

Eco-Parenting

My 9-year-old loves to conduct “water experiments” in the bathroom sink. His little brother, now 4, has a blast in the kiddie pool, even though I have to empty and refill it regularly because the raccoons like it, too. They both beg for me to turn on the sprinklers so they

lots of small cheaply made plastic things that break) that we are often confused with Toys R’ Us.

Still, we console ourselves by remembering that at least 90% of our toys are “recycled” from garage sales or the “Goodie” store, where we have begun to be regarded as their own version of “angel” investors.



can run through them – even though I just watered the lawn.

As environmentalists, my wife and I know that all of these things waste water. But as parents, we feel that they’re part of a happy childhood, and the development of curious, intelligent adults. Guess which line of reasoning most often wins?

If parenting is “the toughest job you’ll ever love,” eco-parenting can sometimes be overwhelming. Life is suddenly full of compromises and concessions that your innocent little charges can wring out of you with all the skill of a seasoned trial lawyer.

I used to be able to fit all of my worldly possessions into the trunk and back seat of a ’65 Mustang. Now, our house and yard is so full of stuff, particularly kids’ toys (yes, including large plastic ones like slides as well as

Right now, if you look in our refrigerator and pantry, you’ll find everything from Ding Dongs to organic apples.

And I confess to driving twice around Portland’s I-205/I-5 loop one night for no other reason than to put a restless two-year old to sleep.

The reality, for most parents, at least, is that time, money and constant whining can quickly chip away at the loftiest of ideals.

But, parents, despair not. In this issue of *One Oregon One Environment*, we offer some “big bang for the buck” ideas and resources – from healthy baby showers to eco-friendly child care – that can go a long way toward making your life – and that of your children – healthier and more sustainable.

Kevin Kasowski is OEC’s Development Director and an ever-aspiring eco-parent.

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New Baby Welcomed in Eco-Friendly Style

The roasted organic root vegetables were the first clue. Then came the table settings – not a disposable item in sight. But perhaps the most vivid evidence that this was no ordinary baby shower was the pile of wrapped parcels, presented in brown paper, grocery sacks and reusable bags. One gift was bundled in a towel.

Mother-to-be Dr. Jenny Pompilio celebrated son Brady Bennett's impending arrival with a Tiny Footprints baby shower. Created in the fall of 2005 by the Oregon Environmental Council, the program emphasizes sustainable, non-toxic and recycled gifts, and environmental education in the home. It is thought to be the first program of its kind in the nation.

Pompilio, an internist who recently was elected president of the Oregon chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and shower host Natasha Carmichael followed many of the Tiny Footprints™ baby shower kit suggestions. Invitations were electronic, and some guests wrote their good wishes on wrapping paper instead of buying a card. "I definitely wanted to minimize paper use," Pompilio says.

Brady received a variety of gifts in line with the Tiny Footprints™ philosophy. New, unbleached cloth diapers. Slightly

worn children's books. Receiving blankets that once snuggled Pompilio's friends' children. She appreciated the gifts' histories. "It's nice to talk about where they got it or what made them think of it," she says. Pompilio says her husband, Ray Bennett, was intrigued by the shower theme. "He's amazed that we really had to buy very little to be ready for Brady."

OEC's Program Director Laura Weiss, a friend of Pompilio, attended the shower. "The major OEC focus is protecting kids from toxic pollution," Weiss says. "Tiny Footprints™ emphasizes how expectant parents can prepare their baby's environment in healthy, low-impact ways." The program has collected a wealth of environmentally healthy information for parents, much of which is available online (www.tinyfootprints.com).

Among the web site's resources are lists of retailers, shopping tips, chats on topics such as nutrition and home toxics, and baby shower ideas. Shower guest Cindy Hamann, who's expecting her second child in May, wants to plan a Tiny Footprints™ shower. "That should be more common," she says.

This article by Chatten Hayes, a Portland-based writer, appeared in the Oregonian (3/23/06).



photo by Leah Nash

Mother-to-be Dr. Jenny Pompilio celebrates her son's impending arrival at an OEC "Tiny Footprints™" healthy baby shower.



