery bags for trash or recyclables instead of buying new plastic bags.

Carry cloth napkins in your school lunch box instead of paper.

Help your parents start a compost heap in your yard, or start one at your school. Food scraps and paper can be turned into healthy soil that is great for plants.

Wrap presents in newspaper or paper bags and color the designs yourself.

Wash plastic containers you might throw away and use them for other things such as storing leftovers, making pet dishes, playing in the sandbox or storing crayons or other small toys.

Once you have used something all up, see if you can recycle it.

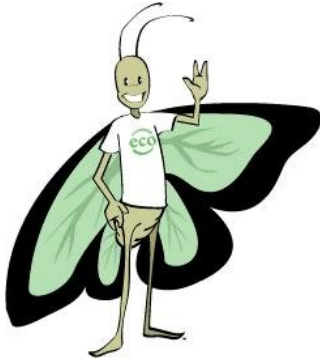
Parents can help, too. When you have outgrown your clothes or toys, parents can donate these things to charities who will pass them on to people who need them. Or you can hand them down to other families. Try shopping at second hand stores to get the things you need instead of buying them new. Or have a neighborhood swap sale where everyone can trade for the things they want.

When you and your parents are shopping, look for items that will last a long time so you can use them again and again before they have to be recycled or put in a landfill.

Use your brain and get creative! Share all of your good ideas for reusing with the people around you so they can help save the planet. Your ideas can be reused and recycled, too!

EVERYBODY PITCH IN

by Eco the Butterfly



Hi! I'm Eco the Butterfly. Do you like playing outside and having fun? I do, too! So I want to do everything I can to keep our world beautiful and healthy for kids and their families, and all of you can help!

One important thing we can do to keep the air fresh and the planet happy is to recycle the things we use everyday instead of throwing them away.

Next time you are going to throw something away, think about how it could become something new. Recycling means taking something that might go into the trash and changing it into something that is useful again.

Lots of things that look like old junk can become fun and useful again through recycling. Old newspapers and boxes can be turned into new paper for drawings and books. Plastic bottles can become flashlights and skateboard wheels. Old glass jars and bottles can become colorful beads or can be used to pave roads!

Everybody pitching in can make a big difference. In the U.S., More than half of all paper, a third of all plastic drink bottles and almost half of all aluminum cans are now recycled. All together, almost a third of all of our waste is now recycled – twice as much as was recycled 15 years ago! That's because a lot of people and kids have learned how important it is and they are all working together.

Some places have curbside recycling. That means that if you sort out the recyclables, a truck comes and picks them up from your house and takes them to be recycled. In other places, you may have to take the recyclables to a plant or collection center.

If your family doesn't recycle yet, an easy way to start is by collecting your family's aluminum cans and paper to be recycled.

Then you can find out what other items can be recycled in your area, such as plastic bottles or glass.

Ask your teacher about putting a recyclable dumpster at your school where students and their families can easily drop off their recyclable items. This can even be a way to earn money for your school.

Recycling not only means less garbage in a landfill, it also saves energy to make things from recycled materials than it does to create all new materials. And when you recycle paper, you are also saving trees that would be used to make new paper.

The final step of recycling is to buy and use products that are made from recycled materials. When you buy recycled products you show that recycling is important to you. If companies know that people want to buy recycled products, they will work harder to recycle, too.