



## GREEN YOUR SCHOOL, GREEN YOUR HOME TIPS FOR PARENTS

Green Schools Initiative works to transform the health and sustainability of K-12 schools. Parents can make enormous contributions to sustainability efforts, both at school and at home. We encourage parents to work with their kids and teachers, school administrators, school board members, custodial staff, and others to improve the health, safety, and sustainability of school facilities, operations, and curricula. There are also steps parents can take themselves to make a difference. Follow our Tips for Parents!

### Energy and Climate

- Have students walk, bike, carpool, or ride the bus or public transportation.
- If driving carpool, don't idle at school pick-up's and drop-off's.
- Inquire about the schoolbus fuel and emissions: promote bio-diesel, clean diesel, natural gas or hybrid school buses.
- At home, turn down your thermostat 1-2 degrees in winter and up 1-2 degrees in summer, switch to low-energy lightbulbs, and get an energy audit from your local utility to conserve energy and reduce your bills.

### Waste

- Pack a waste-free lunch with reusable containers and avoid excess packaging.
- Reduce food waste by packing appropriate serving sizes. Talk to your child about what they will actually eat.
- Promote healthy eating by reducing sugar and processed food, promoting fresh fruit, and buying local and organic.
- Promote healthy lunches and snacks at school, and an "offer, not serve" policy for cafeterias.
- Compost food scraps at school and at home.
- Purchase environmentally-friendly school and office supplies, using our Green Schools Buying Guide.
- BYOB: Bring your own bag and avoid using plastic bags.
- Green your school events and fundraisers - reduce disposable foodware, sell energy efficient lightbulbs or experiences rather than wrapping paper or candy.

### Toxic Pollution

- Promote "green cleaning" at home and at school. Switch to Green Seal certified cleaning products, and use micro-fiber mops and cloths.
- Promote Integrated Pest Management at home and at school to reduce the use of chemical pesticides.
- Avoid PVC plastic for containers, cling-wrap, notebooks, pens, paperclips and other office supplies, and other products. Avoid PVC or #3 on the product, often found next to the 3-arrow recycling symbol.

### Environmental Education

- Make time for your child to play outdoors and in nature. Unplug your child!
- Volunteer in your child's classroom and support the teacher in creating opportunities for hands-on environmental projects.
- Promote physical education, outdoor play, and green schoolyards, including school gardens and asphalt removal.
- Plan Parent Education events around environmental themes for parents, teachers, staff, and students.
- Have students write a regular environmental feature for the school newsletter.

### School Policies and Resources

Pass a school board resolution or policy statement to mandate healthy and sustainable schools.

Visit [www.greenschools.net](http://www.greenschools.net) to find out how to green your school.

