

*Woodlands
Forest School*
INSPIRED BY NATURE

Family activity guide





Family activity guide

Welcome to our free 101 course designed to guide families towards a more environmentally conscious way of life. As parents, we understand the importance of instilling values of sustainability and respect for our planet in our children. In this course, we will explore fundamental composting, gardening, and recycling practices, providing straightforward and practical tips tailored to busy family lifestyles. We aim to empower parents with the knowledge and tools necessary to embrace nature in everyday family life, fostering a deeper connection to the world around us while reaping the rewards of a greener lifestyle. Whether you're new to these concepts or seeking to enhance your efforts, join us on this journey toward environmental stewardship and family well-being.

Module 1: Embracing Composting in Family Life

Lesson 1: Getting Started with Composting

- ✿ **Choose the Right Spot:** Select a well-drained area in your backyard for your compost bin.
- ✿ **Bin Selection:** Pick a compost bin that fits your space and needs, or make your own using wood pallets or wire mesh.
- ✿ **Balancing Ingredients:** Achieve the right mix of "greens" (nitrogen-rich) and "browns" (carbon-rich) for optimal composting.
- ✿ **Chop and Shred:** Cut up large scraps for faster decomposition.
- ✿ **Layering Technique:** Alternate layers of greens and browns to promote airflow and decomposition.





Lesson 2: Maintaining Your Compost

- ✿ **Keeping it Moist:** Maintain proper moisture levels like a wrung-out sponge.
- ✿ **Turning Regularly:** Aerate the pile weekly with a pitchfork or shovel.
- ✿ **Patience is Key:** Understand that composting takes time, typically several months to a year.
- ✿ **Troubleshooting Odors:** Adjust the balance of greens and browns if your compost starts to smell.
- ✿ **Harvesting Your Compost:** Once dark, crumbly, and earthy-smelling, it's ready to use in your garden.

Lesson 3: Composting Benefits for Families

- ✿ **Environmental Awareness:** Learn about waste reduction and environmental impact.
- ✿ **Nutrient Recycling:** Recycle kitchen scraps and yard waste to enrich soil.
- ✿ **Hands-On Learning:** Children witness decomposition and learn about organisms.
- ✿ **Critical Thinking:** Manage the compost pile, troubleshoot issues, and adjust the process.
- ✿ **Connection to Nature:** Develop an appreciation for natural processes.
- ✿ **Family Bonding:** Enjoy a shared activity with a common goal.





Activities and fun facts

Fun Facts about Composting :



Fun Fact 1: Did you know that every spoonful of compost contains more microorganisms than people living on Earth? They're the tiny titans that turn your scraps into soil!



Fun Fact 2: Speedy Soil Makers! Worms can eat about half their body weight in food daily, turning your leftovers into compost quicker than you can say "decompose"!



Fun Fact 3: Nutrient Nirvana! Composting creates humus, not the delicious chickpea dip, but the rich component that holds essential nutrients in a form that plants can use over time.



Fun Fact 4: Thirst Quenchers! Compost acts like a sponge, helping the soil hold onto water, which means less watering for your plants and more playtime for you and your little sprouts.



Fun Fact 5: Climate Crusaders! By composting, you're locking carbon into the soil instead of letting it escape as methane in landfills. In other words, you're a greenhouse gas guardian!

Compost Activities

So, are you ready to turn banana peels into plant feasts and eggshells into garden treasures? Here's your family's "Compost Quest" - a journey to make Mother Nature proud, one scrap at a time!

Activity 1 Compost Quest: Setup Station

- Snag a corner of your yard or a cool compost bin for your eco-base camp.
- Gear up with a collector's bucket for kitchen treasure (aka scraps), optional gloves for the dig, and a journal to jot down your green journey.
- Pop up that bin following its secret instructions, or designate a magical mound area for your organic concoctions.

Activity 2: The Scrap Squad

- Arm your little environmentalist with a bucket and a mission: to save those peels and grounds from the dreaded landfill!
- Remember, no meat, cheese, or greasy stuff – we're keeping it clean and green to avoid the mean (pests).