2006

Children's Environmental Health
Excellence Award

OEC Wins Award for Protecting Children's Health

OEC is proud to announce that we have been awarded a 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Award by the U.S. EPA for our Eco-Healthy Childcare and Tiny Footprints™ projects.

These two innovative programs provide parents and caregivers with tools to reduce children's toxic chemical exposure by creating healthier environments. Excellence Awards are presented to groups or individuals that exemplify invaluable leadership in the protection of children from environmental health risks. OEC is one of 14 Excellence Award Winners (and the only one from the west coast). OEC Program Directors Sarah Doll and Laura Weiss are accepting the award at a ceremony on April 21, 2006, in Washington, D.C.



An Eco-Healthy Place for Your Pre-Schooler



Few businesses in Oregon are as important to our future as Oregon's 8,000-plus child care facilities, where pre-schoolers of working parents spend many of their weekdays. Now, parents have another way of knowing that their little ones are getting quality care: OEC's "Eco-Healthy" Child Care project.

To date, nearly 70 childcare providers throughout Oregon (see list) have qualified as "Eco-Healthy" by agreeing to avoid pesticide use, mercury thermometers, air fresheners and other potential environmental health hazards.

In a recent story about the program on KGW-TV in Portland,

Deborah Murray, who operates the Peninsula Children's Center in North Portland, noted that "projects like this make you stop and think, 'Oh! Maybe it's just habit. Maybe I haven't questioned this and there's a better way of doing that.'"

Participating in the program motivated Murray to think about the pest control chemicals sprayed around the building, and to find alternatives. The center has also been phasing out detergents and cleansers with phosphates, perfumes and dyes, turning to bio-degradable alternatives.

Even child care providers who choose not to seek official qualification

have said that the checklist has given their staff a tool to evaluate how they can improve their practices in certain areas. Most often, it's the use of pesticides, air fresheners, aerosol sprays and plastic food containers that represent the greatest opportunities for improvement.

OEC hopes to have some 300 facilities qualified within the next year or two, including providers who serve primarily Hispanic-speaking households.

For more information, or a copy of the "Eco-Healthy" checklist, contact OEC's Laura Weiss at 503-222-1963 x. 111 or lauraw@oeconline.org.

Eco-Healthy Child Care Providers*

Albany: Great Adventures Child Care

Aurora: Rosy Cheeks Daycare

Baker City: Becky's Daycare

Beaverton: Happy Hollow Children's Center • Little Flower Development Center • The Children's Garden • The Little Red Barn • Wee Folks Kare Kampus

Bend: Summer's Daycare

Canby: Honeybear Daycare • Cascade Locks • Mommy Daycare

Central Point: Denise Wentzel

Corvallis: Corvallis Community Children's Center • Corvallis Montessori School • Seedlings Playschool

Eugene: Blue Moon Nursery • Miss-B-Haven • Moss Street Children Center (University of Oregon) • Rosa Gonzalez • The School House

Fossil: Fossil Co-op Preschool & Daycare

Grants Pass: Pooh & Pals Preschool; 541-479-0419

Hood River: Sunflower School

Keizer: Iris Valley Learning Center

Lake Oswego: Maryam's PreSchool

Lebanon: C&C Daycare

Medford: Misty Scarbrough • "R" Little Stars Daycare

Newport: Carol's Kid Care • Creative Kids • TLC Daycare

Ontario: Martinez Day Care & Preschool

Portland: ABC Kids Childcare and Preschool • Alameda Beaumont Childcare, Inc. • All Roads Learning Community • Apple Blossom Nursery • Ananda Marga New Day School • NewDayAnandaMarga School • As I Grow Infant & Toddler Program • Court Care • Growing Seeds • Harmony Montessori School • Hello Kiddy Child Care • Laurie's House • Little Hands & Feet Daycare • Lucy's Home Daycare • New Farm Kids Home Educare • Open Minds • Peninsula Children's Center • Renaissance Child Montessori • Rowanberry School • Salvation Army White Shield Early Intervention Center • Southwest Kinderhaus • Spindlewood Preschool • Tara Haster • The Willow Tree Preschool • Whole Family Daycare • Yvonne's Kiddie Care

