



Dear Counselling Corner:

This isn't really counselling related, but I will ask it anyway! Earth Day is Saturday, April 22. Do you have any ideas for parents so that we can support being extra environmentally friendly at home? Thanks!

Green Parents

Dear Parents:

What a great question, and good for you for taking time to focus on caring for our environment. There are a number of super fun activities which you can do with your children which are low cost and great for the environment. Chelsea Furlong, (see <https://runwildmychild.com/earth-day-with-kids/>) lists 15+ eco-friendly activities kids and families can do together to celebrate Earth Day. Here they are:

1. Nature scavenger hunt

Make a list of things found in nature around your home, neighborhood or a local park. Then go out for a walk or hike with the family and see how many items you can find. Use your phone to record items to save paper!

2. Neighborhood clean up

Grab some gloves and garbage bags and beautify your neighborhood by picking up garbage.

3. Family bike ride

Going on a family bike ride is a great way to get the family outside.

4. Get out on the water

Spend the day observing nature from the water. Instead of using something motorized, try a kayak, rowboat.

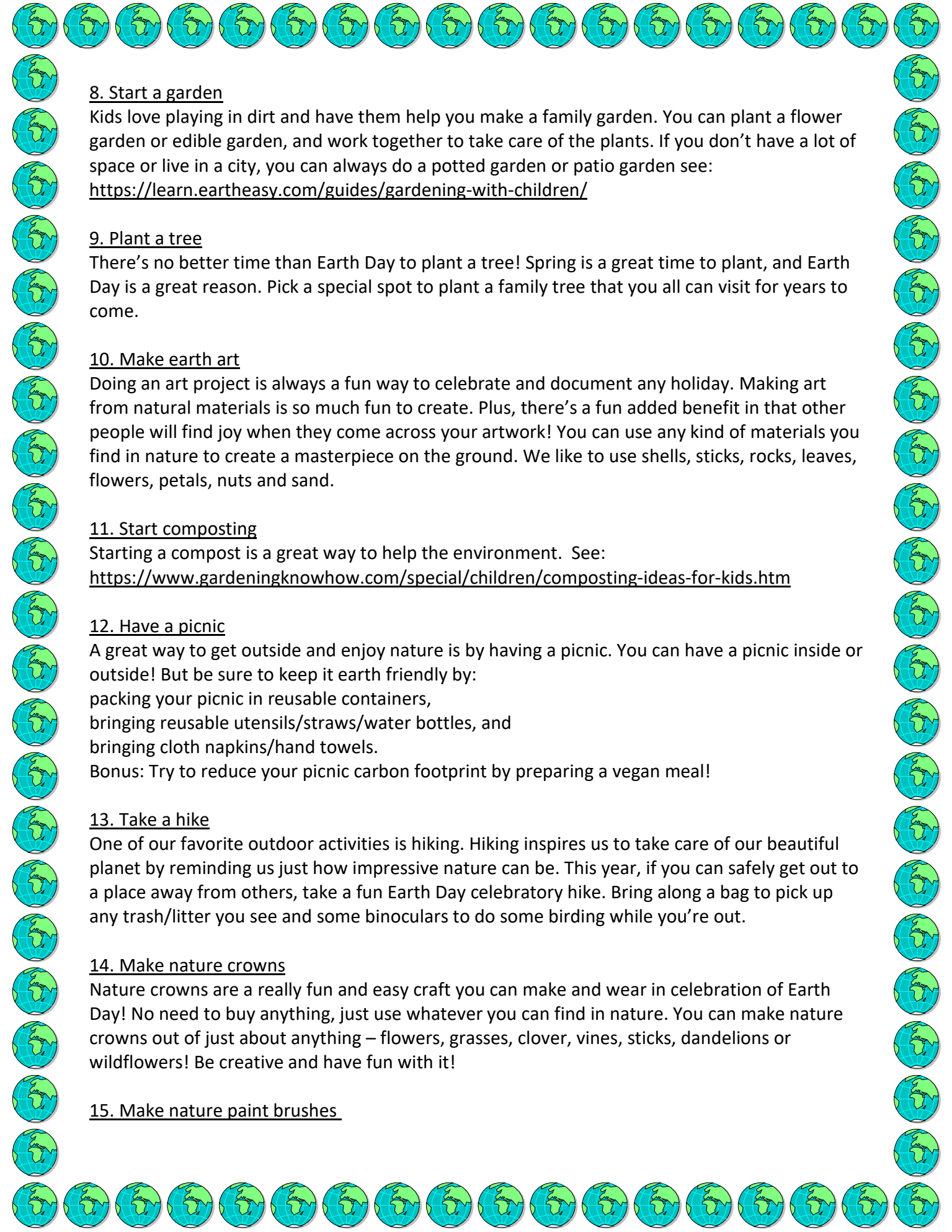
5. Make a bird feeder (see: <https://www.thespruce.com/diy-bird-feeders-5081999#:~:text=Empty%20plastic%20soda%20bottles%20or,you're%20good%20to%20go.>)

