



Environmental Education at Home

The message from our children

The Government of Gibraltar has been delivering an Environmental Education Programme in Schools for the past five years. The success of this programme is down to your children and their teachers. We are continually impressed by the depth of knowledge Gibraltar's children have on environmental matters.



Government of
Gibraltar

Department of the
Environment

In collaboration with the
Department of the
Education & Training

In order to extend the good work being done in schools into the home, we are providing you with the following suggestions for your consideration and possible application at home:

Learning from each other



Tips for Parents

Leaving your TV on standby is not only adversely affecting your pocket but also the environment.

These days, we all know that conserving our energy is good for the planet but it also helps your pocket! In an increasingly technologically advanced world both children and adults need access to power for items like computers, mp3 players, mobiles etc. It is important to switch



things off. This is something your children are being taught at school and it would help to re-enforce this if you cooperate by not leaving electrical appliances on standby. Were you aware that a charger if switched on but not connected to your mobile is still consuming electricity? Similarly, if a rechargeable battery is left on charge continually it will reduce the life span of the battery.

Talk about where energy comes from

Together as a family, search in an encyclopaedia (or on the internet) for answers about where your energy comes from. Do they know how fuel is produced? Do they understand what kind of energy the cooker uses? Find out together - then let your children know that some energy supplies are finite, and they are running out fast.

Family action point:

If you haven't already - start to change your light bulbs to energy efficient bulbs. They are now available in all shapes, sizes and strengths. They use 80% less electricity than normal light bulbs. You could save as much as £65 a year on your electricity bill!

Further information on energy can be downloaded on the Department for the Environment website on www.gibraltar.gov.gi



Ask your kids about their ideas

Call a family meeting and discuss practical ways that you can save energy around the house. Try putting a big piece of poster paper in the middle of the table and get your kids to write down their ideas. Afterwards put the poster on the kitchen wall so

everyone can see it. Remember that this includes adults too. So, if your kids agree to shut down their games console an hour early, promise not to leave your TV on stand by every night, then see if everyone can keep their energy-saving promises.

Family action point:

Be careful and don't promise too much to start off with! Your children will expect you to live up to your commitments!

Have a Switched Off Evening

If your average evening sees you working on your laptop whilst the kids are watching TV, or playing computer games, then the chances are that you could all do with a carbon detox.

As a family, commit to one night a week where you all pledge to switch off the TV

and shut down other energy-guzzling equipment. Try and choose a family-friendly activity you could all do instead. Though they may miss the TV, don't forget that a story read aloud as a family can be fun. This will not only benefit the planet but your family unity as well.

It can be more difficult than you think to wean yourself off some addictive energy-guzzling devices. Start off slow and see how you get on.



An Eco-code for your family

Get everyone in your family on the eco-straight and narrow by drawing up your own Eco Code!

Basically your Eco Code will be the set of ecologically sound 'rules and regulations' you and your family choose to live by in the interests of the planet!

Saving the planet is a serious business - however you need to make sure your code is

achievable and 'do-able' by your family - for instance, completely avoiding car travel, plane journeys and any form of fast food is probably not going to be completely realistic - but walking whenever we can, choosing eco friendly holidays and cutting down on food packaging is something we can all do! Remember how we leave the world is our legacy to our children and grandchildren.



Look out for this eco-label on paper products during your next shopping trip

How Do I get the family onboard?

Like most things in life, stuff that's fun, interesting, stimulating and holds our attention is going to be much easier to take on as a 'way of life' than something that we see as a chore! Make your code fun and your family will follow it and everyone will learn from it!

How do I make my code?

Your code doesn't have to be a tangible object - it could just be a verbal agreement between you and your family, however, a poster or print out will be much more appealing to children, and they can then play a part in its design as well as its implementation!

What Should I Include in My Code?

That's up to you! It could be as simple as drawing up a 'recycle and re-use' poster to display above your waste bins, so your family know what disposal points are for certain items, what stuff is to be recycled etc or it could be as complex as an A-Z list for every aspect of your life! See next page for ideas!

Family action point:

If it's warm outside then why not have a picnic up the Rock or go for a walk to the Alameda Gardens, enjoy the outdoors don't stay at home watching TV or playing computer games. The outdoors is fun - and the only energy you use will be your own and you'll be improving your health!



Some ideas for your Code

So you're raring to go; you're going to recycle, reuse and...what else? Here are some ideas that will build a good basis to start your family's code on:

Recycling

We shall recycle everything we can. We will reuse old envelopes and the back of drawing paper. We shall donate all our old magazines to doctors/hairdressers/hospital waiting rooms. We shall crush and recycle all



our tin cans, foil paper, metal lids. We shall wash and re-use or recycle glass jars and bottles.

Reusing and Reducing

We will endeavour to reduce our waste by reusing as many things as we can. We will opt for re-usable sports bottles rather than throw-away drinks containers. We will not use disposable plates or cutlery for parties and picnics and other outings. We will attempt to mend and repair rather than throw away and replace.

Looking After Wildlife

We will help to protect our wildlife by clearing away rubbish and litter that could endanger them. We will encourage birds and insects into our city areas by looking after green areas of grass and plants for them to inhabit.

Improving air quality

We shall try and stop the increase in air pollution and reduce our 'carbon footprint' by walking, cycling and using public transport. We will shop locally and not make unnecessary trips by car. If we need to travel by car, we



shall try and set up a 'car pool' or share the journey with other people.

Waste

We will throw our litter in the bin!



Have a family brain storming session!

Getting ideas for your eco code, making it and sticking to it, should be fun as well as 'green' - it's not only a wonderful project to work on as a family but an activity that could benefit the whole world!

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