Helping educators use RYH resources

Invite to Use #BeingNotBuying #OptOutside

A class of UNI students came up with their own alternatives for Black Friday (the day after Thanksgiving). They were inspired by outdoor gear retailer REI's #OptOutside campaign.

In 2015, REI closed its doors, paid its employees, and encouraged both employees and potential customers to go outside—hike, snowshoe, breathe in the fresh air. They are doing the same this year. Students in a Fall 2016 Environment, Technology and Society course at UNI created posts encouraging Iowans to be intentional on Black Friday and this entire winter season. Almost every day until Black Friday, we are posting a photo and a persuasive call to get outside on the UNI Reclaim Your Holidays Facebook page.

From there, you can share on your page. You may also go to out #BeingNotBuying web page to access all images and posts. Feel free to use the photos and create your own posts as well.

Find the joy in number, color, adjective!

RYH participants willingly share their stories of creativity, holiday changes and more. Here's one of our favorites that may inspire you.

“My son and his wife have done a fun gift exchange for each other for years. They pick a number, a color and an adjective. One year the theme was 3, blue and warm. She made a set of sweetheart mittens (1.a right hand, 2.a left hand and 3.a two handed one - for holding hands) out of blue fleece! Low cost, fun, personal, and no crowds!”-Swisher mother of creative kids

How I used RYH resources this fall
Reclaim Your Holidays is funded by the REAP Conservation Education Program and UNI EPSCoR.

Quick Links

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Bev Wagner, Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA)

Education & Communication Coordinator

“This fall we shared RYH information at Loras College and the DMASWA. Loras students held a waste free Halloween activity. They carved pumpkins for the annual residence hall trick or treat event. At DMASWA, we shared RYH ideas in newsletters, Facebook posts, and news releases. In school and community presentations, we challenged participants to be more mindful of the waste produced at the holidays. We encouraged them to make changes to reduce the amount of ‘stuff’ they buy and eventually need to get rid of.”

RYH trainers - Watch for a Waste-Free Pumpkin Carving activity based on Bev’s experience. It will be on the RYH Tools for Educators in early 2017.

Control holiday $$ & create meaning

Want to make the holidays less about money or stress and more about relationships and fun? This RYH handout offers practical suggestions to help you and your audiences simplify the holidays. And, we just added a new tool to assess your daily finances. There’s a version for adults and post-secondary students.

Simply list how you spent your money for a week and rate the pleasure and meaning you got from each item. Then decide if you want to spend more, less, or about the same money on each item. The rewards for doing this before the holidays can be great-financially and emotionally.

(ISU Extension Specialists - These tools would fit with any programming/consulting you do with families.)

What if the RYH resource is too much to use?

The RYH Tools for Educators features many great resources. But, some may be just too much finger paint! For example, the 4-part workshop series offers ways to create meaningful and environmentally friendly holidays. If 4 is too many fingers (topics), consider these options:

- Review the table of contents and decide which part works for your audiences.
- Choose one of the action pages (p. 5 self-care, p. 9 action step, p. 15 action plan strategies). Print a few to place at your center’s welcome counter and invite participants to take a list and try one idea.
- Choose one part and it can be a ready to go holiday program for churches, organizations, library groups.

Be inspired, inspire others and enjoy the winter holidays!

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