

# Pointers For Parents

## Getting Kids To The Root Of Community Service

(NAPSA)—It's easy to forget how books and magazines are made and where newspapers come from. It's even harder for kids to grasp how many trees are used just to produce cereal boxes and colored construction paper. Even with computers and electronic devices, it's estimated more than four billion trees are cut down in the world each year—a number 10 times larger than that of the U.S. population.

These startling facts certainly raise the issue of the importance of trees and how they contribute to the earth. As adults, remembering to conserve and recycle is an important way of life. What's just as important is to teach our children about the value of trees. As parents and mentors, it's critical that we ingrain these lessons at an early age.

For the second year, one hotel company is stepping up to the task, helping kids get to the "root" of community service by educating them on the significance of planting trees and caring for the environment. Doubletree Hotels, with help from The National Arbor Day Foundation, has created an interactive lesson plan on environmental responsibility for teachers and will provide evergreen tree seedlings to thousands of elementary school students.

This educational initiative is an extension of Teaching Kids to CARE, a community outreach program which pairs more than 100 Doubletree Hotels with local elementary schools and youth groups



to educate and empower children about making conscious decisions, including caring for their community. This year, Teaching Kids to CARE volunteers and children will plant more than 10,000 seedling trees across the U.S. and Canada.

For parents (and mentors) wanting to remind kids how important trees are and involve them in environmentally-conscious activities, here are a few tips:

**1. Plant A New "Family Tree"**—Take your kids to a garden or home store and allow them to select a young tree to plant at home. Plant the tree in a special location as a family, assigning a different task (digging, patting, watering) to each family member. Make sure to document the activity with a photo, so kids can remember how small the tree was when they planted it.

**2. Think Globally. Act Locally**—Kids should learn that planting even one tree makes a difference—a full-grown tree provides enough oxygen for four humans each day. Challenge your kids to create enough oxygen through new trees to support your entire street ...or neighborhood...or town.

**3. TREE-butes**—The next

time a family holiday (birthdays, Mother's/Father's/Grandparents' Day) rolls around, suggest to your kids that they plant a tree in that person's honor. Then help them decorate a special "TREE-bute" greeting card to let the family member know about the gift.

**4. Memor-Trees**—Just as trees can be planted to honor someone important in your child's life, remind them that a new tree symbolizes new life—and can serve as a memory of someone (family member, friend, pet) that has passed away. Additionally, groups of Memor-Trees can be planted to remember members of the military.

**5. Give The Gift of Clean Air**—The next time your child needs to take a creative gift to school—send a tree seedling for each classmate. Seedlings that are indigenous to your region can be obtained inexpensively (or free) from the department of forestry, or you can purchase many types of trees from The National Arbor Day Foundation ([www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)).

Remember, every new tree makes a difference: the net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day, according to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

To learn more about obtaining tree seedlings of your own 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.