How to ecourage your student to be sustainable

Sustainability is a focus of many schools these days, with students often encouraged to engage in practices such as packing 'nude' lunches, recycling and switching off lights when not in use.

How can parents help encourage their kids to be sustainable students?

Teaching your kids about sustainability and the environment will have a positive impact on the environment and their future. (iStock)

Here are eight tips from Sustainability Victoria:

1/ Lunches – get the kids to make their own lunch and use containers suited to nude food, eliminating the need for disposable wrapping. If you do need to wrap, reusable beeswax wraps can be used. Find out about them online or do a course on making them at your local neighborhood house or community arts centre.

2/ Make your own snacks – despite what they say, many kids have plenty of time on their hands. Teach them to make their own muesli bars and other snacks. Be patient, it's a great life skill. They will learn to be more independent and have fun doing it!

3/ Get more value – use the 'Love Food Hate Waste' website to get great recipes to use last night's leftovers in exciting ways for school (and work) lunches.

4/ Use what you've got– save money by digging out pens, pencils and other consumables from drawers, cupboards and bags, rather than buying new ones. Many stationery makers also have a range of notebooks made from recycled paper.

5/ Textbooks and uniforms – most schools have secondhand book and uniform shops, but your local op shop is also worth trying. Many high school English and literature books are available for free on Kindle. For other subjects, ask teachers what the difference is with this year's version of a textbook compared with last year's, as the older edition may still be suitable.

6/ Walking or riding to school is a great way to stay fit. It saves fuel and reduces vehicle pollution and traffic jams at the school gate. Otherwise, park a short distance from the school and walk with the kids and use it as an opportunity to teach road rules. Catching the bus may also be an option.

7/ Buying a desk, bookcase or filing cabinet? Second-hand office furniture shops often have very modern goods at a much better price than new and they will last. It is also worth checking out Facebook Marketplace for some great quality bargains.

8/ Ask your school to join the ResourceSmart Schools program offered by Sustainability Victoria. Supporting schools within the state to embed sustainability measures across the school facilities, community and curriculum, once a school joins the program, it will have access to an online portal to learn and practice ways of integrating sustainability while also saving resources and money for the school.

For more information and ways to have a positive impact on the environment, visit www.sustainability.vic.gov.au.

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