



## 5 Eco-Friendly Activities for the Family

Environmental sustainability is an important topic for the entire family. From young kids to teens, a commitment to green practices at a young age can yield measurable impacts over the course of a lifetime. To make going green a family affair, get them involved with activities that are both educational and fun. Here are some of our favorite and informative eco-friendly ways to entertain your crew.

1. **Walk a local nature path:** The motivation to “go green” starts by understanding the reasons why. Take the opportunity learn about nature in your area and go exploring! By experiencing and enjoying the Earth they’ll be more likely to want to preserve it. And not only is a nature walk a healthier alternative to watching TV or playing video games, it’s less time spent indoors and less energy used at home.
2. **Shop the farmer’s market:** Much food found in grocery stores is highly processed and grown using pesticides and other environmentally harmful methods. In contrast, most food found at the farmer’s market is minimally processed and grown using sustainable techniques. Take the opportunity to teach your family about the farm-to-fork benefits and make shopping the farmer’s market apart of your grocery routine. But don’t just drag them along — get them involved! Alternate turns selecting recipes or let them get inspired by items they see. Most sellers are able to provide information, tips and recipes involving the products they sell — something rarely available by the average grocery store clerk.
3. **Pack a picnic:** An outdoor picnic is another great activity to encourage your family outdoors while teaching them about making eco-friendly food practices — from what they eat to how they pack. Choose environmentally friendly food items (how about those fresh farmer’s market buys?) and use reusable utensils, tablecloths, cold packs, thermoses, insulated bags, pack and plastic containers when you pack. One big reason people tend to abandon reusable for disposable is the convenience and amount of cleanup in comparison. The other is making sure they’re clean in time to be used again. Involve your family in the post-cleanup but try to make it seem like less of a chore by playing music or even making a game out of it. The point is to spin the positive to create lifelong sustainable habits.
4. **DIY closet projects:** While there may be some more fashion-focused members in your household than others, teaching ways to up-cycle and repurpose old clothes will lead them to reconsider throwing away old items. Select items that can be easily repaired, salvaged or repurposed during your next closet clean out and pull out the sewing kit. If you’re not a seamstress by trade, online tutorials and local sewing classes are readily available. One fun project to consider is a screened t-shirt quilt, especially if like most families, your t-shirt collections seem to have accumulated at an exhausting rate. Select ones that are no longer worn until you have enough to stitch together a quilt. It will be an item that will outlive almost any clothing item and be a nostalgic reminder every time they cozy up.
5. **Plant a family garden:** Whether you want to grow vegetables, plants or both, a family garden is an opportunity to spend quality time together, teach responsibility and learn about botany. Assign each person with a gardening duty or even an area of the garden to look after. Enhance their by allowing them

to select their own items to grow, which will lead them to discover the science of it all along the way.