Roseburg: Bugg's Place Daycare • Ladds Daycare

Salem: Cindy's Kids • Grammy's Kiddie Kare • Second Home Daycare

The Dalles: Christine Knight

Tigard: Bee Bop's Little House • Creative Home DayCare-Preschool • Heartsong Childcare

Tygh Valley: House on the Hill

White Salmon, Washington: Bambinos Learning Center

*These providers had qualified as Eco-Healthy at time of printing. Please visit our website at www.oeconline.org/kidshealth/ecoqualified for contact information and for the most up-to-date list of qualified child care facilities.

Five Essentials for “Eco-Healthy” Kids

Most parents will do practically anything if it means keeping their kids healthy. The challenge, however, is that parents usually have too much to do, not enough time or energy to do it, and not enough information.

When it comes to creating an “Eco-Healthy” lifestyle for kids, how can parents make the right choices? What key steps will have the most impact?

Our resident health expert, OEC Program Director Laura Weiss, suggests five essential steps that will help keep your kids healthier:

1. Go Clean. Most people think of household dust as a tad embarrassing, but harmless. For kids with asthma, it's another story. Even if your kids don't have asthma, recent studies indicate that household dust may be a main avenue of exposure to toxic chemicals, such as certain flame retardants, that flake off consumer products like computers, furniture cushions or bedding.

Using a damp cloth to keep down dust levels is the best way to minimize exposure. Avoid harsh cleansers at all times and use baking soda or vinegar as alternatives. Be sure to get your air ducts cleaned regularly, too.

2. Go Lean. Use low-fat or non-fat dairy products and if you eat meat, buy lean cuts. We all know that too much animal fat isn't good for us; what

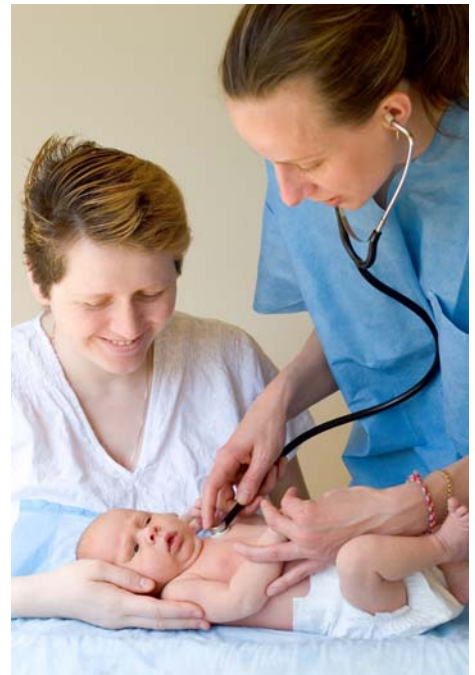
many people don't realize is that it can also contain high levels of dioxins, PCBs and other toxic chemicals.

3. Go Organic. Avoid using insecticides (including flea treatments) and herbicides (such as Roundup) in or around your home. You can find an extensive list of pesticide alternatives at www.pesticides.org.

If the cost of buying organic food is an issue, focus on buying organic fruit, vegetables, cereals, breads and other grain products, which will give you more “bang for the buck” in reducing exposure to pesticides.

4. Savor Your Seafood. Seafood is good for you and some types can be eaten as often as you want. Certain types of seafood, such as swordfish, have high levels of mercury and PCBs and should be avoided entirely, however, while others should only be eaten every week or two (see chart below).

5. Pick Your Plastics. From baby bottles to “sippy” cups to polycarbonate water bottles, people drink from plastic containers at every stage of life. Unfortunately, chemicals (phthalates, bisphenol-a) in some plastic products may cause birth defects and other health problems. Look for the recycling symbol on your plastic bottles (or food containers) and avoid those with a “3” or “7” or those that aren't marked, just



to be safe. Use glass or ceramic for food storage whenever possible.

Taking these five simple steps – most of which are easy and low-cost measures – will make a significant difference in keeping your kids healthy.

For more information, and to join other parents in discussions of these and other issues, logon to www.tinyfootprints.org.

