ACTIVITY 16

Team Trash Crafts

Help children realize that many of the things people throw away every day can be reused in creative ways.

What you need

Boxes, Milk cartons, Scissors, String, Sticks, Egg cartons, Seeds, Beans or Sand, Coffee cans, Materials saved from previous activities (optional), Large box

Time

30–40 minutes per creation

Get Ready! Prepare a few examples of trash crafts to show children. As a group, brainstorm a list of things you can reuse. Have each child bring in at least one thing they would otherwise throw away that could be used to make something new. You may want to send a brief note to children's parents explaining

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1 **Get Started** by talking about the three R's for the environment: reducing, reusing, and recycling. Buying loose, unpackaged fruits and vegetables reduces the need for plastic wrappings and Styrofoam. Once you have used something once, find out how to use it again. When you reuse a soup can as a pencil holder, you make less garbage. Recycling is another way to create less garbage. Recycling means to send used things (such as soda cans and plastic containers) to a factory that turns them into new things (such as a new soda can or a plastic bench).

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2 Each child can choose one or more items to create:

- Bird Feeders—Cut a hole (about 1 1/2 inch in diameter) one-third up a milk carton or plastic soda container (from activity 7). Poke a stick through the container just under the hole. Punch a hole in the top and loop a piece of string through it. Punch a small hole in the bottom to let out rain and fill it with birdseed. Hang it from a nearby tree or outside your window.
- Miniature Gardens—Punch a small hole in the bottom of a used plastic cup (from activity 3), or used plastic soda bottle (from activity 7). Fill each hollow with soil and plant a seed. (Follow instructions on the seed packet.)
- Instruments—Make musical shakers by filling milk cartons with beans, beads, or sand. Glue colorful scraps of paper (from activity 8) onto the shakers.
- Toys—Create pull toys out of used detergent bottles, buttons, and string. Hand puppets and dolls can be made from old socks, gloves, yarn, and other material.

3 **Close** by holding a Trash Crafters Open House where children can display their creations. Invite the whole program or school! Encourage your group to set up a recycling center in your room to collect reusable waste materials.

Challenge children to think of one way to reduce, one way to reuse, and one way to recycle. How is each method different?

REUSE IT: DON'T LOSE IT

Keep a box of reusables handy for creative activities on other days. Children's families also can begin reusable centers in their homes.

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Invite children to bring or describe a family trash craft creation.

Try following this activity with activity 11 (Deliver Woodsy's Message).

Words to Know!

Recycle: to turn things that have been used into new things, so they can be used again

Reduce: to find ways to use fewer resources and make less waste

Reuse: to use something again in new ways instead of throwing it away

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