

Living a Zerofootprint Day at School

Living a Zerofootprint Day leads an individual through a day in their life making choices with the lowest carbon footprint. Students are taught about what it means to live in a way that helps, not harms, our environment. Once they are prepared, the class or school lives a day together thinking constantly about each step they take, each tap they turn, and each switch they flip. This method of experiential learning empowers students to make changes for this day, and - eventually - every day thereafter.

Doing is Learning

We are often told to live in a way that will lower our impact on the environment and on climate change. But what does that really mean? Reading about it helps, and learning about it in a classroom is even better. The most powerful way of learning, though, is often through practice itself. Living a Zerofootprint Day allows students and teachers to learn about, and actually do, what a day of zero-carbon would entail. The day is supported by the Zerofootprint Kid's Calculator and coupled curriculum. Students and teachers will calculate each action of their day, from their meal at breakfast to switching off the lights before bed. The goal is to encourage higher levels of thinking and instill environmental leadership and responsibility at a young age.

A Day in the Life

Improving our habits doesn't usually happen overnight, but it does for Zerofootprint Day. Often it will take people months or even years before every environmental thought or act is automatic. This allows us to jump in headfirst. Here's an example of a day in a normal life, versus in Zerofootprint day - saving 5 kg of CO₂, all before 1pm!

Before: Suzy, age 9, gets up in the morning and eats a breakfast of bacon and scrambled eggs. She and her younger brother brush their teeth, get dressed and get a ride with their mum to school on her mum's way to work. She runs to the bathroom before going to class. In the morning, Suzy's class goes to the computer lab to practice typing. At recess, Suzy goes outside to play. In art class, they paint tiles for a school mural. At lunch, she sits with friends and eats her turkey and cheese sandwich, an apple and buys a bottle of water from the cafeteria vending machine before going back to class.

Zerofootprint day: Suzy, age 9, gets up in the morning and eats a breakfast of oatmeal and nuts. She and her younger brother brush their teeth, with the tap off. They get dressed in layers because the school has turned the air conditioning up a degree to save energy, so the classroom is a little warmer. They ride with their mum on the city bus on her mum's way to work. She runs to the bathroom before going to class and shuts off the lights when she leaves. In the morning, Suzy's class goes to the computer lab, turn on the computers that had been shut down at night, to calculate their carbon footprint so far. At recess, Suzy goes outside to play and keeps her eye out for students that accidentally put their recyclable containers in the garbage. In art class, they paint tiles for a school mural using clay-based paints. At lunch, she sits with friends and eats her veggie sandwich, local organic apple, and local yogurt - all brought in Tupperware. She takes a drink from the hall fountain before returning to class.

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Teachers: Contact us about other Zerofootprint programs for schools and classrooms.

Every Bite, Every Step, Every Switch...

Everything we do has an impact on the environment. There are lots of things we can think about that will help us do the right things for climate change through our own lifestyles.

Eating: The average individual switching from an average diet to a vegetarian diet has the same impact as trading in an old car for a hybrid. Raising livestock is energy intensive based on how much grain they eat alone - which is equal to 10 lbs of grain for every 1 lb of meat produced.

Travelling: Getting from point A to point B can happen by using our two feet, our two bicycle wheels, our cars, or public transportation. Sharing rides, for example, (either carpooling, buses or subways) are more efficient because they are moving more people with less fuel.

Switching: Turning lights on and off, moving the heat or air conditioning up or down, turning off running taps, washing clothes in cold water versus hot, and turning off our computers at night are all actions that help reduce energy and electricity use. Often, power comes from burning oil and coal. Lowering our dependence on this helps us reduce emissions and fight climate change.

These changes are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to doing environmentally friendly things our own lives. Live a Zerofootprint Day and use the Zerofootprint Kid's Calculator to support students in making the smart choices and immediately measuring, comparing, and seeing the effects and importance of the changes they are making.

You can calculate your Zerofootprint Day impact by using Zerofootprint's online Kids Calculators: <http://www.zerofootprint.net/youth/simcoe>

About Zerofootprint

Zerofootprint is an organisation dedicated to a mass reduction in global environmental impact. We provide software and services to individuals, governments, universities, and corporations that measure and manage participants' carbon footprint and engage employees and citizens worldwide in combating climate change.

Summary Text

Living a Zerofootprint Day leads a student through a day in their life making choices with the lowest carbon footprint. Students are taught about what it means to live in a way that helps, not harms, our environment. Once they are prepared, the class or school lives a day together thinking constantly about each step they take, each tap they turn, and each switch they flip. Improving our habits doesn't usually happen overnight, but it does for Zerofootprint Day. Each of our actions has an impact on the environment, whether we know it or not. This educational program, with the Zerofootprint Kids Calculator, helps break down and improve habits so that students can fight climate change through their own intelligent choices. This method of experiential learning empowers students to make changes for this day, and - eventually - every day thereafter.

Share your Experience

Telling people about how you lived your Zerofootprint day will inspire and help others to do the same. Here are some ways of how to do it:

- Blog about it
- Tell your family and friends
- Take pictures of yourself doing Zerofootprint activities
- Have a lunch where everyone shares their own experiences

You can share your experiences with us and we might post your story and photos on our blog! Send stories to zerofootprintday@zerofootprint.net