

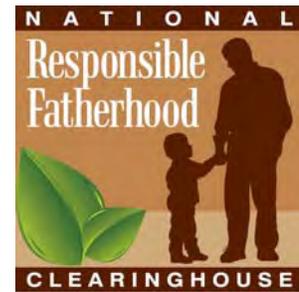


U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services
Administration for Children
and Families
Office of Family Assistance

NRFC Tips for Green Dads

www.fatherhood.gov

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FAMILY-FRIENDLY, ECO-FRIENDLY CHORES

Break the routine of daily or regular household tasks. Turn ordinary chores into an extraordinary chance to spend time and have fun with your children in an environmentally friendly way. Must-do, humdrum chores can take on new importance when they become opportunities for you to teach your kids responsibility at home and for the environment.

Shop for Groceries

Fruits and vegetables taste best when they are fresh, so select items that are in season and grown close to home.

Focus on Family

- Before you make your shopping list, go online with your kids and find out what fruits and vegetables are in season in your area. Together, create a week's worth of dinner menus based on available produce.
- Whether you live in the city or the country, you probably have a farmers market nearby that offers locally grown food, fresh from the farm. Take your children to choose fruits and vegetables for the week's lunches and dinners.
- You and your kids already have developed your seasonal menu, so why not cook the meal together too.

Eye on the Environment

- When food is grown and sold locally, waste associated with shipping is reduced.
- Buying from the farmers market helps support your local economy.

Clean the House

Make sprucing up the house an eco-friendly family affair, using environmentally sound products.

Focus on Family

- Prepare your own cleaning products easily at home. Go online with your children or visit the library together to discover simple recipes that let you clean green. Many of the ingredients – such as baking soda, lemon, white vinegar – are probably already in your kitchen cabinet.
- Challenge your kids to a cleaning contest. Find out who is the fastest with a broom or who can put the brightest sparkle on the bathroom fixtures.

Eye on the Environment

- Environmentally friendly cleaning products are also readily available in supermarkets or online. You might try different brands to decide which ones you prefer, but using any green cleaning products helps keep harsh chemicals out of our air and water resources.

Take Time to Be a Dad Today

Wash and Dry the Laundry

Going green on laundry days can have a positive impact on your relationship with your children, your wallet, and the environment.

Focus on Family

- Lead your kids in a scavenger hunt for dirty clothes lurking throughout the house. The person who finds and properly sorts the most dirty laundry wins.
- Follow directions you and your children find online to make your own laundry detergent with ingredients that respect our environment.

Eye on the Environment

- Wait until you have a full load before using your washing machine.
- Wash in cold water to save energy. Heating the water accounts for about 90 percent of the energy used in washing clothes.
- Use chlorine-free bleach alternatives.
- Buy a new energy-efficient washing machine, which can save water and save you hundreds of dollars in reduced energy costs over the life of the appliance.
- Warm sunny day? Hang your just-washed clothes out to dry on a clothesline. This back-to-basics method saves energy and helps you cut your household costs.

Go Green. Grow Green.

Whether your “yard” is a large open space or a set of glass jars on your kitchen windowsill, you and your children can enjoy gardening together.

Focus on Family

- Visit your local library or go online with your kids to discover what plants are native to your area.
- Plant a family garden, allowing each child to select a few species. They can make and insert markers with the plants’ names and their own names.
- Encourage kids to keep a daily or weekly garden journal, recording the steps they took and the changes they see as the garden grows.
- If your family garden produces fruits or vegetables, sharing some with neighbors or a local food bank shows children that responsibility can extend beyond their family to their community.

Eye on the Environment

- Become organic gardeners, avoiding chemical pesticides and fertilizers to help you keep potentially hazardous materials off your dinner table and out of the environment.
- If you have an outdoor garden, water flower beds and plants only when they feel dry, rather than on a set schedule.