

GREEN

Story of Stuff

My Takeaway:

- The chemicals that are used to create our ever-day products are not always safe. Our pillows are doused in flame resistant chemicals some of which have proven to be dangerous and others that have not been tested. We need to be wary of the products that we consume and the companies we support that make the unsafe products.
- Breastmilk is filled with many toxic contaminants simply because humans are consuming unnatural chemicals in the products they buy. Infants, tiny humans with no control over their own lives or ability to make decisions, are being subjected to toxic chemicals.
- Less than 1% of the things that we consume are still in our lives six months later. Whether it be the product or the packaging, we get rid of 99% of the thing that we bought at the store that we thought we needed but maybe didn't actually.

My Plan to Act:

- Starting today I am going to check to see what chemicals are listed in all of my products. If the chemicals are toxic I will choose an alternative.
- I will be cognizant of the food that I put in my body as well. I will eat less fast-food, processed food, and food that comes in potentially toxic packaging.
- Most importantly I will try to recycle and eliminate as much extra "stuff" as possible. I will not go to the store to buy disposable water bottles when I have a reusable one. I will not buy face cleaning wipes when I can buy one recyclable bottle of face cleaner. As a tangible goal, I will produce less than half of a garbage bag of trash every day.



GREENER

Story of My Stuff

My trash:

I wrote on my bag: the questions that people asked me throughout the day, follow up questions to my response, and their ultimate reactions. The ultimate reactions were not as elaborate as I had hoped, but that just means there are more conversations to be had about the topic!



Food Waste:



Recyclable:



Nonperishable:



My Conversation:

Today I was lucky enough to talk to a 10-year-old girl named Morgan about what my bag of trash really means. Our conversation went something along the lines of this:

Morgan: What's the trash for?

Anjali: I'm using it for a project. Would you like to help?

Morgan: Okay

Anjali: This is a bag of trash that I've collected just today.

Morgan: that's a lot

Anjali: Yeah it is a lot. And I'm just one person. Imagine how much trash everyone makes together...it's even more

Morgan: What are you going to do with this trash

Anjali: I'm going to use it to make a poster that we can hang up in school. It's going to help us reduce how much trash we use. Would you like to help?

Morgan: yeah what do I do?

Anjali: Can you tell me where trash comes from?

Morgan: I don't really know. The ground?

Anjali: Some trash does. Where else?

Morgan: the store?

Anjali: What about before the store? Where does trash come from?

Morgan: I don't know

Anjali: Well a lot of it comes from forests and we have to cut down the forests to get the things that we put in the stores. And when we cut down the forests we kill all of the trees and plants and animals that live in the forest and that's not very nice. What do you think happens to trash after you throw it away?

Morgan: It goes to the dump and then it gets burned and buried.

Anjali: and what do you think will happen when we run out of space to put our trash?

Morgan: something bad

Anjali: right. SO what is something that you could do so that you don't make as much trash?

Morgan: well if I get a frozen tv dinner, then I can use the container for my next dinner and I can keep using it over and over.

How to avoid future trash:

- Food waste- one way I can avoid food waste is to only order what I can eat. If I am still hungry I can always get more food, but if I get too much then it goes to waste. Another way I can avoid food waste would be to compost the food that I don't eat. Items to create these changes may include a **compost bin** or a **compost bag**.
- Recyclable- The biggest thing I notice in my pile of recyclable trash is the three water bottles. An easy item replacement would be a **reusable water bottle**. Other than that the only thing in my pile from today was mail. So, I guess a replacement could be an **email address**.
- Nonperishable waste: One thing I could do to reduce my nonperishable trash would be to eat in! every time I go to a fast-food restaurant I end up with so much trash! One thing Panda Express could do to reduce trash would be serving to-go food in **recyclable containers**. Right now, they use boxes that are coated in a waxy plastic material that are not recyclable. They could also place **recycling bins** in the restaurants for

Anjali Mukherji
Anjalimukherji15

Anjali@smarterfoods.com
Belmont University

recyclable/compostable plates. Another thing I could do to reduce my nonperishable waste would be to buy things straight from stores instead of having things shipped. I received a giant box in the mail and at least 60% of the box was filled with that plastic in the picture above. It was completely avoidable by just buying my things at the store instead on Amazon.

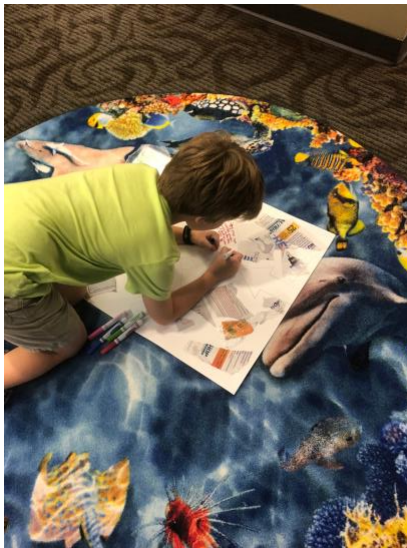
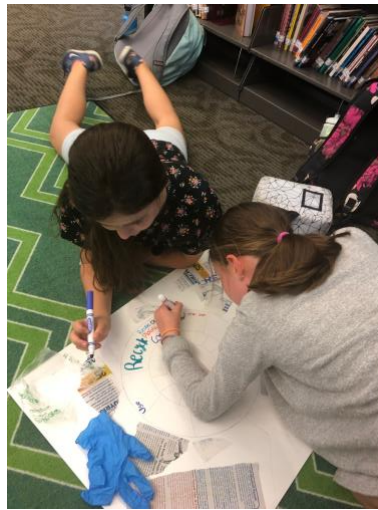
What I will do to contribute to a zero-waste world:

I will not only make the changes that I have listed above, but I also vow that I will educate others about the effects trash has on our planet and the ways we can reduce it.

GREENEST TRASH PSA

My Public Service Announcement:

Today I went to University School of Nashville, a K-12 school in Nashville TN, where I was able to work with some students in the Middle School After School program. Together, we had a conversation about the impact of trash on our planet and then, we made a poster to hang in the afterschool entrance that will help others learn what they can do to make less trash. Here are some photos from my experience:



Here is our Finished product:



Each middle schooler wrote down one way that he or she could reduce waste! It was amazing to see how smart all of these kids are and how creative! Once we filled in the wheel we surrounded it with the trash that I collected. We also put the “golden arrow of consumption” from Annie Leonard’s video, in the middle of the trash on our poster to show what it currently does for our planet. However, it points to the wheel of things we can do better to show what we hope it will do in the future. We want to hang our poster in the entrance of the after school area for all to see!

This is just the start! I hope to do the same kind of project with different groups of kids and get my fellow Belmont students to start their own groups with kids! I think that getting kids involved in activities like this is extremely important so that they can make changes in their lives before they form bad habits.