Activity 3: Decomposition Discovery

- Team up to feed your compost bin with a rainbow of scraps, mixing them with a sprinkle of "brown gold" (dry leaves and newspaper).
- Don those gloves and dive in – it's a hands-on quest for the bravest green knights and princesses!

Activity 4: Journal Journey

- Craft a compost journal with your kids, capturing every step as your pile transforms.
- Sketch, scribble, and speculate in your journal – it's a tale of turning waste into wonder.

Activity 5: Garden Gala

- When your compost cooks perfectly, let your mini-gardeners plant a veggie or flower fiesta in the super soil.
- Watch as your backyard blooms from scraps to splendor!

,And there you have it; you are on your way to be an Honorary Green Forest Member!
Your actions are more than just fun; they are a hands-on lesson in loving our planet.

Let's turn today's apple core into tomorrow's apple tree.

Happy composting!



Module 2: Gardening Adventures with Your Kids

Lesson 1: Starting Your Vegetable Garden

- ✿ **Choosing Easy-to-Grow Vegetables:** Select beginner-friendly veggies suited to your climate.
- ✿ **Sunlight Requirements:** Ensure your garden gets sufficient sunlight.
- ✿ **Preparing the Soil:** Loosen soil, remove weeds, and add compost for nutrients.
- ✿ **Planting Time:** Follow instructions for spacing and planting depth.



Lesson 2: Caring for Your Garden

- ✿ **Watering Wisely:** Keep soil moist, mulch to retain moisture, and water early or late in the day.
- ✿ **Mulching Matters:** Use mulch to suppress weeds and regulate soil temperature.
- ✿ **Feeding Your Plants:** Fertilize with compost tea or balanced fertilizer.
- ✿ **Pest Patrol:** Monitor for pests and use natural control methods if needed.
- ✿ **Harvest Time:** Teach kids to recognize ripe vegetables and involve them in harvesting.

Lesson 3: Gardening Benefits for Children

- ✿ **Reap What You Sow:** Learn about cause and effect in gardening.
- ✿ **Patience and Delayed Gratification:** Understand the time it takes for plants to grow.
- ✿ **Understanding Natural Consequences:** Witness the cycle of life and learn about ecosystems.



- 🌸 **Tolerance for Failure:** Embrace setbacks as learning opportunities.
- 🌸 **Nutrition and Healthy Eating:** Enjoy fresh, nutritious produce.
- 🌸 **Family Bonding:** Work together towards a shared goal.
- 🌸 **Environmental Awareness:** Learn about sustainability and soil health.



Activities and fun facts

Fun Facts about Gardening:



Fun Fact 1: Did you know plants really "listen" to the vibes? Studies show that music can influence plant growth. So, next time you're in the garden, sing along or play some tunes for your leafy friends!



Fun Fact 2: Earthworms are like the underground architects of our gardens. Their tunnels aerate the soil, allowing roots to breathe and water to seep more easily. Plus, their castings are rich in fertilizer!



Fun Fact 3: Gardening can be a workout! Did you know you can burn around 200-400 calories per hour while gardening? It's a fun way to get fit with the family.



Fun Fact 4: Plants are green because of their chlorophyll, which helps with photosynthesis, and they also use sunscreen! Certain pigments protect them from getting too much sun, just like our sunscreen.



Fun Fact 5: Vegetables can be regrown from scraps. Lettuce, celery, and green onions can sprout again from their bases. It's like having a veggie phoenix right in your kitchen!

Gardening Activities

Activity 1 Veggie Musical Chairs:

Assign a musical genre to different vegetables and play that music when attending to each. Maybe your carrots dig classical, and your tomatoes rock out to jazz!

Activity 2 Pollinator Party:

Create a buzz by planting a pollinator-friendly section in your garden. Choose flowers that attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators and learn about these creatures' vital role in our ecosystem.

Activity 3 Garden Yoga:

Integrate simple yoga poses with gardening tasks. Stretch like a tree while planting seeds or balance like a flamingo while watering plants.

Activity 4 Veggie Regrowth Science Project:

Use vegetable scraps to grow new plants. Monitor the growth daily and have the kids keep a plant diary. For example, cut beets or carrots from the top and put them in water to see how they grow.

