

AZA's 12 Ways For KIDS to Be GREEN!

- Reduce, reuse, recycle. Examine what you buy and decide if it is really needed. Then, think about ways to use things over and over again. If they can't be reused, they may be able to be recycled. Bring a lunch box instead of a paper bag to school. Use washable plastic containers to pack food, instead of plastic baggies that are thrown away. Trade toys that you no longer use with friends. Use both sides of a piece of paper before putting it in the recycle bin.
- Walk or take your bike. Think about walking or taking your bike, instead of getting a ride in a car, the next time you travel to school or a friend's house. Make sure you have a safe route to travel, and get your parents' permission first.
- Save water. We use a lot of water every day, water that wildlife also needs. You can conserve water by turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth or washing dishes. You can also take shorter showers. Try washing dishes with water in the sink, instead of letting the water run.
- Turn off the lights. If you are not using something, turn it off. Lights, CD players, computers, TV sets, and other electronics use a lot of energy. Make sure you are conserving by shutting off lights and turning off stuff that needs electricity when you are not in the room.
- Put trash in garbage cans. Litter makes parks and roads look bad, and it can be harmful to wildlife. Animals may eat plastic or paper that smells like food, and get sick as a result. Trash can also end up in rivers and streams, which is bad for fish and other animals that live in the water.
- Attract native wildlife to your backyard. Many animals need specific plants for habitat – food to eat or a place to live. You could work with your parents to plant native plants in your backyard to attract birds, butterflies, and even toads! Another way to help is by hanging a bird feeder to provide food for native birds. And you get to watch the wildlife show from your home!
- Recharge those batteries. Most of us use toys and games that have batteries. Ask your parents to buy rechargeable batteries so that the same batteries can be used to power the toys again and again.
- Green up your school. Talk to classmates and teachers at school about putting recycling bins for paper in every classroom. See if your cafeteria serves organic or locally grown food items. You can even start an Eco-Club to work with other students who care about the environment.
- Use cloth napkins and washable plates. When eating at home or on vacation, bring reusable plates and napkins. Check to see if there is a way to wash plates and napkins when you get back home, instead of buying paper and plastic that gets thrown away after one use.
- Start a composting bin. Some of the foods that we throw away could be composted instead, enriching the soil in our gardens. Ask your parents if you can keep a compost bin or worm bin (with a lid) to compost grass clippings, leaves, and fruit and vegetable peels. Over time, this organic mix turns into great fertilizer.
- Share what you know about animals and habitats with others. One of the best ways to make a difference is to tell someone else how they can help. Ask family members and friends to think about being "green" when they make choices. Together we can make a big difference!
- Visit and learn about places where wildlife live. Zoos, aquariums, national parks, wildlife refuges and nature centers are all homes to wild animals. You can learn about these animals and how people can help them by visiting these places with your family or with your school.