

LIVING & MOVING GREEN - SUPPORT PACKAGE



Green Winter Holidays

During the annual holiday season we look forward to spending time with family and friends, hearing familiar music, tasting yummy treats, exchanging gifts and other traditions or festivities. While the holidays can be the most wonderful time of year, it's also the most wasteful time the year. From non-recyclable glossy wrapping paper to wasted food, human activities put a lot of pressure on the environment. There is also a lot of pressure to buy things for loved ones, including stuff they don't really need which contributes to consumerism and waste. In 2014, Canadians spent more than \$7 billion during the holiday season! Those purchases include a lot of packaging that ends up in landfills. By reducing waste during the holidays, you can make the holiday season more Earth-friendly. Getting creative with gift giving can be a lot of fun! For example, you can upcycle old items to make new gifts! These crafty gifts waste less energy and also save money by using waste as a resource.

There are a lot of ways we can waste less packaging, energy, and money over the holidays. Here are some great tips and ideas that you can share with school staff, students, family and friends, to encourage everyone to reduce their carbon footprint while having a meaningful and memorable holiday.

Action Plan

Show. The Green Schools [Holiday Wasteless](#) slideshow is a great way to start learning about holiday waste.

Learn. Find out more about the consequences of holiday waste. Watch some of the videos listed below.

Discuss. Talk about ways we can reduce waste at this time of year. What are some ways to decrease our impact?

Reduce, reuse and recycle gifts and decorations. Instead of buying brand new gifts, encourage students and their families to consider buying used items or making homemade gifts for their loved ones. With a little bit of time and effort at thrift stores and antique shops, you'll be sure to find a unique gift for everyone on your list. You could hold a Holiday Gift Swap at your school. Encourage families of students to send in any unwanted clothing, decorations or other items that are in good condition and might make a nice gift. Students can swap their old things for something new to give! Ask your Engagement Officer for the Clothing Swap Support Package, it can be used as a guide for any type of swap. Unclaimed items can be donated to local charities.



Get creative. Help students craft their own gifts and decorations that have a personal touch. Check out the [Green Schools NS Green Holiday Pinterest Board](#) for some great ideas. Homemade decorations can be reused year after year. Some fun ideas include [kid art tea towels](#), [mason jar snow globes](#), [DIY bath bombs](#), [festive holiday ornaments from recycled paper](#), and [cards from homemade paper](#).



Waste less. There are plenty of ways to reduce what ends up in the trash during the holidays. Instead of buying shiny gift wrap that is not recyclable, create your own simple gift wrap using [reusable bags](#) or [recyclable brown paper](#). You could even use a part of the gift, such as a [dish towel](#) for wrapping. Students can make homemade wrapping paper to wrap gifts for their family and friends. Opt



for reusable dishes and cutlery for your classroom holiday party. Skip disposable items at holiday parties, and furthermore, we can skip disposables every day. Cut back on unnecessary things, such as [plastic straws](#), for simple ways to waste less.

Save Energy. Switch to LED holiday lights to prevent energy loss. Did you know that 10 strands of incandescent outdoor light bulbs, lit for 5 hours/day for the month of December, can add up to \$40-\$60 in electricity? The energy consumed by the same number of LED bulbs for the same time costs only \$0.23! You can test different types of holiday lights in your classroom using an energy meter. In your math class, use this data to calculate the cost of the electricity consumed. Put your LED holiday lights on a timer to waste even less energy!



<https://greentex.wordpress.com/tag/led-holiday-lights/>

Other Resources

[Green Schools NS Pinterest - Green Holiday](#)
[Green Schools NS Upcycling and Green Gifts Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Stuff Swap Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Gift of Time Support Package](#)
[Green Schools NS Gift Coupons](#)

[Zero Waste Gifts on Pinterest](#)
[Holiday Card Crafts](#)
[How to Reuse Your Holiday Tree](#)
[Ten Ways to Celebrate a Green Holiday](#)
[7 Steps to a Sustainable Christmas](#)

Videos

[IKEA commercial-What kids really want for Christmas](#)
[Kids and Consumerism](#)
[Consumerism and Buy Nothing Day in a Kid's Perspective](#)
[The Story of Stuff](#)

Book

The Berenstain Bears Think of Those in Need - by Stan & Jan Berenstain