Laura Weiss holds a Masters in Public Health from UC Berkeley and has more than 20 years of professional experience in evaluating environmental health hazards. Over the past eight years, she has led OEC's successful efforts to adopt bans on mercury in consumer products, and to create Oregon's pesticide “right to know” program.

| OK to Eat | What to Eat |
|-----------------------|--|
| Twice a week | Scallops; Sole; Flounder; Squid; Striped bass (farmed); Sturgeon (farmed); Tilapia (farmed); Rainbow trout (farmed); Atlantic mackerel; Crawfish |
| Once a week | Catfish (farmed); Crabs; Mahi-Mahi; Tuna (canned light); Spiny or Rock lobster; Haddock |
| Once or twice a month | Salmon; Sardines, Herring |
| Once per month | Tuna (canned white); Halibut; Bluefish; Pollock; Lobster (Maine, Northern/American); Sea bass (wild); Tuna (steaks); Grouper; Marlin; Orange Roughy; Red snapper |
| Avoid at all times | Shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel, Tilefish and Bluefin Tuna |

Connecting Kids with Nature, Off the Beaten Path

Growing up in the “stucco flats” of L.A.’s San Fernando Valley, the closest experience I had with nature was occasional forays into the few muddy segments of the L.A. River that hadn’t already been “channelized” (paved with concrete, in other words).

When I got my own wheels at 16 and could explore still wild mountains, canyons and creeks further afield, it was an epiphany of sorts. I even confess to having had a “John Denver phase.”

So you can see why, as a parent, I wanted to provide my own kids with a healthier appreciation of nature.

I should have known I was in trouble when my then 4-year-old told me – in an observation that Yogi Berra would have been proud of – that “the trouble with hiking is all that walking.”

Still, I persist. And, fortunately, like other parents in Oregon, I have lots of opportunities.

State parks, many with nature centers on site, abound. The Sierra Club, local Audubon chapters and Friends of the Gorge have outings, including many suitable for kids, almost every weekend.

On rainy winter days, there’s always OMSI, the Oregon Coast Aquarium, the High Desert Museum near Bend, the Columbia River Discovery Center in The Dalles, the recently renovated World Forestry Center in Portland, or the A.C. Gilbert Discovery Village in Salem, all of which offer exhibits with a natural history or environmental education bent.

But here are a few tips on less well-known nature outings that are a bit more off the beaten path but worth a visit. Be sure to call ahead since some facilities keep special hours or may charge admission.

Wildlife Images Rehabilitation and Education Center near Merlin in southern Oregon is located on 24 acres of land adjacent to the wild and scenic section of Oregon’s Rogue River. Animals treated at the Rehabilitation Center range from baby squirrels and rabbits to bobcats, black bear and grizzly bears; from hummingbirds and wrens to great blue herons and American bald and golden eagles. The center is open for



public tours, free of charge, throughout the year (541-476-0222).

Cascade Raptor Center. At this rustic 3-acre site just south of Eugene, you can visit more than 50 raptors from 28 species. The Center is also adjacent to the Ridgeline Trail, which offers both hiking and mountain biking. Visit www.eraptors.org or call 541-485-1320 for more information.

Bonneville Lock and Dam. Unless you’re into fishing, there’s no better way to give your kids an appreciation of salmon than to visit the fish ladders at this facility on the Columbia near Cascade Locks. Lots of fun/interesting hands-on exhibits, too. Call 541-374-8820 for more information.

Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve is a 710-acre wildlife preserve just south of Hillsboro. The quiet open waters, rolling meadows, and upland ash and fir woods are homes to thousands of ducks and geese, deer, otters, beavers, herons and eagles, as well as a 12,000 square-foot Wetlands Education Center that opened in 2003. A 3,000 square-foot wrap-around deck connects the center to the trails leading into the preserve. Call 503-681-6206 to learn more.

Spirit of the Rogue Nature Center, about 30 miles northeast of Medford, provides an educational experience in a natural river environment

with profile chambers, underwater pond viewing, walkways across the water, and trail systems that help reveal the upper Rogue River’s ecosystem of salmon, steelhead, otter, beaver, muskrat, osprey, deer, trout, and other types of wildlife. Call 541-878-3800 for details.

