

Celebrating Earth Day



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Snapshot

Every year, Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd. An Earth Day Celebration can be used to kick off or add momentum to your school's Zero Waste efforts.

<https://bit.ly/eco-cycle-zero-waste-schools-guide>

Objective: Students will celebrate Earth Day as a way of honoring their efforts to protect the environment.

Age Groups: K-12th and adults

Setting: Classroom, School building

Project Duration: Vary by activity

Materials: Vary by activity



Why This Project Matters:

Earth Day was first celebrated in the United States on April 22, 1970 by 20 million people. Today, it is estimated that more than one billion people around the world celebrate Earth Day. According to the Earth Day Network, it is the “largest civic observance in the world”. Earth Day is a chance to focus on making positive actions for the environment. Through celebration, children may be inspired to learn more and make changes in their own lives.

Project Summary:

An Earth Day celebration can be used as an opportunity to bring Zero Waste practices to a classroom, school building and/or school community. It can be the public starting point to kick-off a special event or to implement a long-term project. It can also be used as a culminating event for projects such as a Waste-Free Lunch Contest or a special recycling drive. The entire week surrounding Earth Day, known as Earth Week, and the entire month of April, known as Earth Month, extend the celebration and allow for more opportunities to engage in new actions.

Implementation:

1. Choose a Zero Waste project you would like to implement in conjunction with Earth Day. See project ideas below.
2. Decide if a formal kick-off or wrap-up event will be needed for the chosen Zero Waste project. If so, determine if it will be in the form of a school assembly, class party, PA announcement, display case, festival, etc. Consider if any data from project results or progress will need to be collected and reported.
3. Gather materials needed for the project and the kick-off/wrap-up event. Secure a space and time for the event(s), if necessary.

4. Create promotional materials such as posters, announcements, skits, and videos for the class or school community. Emphasize the connection to Earth Day.
5. If it is not possible to implement a large project, Earth Day can still be celebrated with simple activities like singing “Happy Earth Day” (to the tune of “Happy Birthday to You”) or enjoying a healthy snack of fruits and vegetables at an Earth Day party. The main goal is to get students thinking about ways they can show appreciation for the environment.
6. When planning Earth Day activities, tie them to science, health, or social studies curriculum. Help students and the school community understand that saving the environment is good for the health of people AND the planet.

Extensions:

- Write letters to local businesses or public officials about why it is important to take care of the Earth. Thank them for any new actions they have taken to help preserve our planet’s biodiversity and natural systems.

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Recommended activities in this Zero Waste Schools Guide to implement and celebrate Earth Day:

- Eco-Wise School Supplies – Chapter 1
- Waste-Free Lunch – Chapter 2
- Refillable Water Bottle Project – Chapter 3
- “One or None” Paper Towel Campaign – Chapter 5
- Paper Reduction Campaign – Chapter 6
- Getting Artsy with Reuse – Chapter 8
- Reducing Junk Mail – Chapter 10
- Repurposing in the Classroom – Chapter 12
- Making Cloth Napkins – Chapter 13
- Green Cleaning: Non-Toxic Schools – Chapter 15
- Lessening Litter – Chapter 16
- Purchasing Policy – Chapter 17
- Schoolwide Recycling Collection – Chapter 18
- Special Materials for Recycling – Chapter 19
- Creative Crayon Recycling – Chapter 20
- Making Recycled Paper – Chapter 21
- Compost Collection – Chapters 23-25
- Conducting a Waste Audit – Chapter 30
- Zero Waste Field Trips – Chapter 31
- Compost Delivery – Chapter 32

Assessment:

On Earth Day, students will be able to state at least one action they can implement to take care of the Earth.

