

Moms follow simple steps to go green
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May 13, 2007 - Some local moms are leading the charge in their families to be more environmentally friendly with just a few small changes. Mothers wear many hats-- but perhaps they're most cherished for the care they give their families.

"Mothers especially have that innate ability to want to protect and make their world perfect for their child," said Beth Aldrich, For Her Information Media.

Aldrich, herself a mom, is appealing to mothers to go green. A year and a half ago, she started "For Her Information," a quarterly journal that includes advice on how to live an environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Aldrich says each choice, no matter how small, can make a big impact on the environment. She shared some examples with Sara Ferniza, who had been interested in an eco-friendly lifestyle, but didn't know how to start.

"I found myself using and wasting a lot of paper towels. Now I'm more conscience of it," said Ferniza. "I try not to use disposable plastic. I bought glassware as opposed to plastic."

Ferniza says her goal is to cut down on the amount of garbage her family generates by shopping with canvas bags and replacing old burnt-out bulbs with long lasting, compact fluorescent lights.

For Sally Milito, being green means buying cleaning products with natural ingredients and no chemicals or making her own cleaning solutions. "If I need oven cleaner, i take my baking powder, vinegar and water and make a paste. It is more labor intensive; i have to scrub, but maybe I'll get some arm muscles out of it," said Milito. "I don't think anyone who uses oven cleaner doesn't cough when they use it."

Buying organic foods is how Kristie Edwards helps the environment, a concept she says that took some getting used to.

"It can be intimidating, overwhelming, it can be expensive. It doesn't have to be but that was my preconceived idea about it," said Edwards.

Edwards says she now makes eco-friendly and economical choices.

"Bananas have a thick skin so I don't have to buy the organic bananas, but as far as strawberries, peaches, that's where i will spend my money a little bit more on the organics," said Edwards.

Phasing in green habits little by little is the best way, according to experts to make a positive impact on your family and the world.

"Any step you take is an important step. any step you take is making a difference," said Suzanne Malec-McKenna, Chicago Dept. of Environment.

McKenna said don't be intimidated by going green or suffer from "environmental guilt." She said to make it easy, try one change a week.

For more information and tips on going green, check out:

forherinformation.com

cityofchicago.org/environment