6. Practice Earth Day yoga

Celebrate Earth Day with kids by doing a special outdoor kid-friendly yoga session. Stand barefoot in the grass so you can feel the earth under your feet and are grounded. Breathe in the fresh air and feel the sunshine and wind on your skin (that's IF it stops raining!).

7. Make seed bombs or seed paper

Another great activity to celebrate Earth Day with kids is to make seed bombs (with clay) or seed paper using recycled paper scraps you have lying around the house or in your recycling bin (see: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-seed-bomb#:~:text=In%20a%20bowl%2C%20mix%20together,dry%20in%20a%20sunny%20spot.>)



8. Start a garden

Kids love playing in dirt and have them help you make a family garden. You can plant a flower garden or edible garden, and work together to take care of the plants. If you don't have a lot of space or live in a city, you can always do a potted garden or patio garden see:

<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/gardening-with-children/>

9. Plant a tree

There's no better time than Earth Day to plant a tree! Spring is a great time to plant, and Earth Day is a great reason. Pick a special spot to plant a family tree that you all can visit for years to come.

10. Make earth art

Doing an art project is always a fun way to celebrate and document any holiday. Making art from natural materials is so much fun to create. Plus, there's a fun added benefit in that other people will find joy when they come across your artwork! You can use any kind of materials you find in nature to create a masterpiece on the ground. We like to use shells, sticks, rocks, leaves, flowers, petals, nuts and sand.

11. Start composting

Starting a compost is a great way to help the environment. See:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/children/composting-ideas-for-kids.htm>

12. Have a picnic

A great way to get outside and enjoy nature is by having a picnic. You can have a picnic inside or outside! But be sure to keep it earth friendly by:

packing your picnic in reusable containers,
bringing reusable utensils/straws/water bottles, and
bringing cloth napkins/hand towels.

Bonus: Try to reduce your picnic carbon footprint by preparing a vegan meal!

