

HOME PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

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Theme: *"Environment & Families God's Beautiful Creation Let's Protect it."*

Aim of this department – *The purpose of the Home Protection Department is to strengthen Christian family values and to encourage family members to help toddlers and pre-schoolers to develop a life time commitment to total abstinence through the W.C.T.U. program and to promote non-alcoholic drinks, with drug-free and smoke-free environments for a better future in our world.*

In Finland the equal school system gives an opportunity to study free of cost! The lunches are free. Everyone learns to read and write. The social health care system is good. All the students have the basic information, knowledge and what is happening in Finland concerning the environment. The global environmental problems are shared and taught in all the schools. Thus it is easy to build the basic wise discussions in families and creating new forms of work in different organizations. On the contrary in many countries of the world if one is too poor or hungry, the possibilities for the rich and poor families are different. One is you are underestimated as a girl, you hardly have power to fight for changing new habits concerning the climate and environment.

Jesus, in the Bible stories, gives us many good examples about the simple, not selfish, nature-loving life. We need not be ashamed two thousand years later to follow His godly example. Let's take our responsibility as Christians seriously, have respect for all the people, speak encouragingly with understanding, help and serve all the people near and far away. We can be good examples by working locally and thinking globally in all small daily things. We need to make these good early habits to protect our environment and families.

EVERY SMALL CHANGE MAKES A HUGE IMPACT. ALL OF US CAN CHANGE SOMETHING IN OUR DAILY LIVES

We want to use the suitable amount of water at home, not being irresponsible or careless. Even if we may have hundreds or thousands of lakes, thus clean water and clean tap water in some countries, we must not forget, how valuable the water is for our well-being. WE ARE THANKFUL FOR IT AND MUST TEACH OUR CHILDREN to use this God given life-giving resource carefully.

We must have respect for seas, lakes and rivers. If we see litter, we must pick it up and dispose of it properly. Some family members together clean beaches as a hobby in order to do something good. We must remember and realize that there is this huge plastic pollution problem in seas and water resources because of plastic bags and plastic disposal items. We must pray together as a family. We pray that we should not be so greedy by polluting and damaging one of the basic elements of life - **water**. We may tell our children about the fantastic work different organizations, missionary organizations and our own organization have had in many countries that provide people with fresh drinking water.

We take care of our plastic, glass, different garbage waste at home and set a good example for our children. If possible, we must use nature-friendly packages and bags. We must pay attention about different company's discoveries and research done in all the sectors concerning creating safe and clear environment. We pray as a family to be sensible and support companies and the products produced in sustainable ways.

We should have respect for food. We must buy only the amount of food we need. We should avoid throwing away cooked or excess food so our children will learn not to waste food. We can find creative ways to use leftovers. Many youngsters are often eager to find new mixtures, drinks, desserts using leftovers, which may create excellent, beautiful, cheap, nutritious dinners or snacks for the family. We can encourage them to eat in healthy ways, if possible. We thank God for all the fruit and vegetables, and plants He has given to human beings, and we should be grateful and gracious about it.

We can support our relatives and people in need living close or far away with our excess food if we have that resource. The children get information, knowledge about different countries. Not all the people have food. We can think together, if we could support some families somewhere near or far away so that the children will learn to do so with a sympathetic heart and loving compassion and simultaneously learn about that different beautiful country, whether nearby or in far-away places. The children will learn to give, instead of demand and waste things.

Many families are happy when they have a small garden. They take care of it together. Many immigrants here, rent a piece of land and they say it is the best thing in their lives, to go to the little piece of land and see their flowers and vegetables grow. It is a simple, happy life to labor and grow food for your entire family.

We must use electricity in a sensible way. In Finland they sometimes arrange competitions that different families can take part in: HOW MUCH CAN YOU AS A FAMILY DIMINISH THE ELECTRIC ENERGY CONSUMPTION IN HALF A YEAR? We can pay attention to many things, turning lights off, how to use less machines, which machines we really need, how do we use them? We can decide if we can save money in this way, we can donate that money for some good purpose or sometimes to have a good dinner together as a family fun and blessing.

Recycling is important. Some children love to do it; they do not demand and demand. They should learn at home that it is a fun activity and useful. We should buy something only when we need it. We can sew, knit, repair old things giving them a beautiful, new look and continue using them. I know in some families it is a joyful, useful hobby. We can admire people who are good at recycling, creating NEW out of OLD. In this way we can change attitudes. We should not admire only rich and name brand expensive, completely new products all the time.

In Finland we cycle, ski, walk, skate. Now people ski and the municipality and towns take care of the tracks so that everybody has the possibility to take care of their muscle condition and health, and have fresh winter air. Small pupils used to walk or cycle to schools. We should encourage them and ourselves to use cycles as often as we can. We know airplanes and cars pollute the air. The cars, laptops, games, and mobile phones are creating a lethargic society so we must discuss it. They often steal a lot of time and young people are not in as good a health condition they used to be. They like to sit in the car or by the laptop. Now this is being discussed a lot on TV, in different media. Being in nature is cheap, possible for everyone, improves your mental health, touches your senses, and teaches many things to you. It is a great responsibility in families to teach the balanced form of life to children. We are living in a digital age that has become a way of life but it is addictive and harmful. So use it, but don't become enslaved by it.

If we buy books, games and different things for children as gifts, they should be those including environmental issues. We can watch nature films, documentaries and discuss them. The countries are different. The parents can help children to find the beauty God has given to different countries. In our schools, history teaching is a good way in which different countries are being studied and seen. But at home you can use that knowledge to instill a compassionate and helping attitude in the heart. As Christians, we know about the missionary work and different organizations serving the poor and needy in many countries and this aspect can be added into a child's early learning.

We choose not to use alcohol and drugs. We do not smoke. It is important to keep the wholeness and purity of mind, body and soul. Responsible family members do not throw cigarette butts in the nature. They do not break alcohol bottles against shore stones. They are learning and paying attention to the environment and protecting God's beautiful creation because they are not using drugs. They can control their lives, change habits, feel empathy, serve, give, not losing their lives in lack of money - robbing and

chasing after drugs and alcohol. A lot of mess and damage in the nature, towns, street is caused by people who use alcohol, drugs and smoke.

In different countries, if we organize something for children, we can use some of these aspects. We love and respect the environment and that we are all GOD`S CREATIONS. It depends on the country, what is touching, essential and relevant there. When we are thankful for the birds, we start to take care of them or study about them. If we see insects and notice that bees are diminishing, we can find means of protecting them. If we are thankful for plants and vegetables because we eat them, we must take care of them in responsible ways.

When you are thankful, you pay attention to small things and when you have paid attention, you must start to work towards its protection and sustainable development. Together the small deeds can be done with joy, praising our God, which will be bearing and bringing good fruits. May God bless you all to do the good for which you are created, which will bring glory and honor to our God.