

FAST FACTS



2+
People



25-40
Minutes



\$10 - \$20



Low Risk

Recycled Planters

Purpose of Activity: To reuse/recycle bottles to grow plants

Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

By actively participating in this activity, participants will:

- Understand how reusing items is beneficial to the planet
- Learn ways to reuse/recycle common items
- Learn how to plant and care for edibles or flowers

Materials Needed:

- Enough plastic bottles for everyone in attendance
 - Put up a collection spot in your wing or hall. **Do not** use new bottles
- Decorations
 - Option 1: paint, brushes, newspaper, glitter, baubles, etc. (whatever you can find in the staff office)
 - Option 2: address/shipping labels (preferably 100% recycled content) and markers. This option is significantly less messy. You will need between 2 and 4 labels per attendee, depending on the size of the labels
- Soil- Approximately 1 cup per attendee
 - Please purchase organic
 - I recommend a local business on 4th Ave: Sea of Green
- Seeds- about ten per attendee
 - I recommend purchasing from Native Seeds (a local nonprofit conservation seed bank), located on Campbell Ave

Facilitation Guide:

- Distribute bottles and evenly disperse decorating materials.
- Have residents fill each bottle with soil to about 2.5 inches below the rim of the bottle, about 1 cup depending on where it was cut.
- Inform residents that you are going to be planting (either edibles or flowers)
- Give residents about 10 seeds to plant in their bottle. They should be planted near the top. It is recommended that you sprinkle the seeds on top of the soil then basically scratch them in. They should be no farther than a half inch down.
- Using a pair of scissors, poke 1 or 2 small slits in the bottom of the bottle for drainage. Herbs don't like to sit in water. Since you will only be keeping the soil moist, there should not be drainage. However, we recommend you keep a towel (could be paper) underneath just in case.

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- Care instructions should be shared, depending on which seeds you planted. If you choose a different plant, ask about care instructions where you buy them. Care instructions for basil include:
 - Bottles should be kept in as much sunlight as possible. If you have your blinds down, put them on the outside of your blinds so they soak up the sun. Sun is important to basil especially. If your room does not get a lot of direct sunlight, it may be harder for your plant to be successful, unfortunately. It can still happen, though, so don't give up!
 - You have been given about 10 seeds in hopes that at least some will take root. If you start getting several plants in this small bottle, you will need to trim out some of the plants when they get to big. Realistically, only one sizeable basil plant can fit in a container this big.
 - Keep the soil moist, but moist only. You do not want to over water basil! When it gets dry will depend on how much light your room is getting. Keep an eye on it until you figure out about how often it needs to be watered.
 - DO NOT OVER WATER! Not only will it kill your plant, it will make a mess since there are holes in the bottom of your bottle.
 - Remember—moist to the touch, but not wet!
- Residents spend time decorating their bottles or labels
- As residents are decorating, tell them you would like to have a discussion about reusing and recycling

Discussion Questions:

- What are some common items that you regularly reuse?
- What are the ecological benefits to reusing items over and over?
- What do you think the world will look like in 100 years?
- What is the difference between reusing and recycling? Is there one?
- What do we recycle in the halls?
 - Glass (colored and clear)
 - Paper (newspaper, magazines, printer paper, mail, etc.)
 - Plastic (numbers 1 through 7)
 - Metals (tin and aluminum)
 - In special containers
 - Cardboard (outdoor cages)
 - Rechargeable batteries (tube in indoor recycling center)
 - Ink cartridges (tube in indoor recycling center)
 - Plastic bags (blue bin near vending machines)