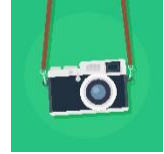


## Earth Day Activities

**Nature Photo Exhibit** Provide your residents with a camera (or smart phone) and give them the opportunity to go outdoors and take pictures of nature. Print the images from the computer or develop from a photo shop. Display the images in a common area during the month of April.



**Join a Group** Many environmental organizations work to protect the environment today, and you can do your part by joining forces with these organizations. Check out this list of [Environmental Organizations](#).

**Write a Letter** Discuss with your residents the environmental causes that are meaningful to them. Choose one or more and write letters to your local politicians expressing concerns about or support for upcoming legislation.



**Raise a Butterfly** Residents can enjoy the anticipation of watching a caterpillar transform into a butterfly. The butterflies can be released into the wild or into your community garden, especially if you have butterfly friendly plants. [Butterfly Kit](#)

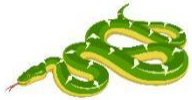
**Plant a Sensory Garden** A sensory garden is specifically created to be accessible and enjoyable to visitors, and to provide sensory opportunities for the user that they may not normally experience. Outdoors would be ideal for a



sensory garden, but if you don't have outdoor space, indoor sensory gardens also work. Your residents will enjoy the sight, smells, flavors and textures of a variety of different plants and other things

typically found in a garden.

**Visit a Zoo** Celebrate Earth Day with the planet's amazing and diverse wildlife. Arrange a visit to a local zoo or wildlife refuge for your residents. You can also check for local wildlife experts who will bring animals to educate and entertain your residents.



## Make a Terrarium

### Materials:

Mason jars (or other glass container)

A collection of small plants

Potting soil

Small stones



### Directions:

Put a 1" layer of stones in the bottom of your terrarium. Fill the mason jar about  $\frac{1}{3}$  full of potting soil. Arrange the plants in the jar. Once you have found an arrangement you like, fill the rest of the container with potting soil and gently tap it down so soil is firm and the plants are supported. Water with a moderate amount of water. Put the terrarium in a place with occasional sunlight

**Earth Day Swap** Have each person bring things they no longer use or need (you can include staff and families in this activity, if desired), and set the items up in categories (books, decorations, clothing, games). Whatever someone can use, they can take. At the end, if there are things left over, donate them to a

shelter or thrift shop.



**Farmer's Market** Challenge your residents to reduce their consumption of processed food by visiting a local farmer's market and planning a meal based on the fresh foods available.

## Make Solar S'mores

### Materials:

- 4 graham crackers
- Mini marshmallows
- 2 plain milk chocolate bars
- 8" x 11" glass baking dish
- Clear glass lid for baking pan



### Directions:

Put 4 graham crackers side by side in the bottom of the glass baking pan. Place a chocolate bar on top of 2 of the graham crackers. Put 8 mini-marshmallows on top of the other 2 graham crackers. Cover the baking pan with the clear glass lid. Put the pan out in an area where it will get full sunlight (a hot day works best). Let the pan sit until the chocolate bars and marshmallows melt. To make a S'more, put one chocolate and one marshmallow graham cracker together to make a sandwich.

**Plant a Tree** Choose a suitable tree for the region, climate, and space. With a shovel, dig a hole that is 2-3 times the width of the root ball. Turn the tree upside down gently to get it out of the pot. Place the tree into the hole gently. Be sure the hole isn't too deep or too shallow. The ground level of the plant in the pot should match up with the ground level after you fill the hole in. Use some compost if needed. Fill three quarters of the hole with existing dirt, one quarter with compost. Water the newly planted tree. Allow settling, backfill the remaining soil, and water again.



**Beach or Park Clean Up** Visit a local beach, park or neighborhood. Provide your residents with gloves and bags. Spend 20 minutes or more picking up trash.

**Start a Compost Pile** Choose a place to compost. You can use a bin, but you don't need to. Compost will decompose in a pile by itself. Wood products are the first type of materials to include. These materials allow needed air to circulate through the pile. Secondly, add food materials. Food waste provides the moisture the bacteria need to survive. As long as your compost pile has air and a moderate amount of moisture, the bacteria, along with insects and worms, will do their job. Turn the compost pile over daily with a rake or hoe so all the material gets air. Compost is ready when the ingredients are not recognizable anymore. It usually takes on a dark brown color once it's ready.



**Go Green** Go green for Earth Day! Ask staff and residents to wear green on April 22<sup>nd</sup> as a reminder to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Encourage everyone to make an extra effort to conserve the earth's resources.





**The Lorax** Invite local children to view a screening of Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* or read the book aloud. Discuss the message in the story with guests and residents.

**Land Art** Connect with nature through Land Art. Land Art is creating art outdoors in nature by using raw material from nature. You can use leaves, pebbles, twigs, berries, acorns, flowers, etc. Arrange pebbles and colorful leaves together on a rock or create a sculpture using twigs and flowers.

Anything goes! Land art is ephemeral, which means it will stay for a fleeting time. It may be there for just the time you are working on it and then it will deteriorate and become one with nature again.



**Color Hunt** Ask a local hardware store for various colors of paint chips. Instruct your residents to take a few paint chips with them on a walk outside or in the garden. The idea is to try to find items in nature that most closely match the paint chips.