

# Protecting Our Environment

## Tips On Helping Your Kids To “Think Green”

(NAPSA)—From food and fuel to shelter and shade, trees play a crucial role in both human and the planet’s survival.

Consumers are surrounded by everyday products made from trees—from pencils, books, movie tickets, soap and perfume to even clothing and toothpaste. Trees also help reduce air pollution and conserve energy by shading our homes in the summer and acting as windbreakers in the winter. But what’s being done to ensure that these shady friends are protected?

Doubletree Hotels, along with The National Arbor Day Foundation, is helping kids to “think trees.” As part of Doubletree’s Teaching Kids to CARE initiative, thousands of elementary school students in the U.S. and Canada are learning about the roles trees play in our everyday lives and the many benefits they bring. All told, kids are planting more than 10,000 seedling trees across the U.S. and Canada this spring.

For those parents and mentors wanting to encourage their kids to “think trees,” here are a few tips:

- **Plant a Tree**—Take kids to a nursery and allow them to help pick out a young tree that is native to the climate/region. Plant the tree in a special location, assigning a responsibility (digging, planting, watering) to each



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person. Document the activity with photos, so kids can remember how small the tree was when they planted it!

- **Pick it Up!**—Encourage children to care for trees and the environment by picking up their own litter in parks and using the environmental 3Rs to “reduce,” “reuse” and “recycle” everyday items at home.

- **Create a “Family Tree”**—Just as moms, dads, grandparents and cousins make up a family tree, trees are the foundation of our global family. Work with your children to bring trees into the home by creating a “family tree” of your own. Start by tracing the hands of all family members on green paper, then cut out the shapes and hang them in clusters on a wall in your home. Don’t forget to design a trunk for your tree!

Keep your tree evergreen by inviting friends and neighbors to trace their hands, too.

- **Take a “Nature” Walk**—Walk with your child in a neighborhood park or on a nature trail, asking him or her to point out which trees have the biggest trunks, the longest branches and the most colorful leaves. See how many varieties of trees you can identify on your own. If you get “stumped,” consult your local library to learn more about the different tree species.

- **Make a “Ring of Life”**—When looking at a cross section of a tree trunk, you can tell how old the tree is by counting the rings. Help kids understand that trees “grow up” just like they do by creating “growing rings.” Draw a series of rings, each slightly larger than the last, on a large piece of paper. Attach photographs of your kids in each ring by age (e.g., photo at 1 year old in the center ring) to create their very own growing “ring of life.”

Remember, a small effort by adults to connect kids with nature and trees today can contribute to a healthier, greener tomorrow.

To learn more about the everyday importance of trees and making a difference in your own neighborhood, visit the Teaching Kids to CARE Web site at [www.doubletree.com/teachingkids](http://www.doubletree.com/teachingkids) to care or [www.doubletree.com/thinktrees](http://www.doubletree.com/thinktrees).