

Activities for kids

Zero Waste Challenge

Recycling and organics recycling

Toddler – Pre-K

- Use old baby wipe lids to make an easy [sensory board](#) of objects found around your home.
- Color [recycling signs](#) for your house or draw your own!
- Take compost or recycling out to your backyard or curbside bin together.
- [Make your own paper](#) out of junk mail, old drawings, newspaper or coloring paper.
- [Watch Mr. Rogers](#) explore how construction paper is made!
- [Watch Murray from Sesame Street](#) visit a recycling center.

Elementary

- Use paper grocery bags to create a “[recycling monster](#)” that eats your household recyclables.
- Work your way through a [Recyclo booklet](#).
- Calculate your household diversion rate (the amount of your waste that doesn't go to trash!):
 - $\text{Diversion rate (\%)} = (\text{Recycling weight} + \text{Organics weight}) / (\text{Recycling} + \text{organics} + \text{trash}) \times 100$
- [Make bookmarks](#) with a cereal box and materials you have around the house.
- [Watch a video](#) about how a local company, Dem-Con, separates recyclables.

Tween/Teen

- Learn about and [manage the backyard compost bin](#).
- Build and maintain a [worm compost bin](#).
- Learn [what you can recycle](#) and become your household's recycling champion.
- Attend the virtual Material Recovery Facility tour with your adults
- Take a field trip to your closest [Hennepin County Drop-off facility](#) with items you can't recycle in your curbside program.

Food waste

Toddler – Pre-K

- [Introduce your child to new foods](#) in fun, low-pressure ways.
- [Get your toddler involved in the kitchen](#) with mixing, kneading, or other simple tasks.
- Practice skills to clean up after a meal- put food scraps in the compost bin.
- Get your kids excited about [growing their own food](#) in a pot or garden

Elementary

- Visit a farmers' market or grocery store together and complete a [fruit and veggie scavenger hunt](#).
- [Pick your own fruits or veggies](#) from a local farm or orchard.
- Practice cleaning up after a meal- [store and label leftovers](#).
- [Help with kitchen tasks](#) such as reading recipes, measuring ingredients and peeling fruits and veggies.
- [Watch a video about reducing food waste](#).
- [Help put away produce, storing them for a longer shelf-life](#)

Tween/Teen

- Take charge of cleaning out the fridge and fill out a [Fridge check guide](#).
- Look up and help make a recipe based on the ingredients you have in your house. Stir-fries and soups are tasty options.
- Sign up for a cooking class offered by your local community ed.
- Put together a [recipe book](#) of family favorites to help with meal planning.
- Learn how to [reheat your favorite leftovers](#).

Reducing packaging

Toddler – Pre-K

- Help mix and shape [energy balls](#) for snacks.
- Find a snack your toddler loves that isn't bought in single-serve packaging.
- [Make your own playdough](#) at home rather than buy new.
- [Make your own bubbles](#).

Elementary

- [Pack your own snacks and lunch items](#) in reusable containers.
- Make a [no-sew t-shirt tote bag](#) to carry groceries and anything else that fits.
- Hunt through the bulk bins at the grocery store and pick one item to buy for a snack.

Tween/Teen

- Learn some [basic cooking skills](#).
- Make your own [stovetop popcorn](#) for your next movie night.
- [Make your own beeswax wrap](#) to replace plastic wrap and keep food fresh.
- Bring your own tupperware for leftovers the next time you dine out. Bring your own cup for a coffeeshop visit and refuse the straw.

Advocacy

Toddler – Pre-K

- Practice separating recyclables at home, daycare or school.
- Get outside and pick up litter in your neighborhood.

Elementary

- [Write a letter](#) to an elected official about what you want to see in the world.
- Read a book about [recycling](#) or [composting](#) to a younger sibling or relative.
- Get a stewardship scout badge or do a related project

Tween/Teen

- Use old magazines, newspaper or junk mail to [create a collage](#) showing the world you want to see.
- [Join or start](#) your school's green team
- Make a PSA or video tutorial to share on social media about something you've learned during this challenge.
- Volunteer at a local food pantry or kitchen using rescued food.
- Talk to a manager at your favorite store or restaurant about adding recycling or reducing waste.

Cleaning, personal care products and wardrobe

Toddler – Pre-K

- Donate toys [with your toddler](#).
- Help with basic cleaning tasks using reusable items like dust cloths, brooms or a small vacuum.
- Help separate out clothes that no longer fit.
- Visit the [Minneapolis Toy Library](#) to check out toys.
- Work on potty training to get out of diapers!

Elementary

- Read the tags on your clothing and sort by whether they should be washed in hot or cold water.
- Help mix up a [simple green cleaner](#).
- Try out using the bulk bins and refill your soap containers
- Learn [simple mending skills](#).
- Introduce your child to reusable pads along with other period products.

Tween/Teen

- [Host a clothing swap](#) with friends or family to get some new-to-you pieces.
- [Learn how to use a safety razor](#) for hair removal.
- [Get ideas on upcycling clothing items](#) you don't wear.
- Try a shampoo bar.
- [Make your own deodorant](#) and store it in a repurposed jar
- [Watch a video](#) about more sustainable menstrual products.

Community and repair

Toddler – Pre-K

- Visit your local library and discuss what it means to borrow a book.
- [Start seeds](#) for your garden.
- Share your toys with a friend.
- Say hi to your neighbors!

Elementary

- Shop for a sport at a [used sports equipment store](#)
- Bring something to a [Fix-It Clinic](#)
- Learn how to pump up your bike tires or help with basic bike maintenance.
- Learn or teach a [low-waste game](#) to play with friends or at a party.

Tween/Teen

- Host a [zero-waste film night](#) with friends
- Organize an [“essentials drive” for items for Bridging](#)
- [Organize a plastic film collection](#) for your school or neighborhood. Trex will provide a bench if you meet the 1000 lbs goal in 12 months.