The **South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve** near Coos Bay includes an interpretive center, programs such as “Estuary Arts and Crafts” and “Tide of the Toddlers,” as well as several miles of hiking and self-guided paddling trails. Learn more by calling 541-888-5558.

Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area near Newport is the home of the “Quarry Cove” – a former rock quarry converted to a man-made system of living tidepools. In May of 1997, a new interpretive center was opened, and the 93-foot high Yaquina Lighthouse (Oregon’s tallest) is nearby. Call 541-574-3142 for additional information.

Kevin Kasowski

New Faces at OEC

Tom Imeson joined OEC's board of directors as of April. Tom is a Partner of Imeson & Carter, a consulting firm focused primarily on strategic planning and problem solving for national and international businesses. Previously, he was vice president of government, public affairs and communications for PacifiCorp, and worked for 16 years for U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon. He has also served Oregon Governors Goldschmidt, Kitzhaber and Kulongoski.

The board also welcomes **Bryan McCampbell**, Environmental and Facilities Manager for the Papé Group in Eugene, as a new member. Bryan is responsible for the company's compliance with all federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations. Previously, he served as Senior Industrial Hygienist at Oregon State University and as a consultant in applied environmental research.

Teke Dillender joined our staff in January as our first-ever Director of Major Gifts. She leads our efforts to raise significant gifts from members who are passionate about OEC's work. Since settling in Oregon ten years ago, Teke has worked in the nonprofit sector, primarily for children's organizations. She has two small children of her own, and when not working to further the mission of OEC, she enjoys laughing, playing, and puddle-jumping with them.

Sallie Schullinger-Krause is our new Program Director for our global warming work. Prior to joining OEC, Sallie concentrated on global warming and energy related issues, with a broad range of nonprofit organizations in New York, the Northwest and Alaska since 1991. Sallie has also taught yoga for the last six years and will be happy to share relation techniques with hard-working colleagues. She will be taking over for Christine Hagerbaumer, who is now OEC's Director of Programs.



New OEC board members: Tom Imeson (top) and Bryan McCampbell.



Welcome to new staff Teke Dillender (top) and Sallie Schullinger-Krause.



Thank You!

OEC's work would not be possible without the generous donation of time and energy of our volunteers. We'd especially like to thank **Dorothy Fisher Atwood** and **Susan Reid**, who recently left OEC's board, for their many years of volunteer service.

Other volunteers are helping us out on specific projects. **Alison Dennis** is providing an invaluable boost for our Tiny Footprints™ project, including organizing our upcoming event at Peanut Butter & Ellie's in Portland (see page 7). PSU student intern **Meghan Watson** has done a wonderful job on our Eco-Healthy Child Care project (page 3).

Lisa Adatto, Scott Turnoy and **Alison Hill** have all been of tremendous help in our work to ensure that Oregon adopts clean car standards.

Our Forum events would not be the same without our loyal crew of volunteers: Robyn Alper, Suzette Barakat, Sue Bartlett, Ray Berardinelli, David Burdick, Peg Butler, Sara Carter, Chris Dennis, Alison Dennis, Kevin Driesche, Diane Drum, Donna Dzwonkas, Brandon Emerick, Pat Giannetti, Beth Meredith, Kate Miller, Star Moran, Ethan Nelson, Christie Nuttall, Chris Ortolano, Wade Peerman, Jonathan Potkin, Janel Sterbentz, John Tydlaska, Doug Wise, Beth Woodward and Kristen Wright.

Heather Brentley, Will Eusebio, Alison Towle, Laurel Ramsey and Sue Wiff have all done tabling for OEC at recent community festivals and events. Caroline Kincaid and Jeff Grier have been an enormous help around our office.

We'd also like to thank a number of Oregon businesses for their generous donations of products for online and event give-aways, including **Green Loop, the Imperial Stock Ranch, REI, Ryan Gwinner Press,** and **Viento** restaurant in Bingen, Washington.

Raising an “Eco-Healthy” Kid: Learn More!

