

Dear Earth
A Child's Letter to Combat Climate Change

10 Small Steps Families and Kids Can Do
To Reduce Their Environmental Footprint

By Michele Lilyanna



ML
-19

Just like adults, children may feel completely overwhelmed by the complexities of climate change. Included in this offering are ten easy and doable steps families and children can seamlessly adapt into their lives to reduce their environmental footprint. Though small steps for one child or family, together, these actions make huge positive changes for the planet.

*Dear Earth, your water with its purest taste
Is a gift that I shall not waste.*

How: I can take a short shower instead of a bath. I don't let the tap run water down the drain. I can get help setting up a drip watering system for gardens and harvest rain water.

*Magnificent trees give me air to breathe
I plant for you new baby seeds*

How: I will gather seeds in the Autumn. I can also purchase seedlings from the garden store and plant, plant, plant. Learn about plant life cycles and, when walking, thank the plants and trees for all they do to make our lives wonderful.

*Deep Earth, all your ancient fossil fuels
I will conserve like precious jewels.*

How: I can take reusable shopping bags to the store and use them. I will turn down the heat and put on a sweater. I can unplug electric items that are sucking electricity. I can have a special night when I turn off the power and light candles, inviting my family to play board games. I can make sure I carpool or learn to use public transit.

*To people whose labor brings me goods
I will honor them as I should*

How: I will make a commitment to thinking about purchases and sourcing ethically. I will learn about sweatshops and how to source how items are made. Once I know about my clothing, I can choose to purchase or not. I can share items with friends and shop in thrift store. I may fix clothes and upcycle to create new items. I will ask if I can pull out the sewing machine!

*Animals for food costs the earth a lot
I can choose food from a garden plot.*

How: I can turn to a more vegetarian diet. I will EAT my VEGGIES because eating more plants cuts down on the need for so much livestock and therefore there are less emissions.

*From soil, water, and abundant sunlight
I will source and grow food close to my site.*

How: I can plant a food garden on the land where I live or share in a community garden. If this is not available, I can try to shop at a farmer's market and try to buy local food. Local food means less air pollution from food transport.

*Abundant wind, water and air,
I keep you clean for all to share*

How: I will walk or bike as much as I can. By biking and walking instead of riding in a car, I can save carbon dioxide from going into the air—one mile a day has the same effect as planting four trees and letting them grow for 10 years!

*Valued resources, whether I am cold or hot
I will do my best not to use a lot.*

How: I can put on a sweater, some socks or an extra shirt when it's cold inside instead of turning up the heat. When it gets really hot, instead of using the air-conditioning to cool the whole space, I can use a fan to cool myself. I can also close the drapes to block the heat from entering the house.

*Dearest Earth, I will write, speak and shout
I will listen to others and send goodness out*

I can write letters of concern to local politicians and join “green” groups. I can start groups in my school that create positive change such as composting, energy awareness, no garbage lunches and caring for the planet. I can do small positive actions myself and be the change.

*Dearest future earth, no matter where,
I will think of a green career to keep your lands fair*

How: I will research possible “green” jobs. These jobs may range from planning drought tolerant landscapes to solar energy ideas. I may even create a career no one has thought of. I will think long-term about how my career will affect life on this earth and make my choices from that awareness.

*Dear Earth, your water with its purest taste
Is a gift that I shall not ever waste.
Magnificent trees give me air to breathe
I plant for you new baby seeds
Deep Earth, all your ancient fossil fuels
I will conserve like precious jewels.
To people whose labor brings me goods
I will honor them as I should
Animals for food costs the earth a lot
I can choose food from a garden plot.*

*From soil, water, and abundant sunlight
I will source and grow food close to my site.
Abundant wind, water and air,
I keep you clean for all to share
Valued resources, whether I am cold or hot
I will do my best not to use a lot.
Dearest Earth, I will write, speak and shout
I will listen to others and send goodness out
Dearest Future Earth, no matter where,
I will think of a green career to keep your lands fair*