

Is there a budding environmental educator in your house?

Is there a budding environmental educator in your house? At one time or another, many parents probably have had their child instruct them on the finer points of recycling. Kids learn the three R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) right along with their ABC's.

These days it is just as likely that children are coming home from school excited about watersheds, water supply systems and the importance of being smart about their water use.

An annual water-awareness event is one example of how schools are integrating environmental education into their curriculum with the help of a variety of regional partners. The 17th annual Children's Clean Water Festival held in April attracted over 1,400 4th and 5th graders to the PCC-Sylvania campus. The kids – students in 22 metro-area middle schools – were immersed in a day of fun, interactive activities that taught them about the science and ecology of water and ways to conserve it. Every 30 minutes students moved to another activity or presentation, including "Watershed Jeopardy," a fast-paced interactive game that taught students about watershed characteristics, and "Watersheds Rock!" where they learned about ground water and aquifers.

The Children's Clean Water Festival (www.cleanwaterfestival.org) is a community-supported event, organized by a dozen public, private and non-profit organizations, all committed to water issues and environmental education.

One of the partners and sponsors of the festival is the Regional Water Providers Consortium. Parents are interested to know that the goals of this group include planning for our region's water needs through conservation, emergency preparedness planning and water supply coordination.

But the Consortium has plenty to offer kids as well. From school presentations to fun and educational activities available on the Consortium's website, there are a lot of things kids can learn to help their families save water.

Designed for kids...but grownups can play too

The Regional Water Providers Consortium's website – www.conserveh2o.org

– has a section called the “Kid’s Corner,” which features fun games, booklets, quizzes and activities for kids. Some of the activities are suitable for young children; others are more appropriate for older kids. But everyone can become a Water Conservation Hero and have a fun time doing it.

On the Kid’s Corner you can:

- Take a room-by-room tour of a house. Locate places throughout the house and yard where you can save water.
- Test your water IQ by downloading and completing the “What do you Know about H2O” activity book.
- Download stickers and bookmarks.
- Play games: Washing Machine Basketball, Water Cycle Woop Dee Doo, or Dripping Faucet.
- Visit the Amazing Water Map.

Get free tips and tools at summer nursery events

Parents, keep an eye out for summer events at local nurseries and garden centers where Consortium staff are on hand to provide information about outdoor water conservation. Pick up a free watering gauge, booklets on water-efficient plants and learn the seven basic steps to creating a water-efficient landscape. Staff will have some kids’ activity booklets on hand too. Find out about nursery events near you and much more on the Consortium’s website, www.conserveh2o.org.