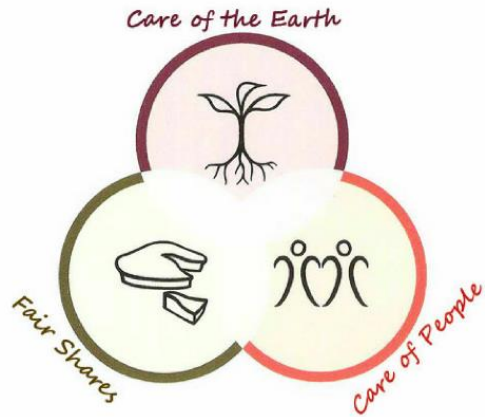


Top 10 Back to School Permie Guide!

- Care of Earth
- Care of People
- Fair Share (aka share the surplus)

The three permaculture ethics are listed above. How do you apply those to you and your families' lives as you prepare to go back to school? Here are our best tips at On Sacred Ground:



1) The ban is on for single-use plastics.

NO straws, NO ziplocs, NO snack wrappers, NO juice boxes

Aim for re-useable lunch box, re-useable drink container, wrap food in towels, wax paper, print-free newsprint, glass tupperwares, lunch boxes like stainless steel bento boxes have food compartments built in, there are products like 'lunch skins' though they still have a fair bit of plastic in them despite being re-useable....match the age w/ the container.



2) Shop at thrift stores.

Clothing & school supplies! Re-uses resources, saves you funds to put toward a family vacation. Take your kids & encourage their style & clothing creativity. Start talking about their Halloween costume & shop for it while back to school shopping if you need some motivation help.

3) Arrange a neighborhood clothing/school supplies swap.

If the kids aren't into it, do it for the moms. Clothing swaps promote community, re-use materials, and bring out the tailors and the creative types. Maybe 1 mom cooks while 1 mom sews patches on thrift store clothes to up their coolness factor? Or you recycle those old wool sweaters into new scarves for the coming winter?

4) While you're at it w/ the neighborhood clothing swap, plan & plant your kitchen garden or winter window box.

Plant winter veggie gardens & seed starts for window herb & lettuce boxes and involve the kids. They get the farm to table experience even if you don't live on a farm. If they grow their own lettuce and know the effort it took to get it onto their sandwich, they develop appreciation for where food comes from. You can plant your Autumn bulbs like Paperwhites & Hyacinth to be ready in time for Christmas too.



5) Families who harvest together, well, harvest together ☺

'Tis the harvest season. Invite the family to u-pick farms and can your lunch sandwich pickles and applesauce. Peruse the wild edibles like rose hips to make winter medicines to combat colds. Elderberry syrup is a good one for kids - they'll want it on their pancakes.

6) Do Autumn yard work together too!



If you rake leaves, put them somewhere – lasagna mulch layers on your garden, or use them as mulch on non-edible garden beds. Chop & drop your plants that need clean-up after summer and use them as mulch too. Plant cover crops to up your nitrogen level. Turn a brush clean-up afternoon into a marshmallow roast at the end of the work day to keep your workers happy.

7) Make cozy reading/study nooks for the coming Autumn/Winter.

Pillow forts, comfy chairs, mini-bookshelves and the cat or dog bed next to the heater or fireplace should suffice. Perhaps a drink holder for the mug of hot cocoa. Make the homework space enticing and able to nourish that aspect of our seasonal soul that likes to cozy up indoors with a good book when the weather gets rougher.



8) Set up your worm bin/compost system if you don't have one already.

All you need for a simple set-up is some red wigglers (often craigslist or local farm forums have posts about someone giving away a handful of compost worms to get you started),



a Rubbermaid bin, some food scraps, a few newspapers and a bucket full of soil. You can teach your kids how to make good soil utilizing nature. Layer the Rubbermaid bin w/ shredded newspaper (local paper offices or grocery stores will often give away extras/outdated papers), put your food scraps in then your handful of worms and cover w/ scoops of soil to keep the smell down. Drill airholes into the bin lid and you can keep the bin animal proof if needed with the lid. Keep layering each time you add food, and in 1-3 months' time you will have good soil to add to your garden.

9) Encourage dreaming and visioning – for the whole family.

Visioning your ideal home set-up, in all its green glory is important for everyone to do together. Social permaculture is about community, speaking needs, making sure everyone gets a share in the life they imagine for themselves. Perhaps this is done at the dinner table. Visioning meetings as a family, and then action days on the weekend implement your goals. Everyone gets a chance to participate and help work toward creating that vision.



10) Take permaculture into the schools.

Get involved in the school. Encourage the ban on single-use plastics and help the school transition to recycled and compostable lunch waste. Talk about harvesting rainwater off the school roof with the school's principal. Organize community work parties and keep learning about permaculture. It will make a difference in the world.