

1. **Educate your kids about environmental issues.** Watch documentaries such as [DisneyNature's Ocean](#) and movies such as [The Lorax](#) with an underlying green theme. The more they know, the more they'll understand the need to reduce waste. For more suggestions, including books, take a look at my [kid friendly selection](#).
2. **Turn down freebies.** In our consumerist society we're pounded with free goods. But every time we accept a freebie, such as a plastic party favor from a birthday celebration, we create a demand to rig more oil and make more plastic party favors. Once home, these items quickly break (making kids cry) and clutter our space and then landfills. Teach your kids to think twice about bringing things into your home and graciously say no to favors that they don't need and won't last.
3. **Declutter their wardrobes and toy chests.** It seems natural to want to spoil our kids with stuff. Yet, decluttering their space is a more environmentally sound thing to do, as it puts precious resources back on the market for others to enjoy while decreasing the depletion of natural resources. Teach them the benefits of decluttering vs. accumulating. Living with less allows them to pick up their room quickly so they have more time to play!
4. **Give them the gift of experiences.** Experiences don't break and last forever. They also teach our kids that *being* is more important than *having*. Consider activities instead of stuff as presents. Examples include tickets to a movie, a show or a museum, gift certificates to the local ice cream or pizza parlor, registration to a skateboarding or dancing class etc.
5. **Shop the bulk aisle with them.** Eliminating food packaging does not just make obvious environmental sense, it makes financial sense (Did you know that when you purchase a packaged good 15% of the price covers the packaging? That money could be used to fund an experience). And it's better for our kids' health too -reducing their exposure to processed foods and plastic packaging's toxic leaching. Let your kids fall in love with unpackaged food by letting them explore the bulk aisles and choose their favorite cereal and snack with you.
6. **Pack Zero Waste lunches.** Disposables are not only a waste of resources; they're a waste of your time and money shopping for them. Keep your money out of the landfill (save it for a family trip) and pack a waste free lunch for them: You probably already have all the reusables you need! A reusable bottle and container, and a dish towel to wrap them in [Furoshiki](#) style. The cloth becomes a carrier, a placemat, and a napkin all in one!
7. **Take them on a tour of your local sorting center.** Not only will they learn about what happens to their recyclables once they leave the curb, but so will you. You'll get to see firsthand why plastic bags and shredded paper are a sorting facility's nightmare.
8. **Include them in composting activities.** There is a composting system out there for every family's living condition (whether you are an urban, suburban, or rural dweller) and diet (whether you produce meat or veggies scraps). The worm bin in particular, is a great way for kids to witness the cycle of nature: feed the worms and watch them transform scraps into a rich soil amendment, which they can then feed to your plants.
9. **Get out.** What better way to teach the importance of conservation than going outside to enjoy nature and understand the reason behind being green! Let your kids connect with the outdoors through hiking, biking, picnicking, [camping](#), etc. They can also participate in litter picking events or habitat restoration projects: Their energy is always welcome!

[Ways to Celebrate Earth Day With Your Kids – Bea Johnston \(Zero Waste Home\)](#)

10. **Have Fun!** Environmental awareness should not make our kids feel scared about their future, but give them the strength to want to do their bit for the Earth. Kids respond best to our “lessons” through humor and play. We found that experiences provide a great opportunity for both. Stay tuned for upcoming posts about our family most recent adventures.