Activity 5 Soil Health Treasure Hunt:

Learn about soil health by burying "treasure" (like biodegradable items) and dig them up weeks later to see how they've decomposed, teaching kids about composting and decomposition.

With a sprinkle of fun, a dash of science, and a hearty dose of family teamwork, your gardening adventures can cultivate not just plants but lasting memories and lessons for life.

Happy gardening!



Module 3 Recycling Together for a Greener Future

Lesson 1: Getting Started with Recycling

- ✿ **Know Your Materials:** Understand what can be recycled in your area.
- ✿ **Set Up a Recycling Station:** Organize bins for different recyclables.
- ✿ **Clean and Dry:** Rinse containers and ensure they're dry before recycling.
- ✿ **Reduce and Reuse:** Use reusable items whenever possible.

Lesson 2: Creative Recycling Projects

- ✿ **Educate Your Kids:** Teach them about recycling and its benefits.
- ✿ **Get Creative with Recycling:** Repurpose materials for arts and crafts.
- ✿ **Lead by Example:** Practice good recycling habits.
- ✿ **Stay Informed:** Keep up with local recycling guidelines.
- ✿ **Support Recycling Initiatives:** Participate in community events.





Lesson 3: Recycling Benefits for Families

- ✿ **Creativity and Resourcefulness:** Transform old items into something new.
- ✿ **Financial Literacy:** Save money by recycling and reducing waste.
- ✿ **Environmental Awareness:** Understand the impact of recycling on the planet.
- ✿ **Responsibility and Accountability:** Take ownership of recycling efforts.
- ✿ **Community Engagement:** Contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable community.
- ✿ **Hands-On Learning:** Develop practical skills through recycling activities.
- ✿ **Health and Safety Awareness:** Learn about proper waste disposal.
- ✿ **Empowerment and Advocacy:** Feel empowered to make a positive impact.



Activities and fun facts

Fun Facts about Recycling



Fun Fact 1: Recycling one aluminum can save enough energy to run a TV for three hours. Imagine your favorite movie marathon powered by just a few cans!



Fun Fact 2: Not all glass is created equal. Glass from windows or dishes isn't recyclable like bottle glass because its melting temperature is different. So, you can't just toss your old glasses in with the bottles!



Fun Fact 3: Recycling plastic is like a magic act. Plastic can take up to 1,000 years to decompose in a landfill, but recycling can turn it into something new in months!



Fun Fact 4: A ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees. That's a small forest for every ton! It uses 70% less energy than making new paper from trees.



Fun Fact 5: Your recycled cardboard could return to you as a cereal box. The average corrugated box contains about 47% recycled fiber. Breakfast might be crunchier knowing you helped save trees!



Recycling Activities:

Activity 1 Fashion Show with Recyclables:

Create costumes from recyclable materials and host a family fashion show. It's a runway of resourcefulness!

Activity 2 Recycling Bin Art:

Decorate the recycling bins with paint or stickers. This not only makes recycling fun but also helps kids learn sorting.

Activity 3 Paper-Mache with Recycled Paper:

Have a paper-mache crafting day using strips of recycled newspaper. Create sculptures or masks together, and discuss how recycling paper can help save the forests and energy.

Activity 4 Recycling Scavenger Hunt:

Make a game of finding items to recycle at home or in the neighborhood. Whoever collects the most gets to pick a family activity.

Activity 5 Junkyard Orchestra:

Gather different recyclable materials and create musical instruments. Then, jam out to the rhythm of reuse and recycling!

Let's turn our recycling routine into a treasure trove of creative, fun, and eco-friendly lessons, sparking a greener future with every bottle, can, and paper we give a second life.

Keep on recycling!



Thank you for exploring the intricacies of **composting, gardening, and recycling**, which enriches families' knowledge of sustainable practices and cultivates a profound connection to the environment. As they delve into these topics, families embark on a journey of learning and discovery, fostering a deeper appreciation for the natural world and their role in its preservation.

By embracing composting, gardening, and recycling, families contribute to a **greener future and experience the myriad of rewards that come with living in harmony with nature**. Through hands-on experiences and shared moments, they forge stronger bonds, instill valuable life lessons in their children, and pave the way for a more sustainable and fulfilling life.