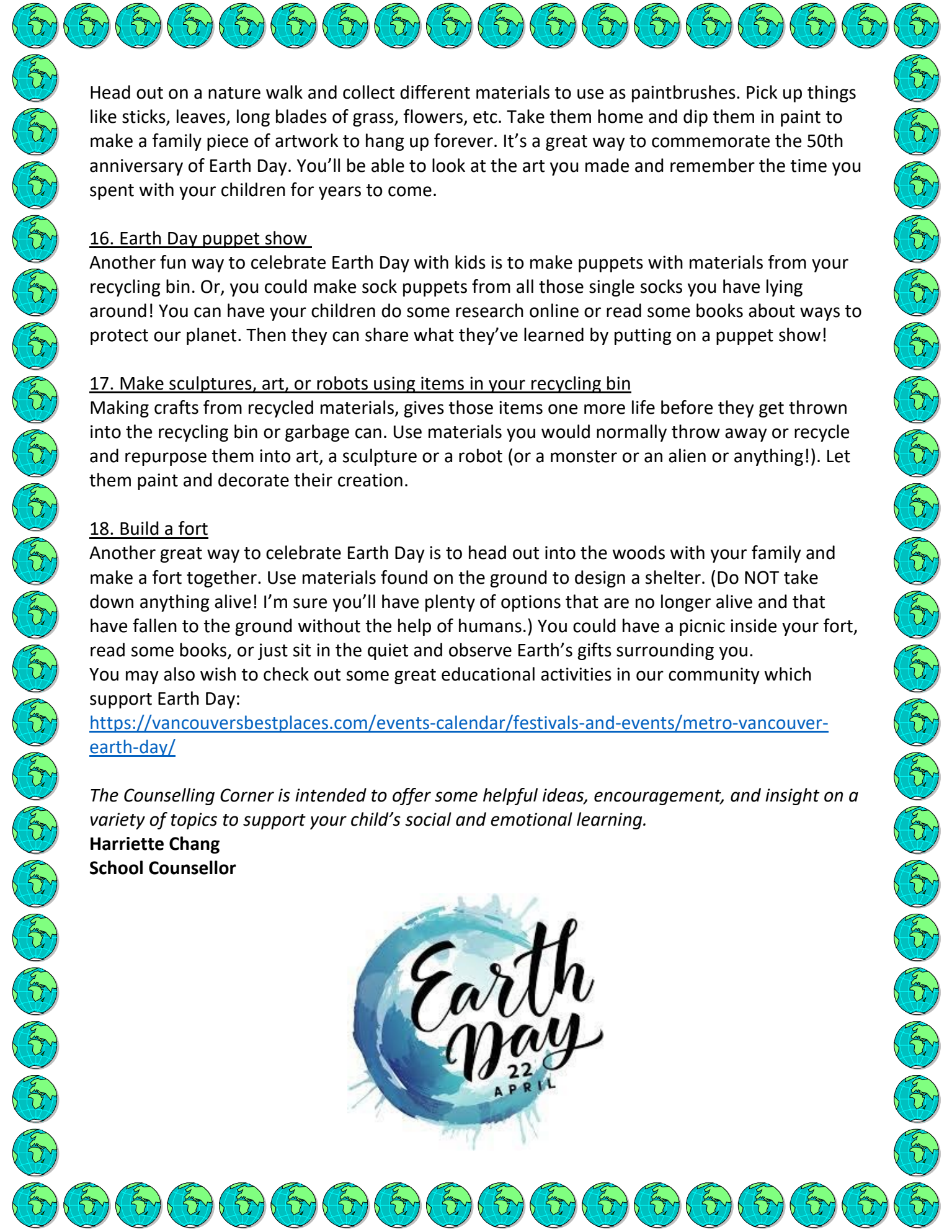
13. Take a hike

One of our favorite outdoor activities is hiking. Hiking inspires us to take care of our beautiful planet by reminding us just how impressive nature can be. This year, if you can safely get out to a place away from others, take a fun Earth Day celebratory hike. Bring along a bag to pick up any trash/litter you see and some binoculars to do some birding while you're out.

14. Make nature crowns

Nature crowns are a really fun and easy craft you can make and wear in celebration of Earth Day! No need to buy anything, just use whatever you can find in nature. You can make nature crowns out of just about anything – flowers, grasses, clover, vines, sticks, dandelions or wildflowers! Be creative and have fun with it!

15. Make nature paint brushes



Head out on a nature walk and collect different materials to use as paintbrushes. Pick up things like sticks, leaves, long blades of grass, flowers, etc. Take them home and dip them in paint to make a family piece of artwork to hang up forever. It's a great way to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. You'll be able to look at the art you made and remember the time you spent with your children for years to come.

16. Earth Day puppet show

Another fun way to celebrate Earth Day with kids is to make puppets with materials from your recycling bin. Or, you could make sock puppets from all those single socks you have lying around! You can have your children do some research online or read some books about ways to protect our planet. Then they can share what they've learned by putting on a puppet show!

17. Make sculptures, art, or robots using items in your recycling bin

Making crafts from recycled materials, gives those items one more life before they get thrown into the recycling bin or garbage can. Use materials you would normally throw away or recycle and repurpose them into art, a sculpture or a robot (or a monster or an alien or anything!). Let them paint and decorate their creation.

18. Build a fort

Another great way to celebrate Earth Day is to head out into the woods with your family and make a fort together. Use materials found on the ground to design a shelter. (Do NOT take down anything alive! I'm sure you'll have plenty of options that are no longer alive and that have fallen to the ground without the help of humans.) You could have a picnic inside your fort, read some books, or just sit in the quiet and observe Earth's gifts surrounding you.

You may also wish to check out some great educational activities in our community which support Earth Day:

<https://vancouverbestplaces.com/events-calendar/festivals-and-events/metro-vancouver-earth-day/>

The Counselling Corner is intended to offer some helpful ideas, encouragement, and insight on a variety of topics to support your child's social and emotional learning.

Harriette Chang
School Counsellor

