

Reduce Household Waste

School and media teach your kids about recycling and “green” programs. Are you addressing this problem at home?

Households produce 55% to 65% of municipal solid waste.

Each year:

- Over 3 million tons of tissues and paper towels enter landfills.
- The U.S. uses 40 billion plastic utensils. Most of them become garbage.
- 300,000,000 *pounds* of single use bags become landfill.
- Food scraps comprise 14% of municipal solid waste.



Recycling is necessary is a great family project that teaches problem- solving. First, have your kids tell you what they know about green programs. Then, assess your household waste. What becomes garbage, and what fills your recycling bins? Urge them to find solutions in books, magazines or on the Internet. Common tips suggest you:

Control the amount of waste you bring home.

- Avoid buying single-wrapped and double wrapped items, snack packs and single serve containers.
- Buy bulk food items *you use often*.
- Choose large bags of frozen foods instead of small boxes.
- Buy concentrated dish and laundry soap.
- Avoid buying produce in paper-board trays and shrink-wrap.
- Use refills on items like haircare products, laundry and dish soap and hand soap.

Compost food waste and use it for your garden, flowers and shrubs.

Composting eliminates fruit and veggie scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds and tea leaves in your garbage. You can also compost some types of shredded paper, grass clippings, leaves and twigs.

Buy less disposable items.

Use:

- Plates and silverware instead of paper and plastic. Wash and reuse plastic.
- Cloth shopping bags.
- Rags instead of paper towels for cleaning.
- Your own reusable dry cleaning bags.

Request emailed credit card and monthly bill statements or pay through your bank.

Repair clothing and household items.

- *Maintain* home equipment and appliances.
- *Donate* unwanted clothing, furniture and household items to charities.

Recycle daily.

- Recycle items instead of throwing them in the garbage.
- Search your community for places to recycle specific items such as computers and electronics.

Construct a doable, family-friendly plan. Watch the changes in your garbage and recycling. This family project teaches your kids that you *can* make a difference in your home, your city, your country.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

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