Reclaim Your Holidays

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Helping educators use RYH resources

Repurpose! From calendars to gift bags

Repurposing is “in” so take advantage of your audiences’ interest in creating something new from something old. Jen Jordan, City of Iowa City recycling coordinator and RYH educator, did just that in a repurposing series earlier this year at the East Side Recycling Center. You just need a few colorful monthly calendar pages to create colorful gift bags to use any time of the year. These step by step directions from Jordan will lead participants through the activity.

RYH Educators: Could kids do this with an adult in their lives during a nature center/library/congregation event?

How I used RYH resources at O’Brien County Fair

Charlene Elyea, Naturalist, Asst. Director O’Brien County Conservation

“Recently we cooperated with eight county libraries at the O’Brien County Fair. We set up a small reading area with some of our favorite books on the wise use of resources. We took The Gift of Nothing, Agatha’s Feather Bed, The Quiltmaker’s Gift, the Wartville Wizard, and others. A banner promoted Reclaim Your Holidays and included wall space for people to make public pledges using the pledge card template on the RYH website.

This fun, reading corner encouraged fair-goers of all ages to think about the longer impact their actions may have. The county fair board loved it because it engaged many fair-goers. Plus, it took next to no work and was an easy to partner with other organizations.”

RYH Educators: Would this be an easy RYH connection for you to try at a fall gift fair, during Earth Month, at your county fair -- whenever you can all year long?

Kids reclaim their holidays in "The Other Letter"
What do the kids in your life truly want for the holidays? This 2-minute video gives parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and adult friends food for thought. Watch it and see. If you’re a RYH educator, consider using one of our intergenerational activities for workshops this fall and winter. A few include: Spoiling Grandkids - The Greatest Gift is You, Using Creativity, Cookies and Conversations, or printable gift certificates.

Congregations make strong RYH partners - find one!

This idea guide offers RYH educators activities to partner with a congregation. The activities can help participants discover what matters in their personal lives. They can reduce greenhouse gases at the same time. The tools include the Happiness Store video, writing a gratitude letter, or reading a book together. Each offers great experiences for winter holidays or any time of the year. For example, congregational youth members could write a gratitude letter to adult members and vice versa. This might just open some grateful ways to start the winter holidays.

Making connections for winter holidays

We invite you to try a few tricks we’ve learned lately to engage new audiences in Reclaim Your Holidays.

Try setting up a RYH table/booth at a farmer’s market this fall. They often run up to Thanksgiving or later. This would be a great opportunity to hand out the Pick 5 Survey and/or 5-Minute Assessment and show alternative gift wrap ideas.

◆ Does your community/congregation have a holiday craft/gift market? Offer to have a RYH table! Invite people to fill out the Pick 5 survey and then complete a pledge card stating one thing they might change this holiday season.
◆ For any audience (youth to adult), read The Gift of Nothing (usually available at your local library). Then offer the 5-minute assessment tool for participants/families to complete. What one change would they like to make for the winter holidays? Encourage participants to post that change on a bulletin board.

You’ll keep getting great RYH ideas each month this fall. Start planning now to use Reclaim Your Holidays ideas for your audiences in the next few months.

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