OEC and Peanut Butter & Ellie's Café in Portland are hosting a first-ever event on May 7th that will provide parents and parents-to-be with a fun opportunity to learn more about eco-parenting.

This fun-packed celebration will feature grab bags for the first 50 parents, door prizes, mini-workshops, tips on making eco-healthy choices for baby, and a baby carrier fashion show! An “Everything Eco-Healthy for Baby” product fair will showcase adorable offerings from great local businesses including Greenloop, Babyworks, Event Bliss and Mama Rose's Naturals.

You can also learn more about OEC's Tiny Footprints project (see page 2), our Eco-Healthy Child Care project (see page 3), and our “It's Not Cool to Idle at School” initiative.

Free party cake will be served and the full Peanut Butter & Ellie's Café menu will be available throughout the day. Everyone is welcome at this free event including parents, parents-to-be and, of course, kids!

“This event is a great opportunity for parents to get tips on making eco-healthy choices for their kids in a social, family-friendly setting,” says Alison Dennis,

event organizer. “People will be able to connect with a growing community of local families and businesses concerned with creating safe, non-toxic environments for children.”

Welcome to an Eco-Healthy Baby Event!

Sunday, May 7, 2-6 p.m.

Peanut Butter & Ellie's Café
4405 SW Vermont Avenue,
Portland

Watch for OEC at an Upcoming Event!

EarthDay at Sellwood Park in
Portland 4/22

EarthDay at Portland's Children's
Museum 4/22 & 23

The Ag Fest in Salem 4/29 & 30

Hey Baby Expo! at Oregon
Convention Center 5/13 & 14

Race for the Cure Health Expo Oregon
Convention Center 9/15 & 16

Salmon Festival at Oxbow Park near
Sandy 10/14 & 15



2006 Ag Forum

The new season of OEC's Forum for Agriculture and Environment gets under way this spring. Join us at an event in Medford on April 27th where leaders from the Food Alliance, Oregon Tilth, and Salmon-Safe and the Applegate Watershed Council will talk about the role of food “certification” programs in creating sustaining markets for farmers and producers. The series continues in May in Baker City with an event on how bio-based fuels products and fuels could provide new options for Oregon agriculture. In June, the 2006 series concludes with an event in Portland showcasing how sustainable agriculture is emerging in Oregon as a new engine of economic development.

For locations and event times, or to register; call 503-222-1963 x. 106 or visit our website at www.oconline.org.

Many thanks to the following sponsors for helping to make the 2006 series possible: Harry and David, OSU, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the Rocking C Ranch, Three Mile Canyon Farms, Emerald Valley Kitchens, Organic Valley Family of Farms, Lochmead Dairy, Amy's Kitchen, Ashland Food Co-op, Duckwall-Pooley Fruit Co., Oregon Freeze Dry, and Wilco.



OEC volunteers chat with a mom at KidFest in Portland, which was held in March.

OEC Readies “Baby Bottle Bill” for 2007 Legislature

Oregon's nickel-deposit bottle bill is a hallmark of our state's reputation as an environmental leader, and OEC played a key role rallying citizen support in support of that law back in 1971.

Today, OEC is once again getting ready to rally Oregonians – especially parents – around legislation that would, like the original bottle bill, be nationally significant.

The “Baby Bottle Bill” isn't about recycling though; it's about protecting infants and newborns from harmful chemicals that are found in certain kinds of plastic baby bottles (see Health, page 4), as well as some toys.

If enacted, this legislation would ban the sale of baby products that contain



phthalates (THA-lates) and bisphenol-a (BPA, for short). Both chemicals have been identified as potential triggers of birth defects and other reproductive problems.

In recent legislative sessions, OEC has succeeded in convincing Oregon lawmakers to reduce the dangers of mercury and certain toxic flame retardants by enacting similar health and safety protections on consumer products that contain those chemicals. As we approach 2007, OEC will once again be rallying health advocates, parents and a wide range of Oregonians to add baby products that are health hazards to that list.

For more information, contact OEC's Sarah Doll at 503-222-1963 x. 110 or sarahd@oeconline.org.

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