

A Pre-Kindergartners Go Green at Harbortown Place Children's Discovery Center (3/1/09)

During the past four months at the Children's Discovery Center on Route 25 in Perrysburg, Ms. Megan has been working on a project that teaches her pre-kindergartners how to reduce, reuse and recycle. The idea was initiated by the students when they began to ask Ms. Megan about plastic bottles. Since Children's Discovery Centers follow the Reggio Emilia teaching philosophy, where student interest dictates the direction of a project, Ms. Megan and the children focused on exploring plastic bottles from creation to being recycled. From there, the students implemented a recycling program at the school, where they go to each classroom and collect recyclables. Since inception, they have gathered more than fifty pounds of recyclables.

In January, the class took a field trip to the Bowling Green Recycling Center where students were able to view the recycling equipment in operation and were also able to see "bails" of aluminum and paper after being processed. It certainly helped the students make a connection between collecting recyclables to actually seeing what happens to all their recyclables once they are taken from the school. Many students remarked that their favorite part of the tour was the "crusher!" Then recently, to better prepare them for the culminating event of touring the local landfill and the wind turbines in Bowling Green, they created an edible landfill. Pie crusts symbolized the hole in the ground, crushed graham crackers represented dirt and pudding and chocolate morsels resembled the trash at the landfill.

The center plans to continue the recycling program the class began. As many organizations and families continue to "go green," it is refreshing to know programs can sometimes be started by four year olds! The children and teachers at Children's Discovery Center will continue to explore ways to become responsible citizens of Perrysburg and of the planet on which we live.