



– HEALING MOTHER EARTH –

An Earth Exchange Event for Children & Adults

Together we are blazing a new path of environmental activism by finding and making beauty in the Earth's wounded places.

Suggestions for Parents & Teachers

Dear Parents and Teachers—

Thank you for your interest in joining the **Global Earth Exchange** on Saturday, June 23. You will be joining people all over the world to bring attention and beauty to places where we live and that we love that have been damaged in some way. Through this global adventure we honor the Earth and our own connection with it. Children and young people are deeply connected to nature. They know that many places on the Earth are hurting and they are disturbed by that. When they have the opportunity actually to go to one of these places and do something fun, adventurous, and creative there, they become more engaged in their world. And that means they're on their way to becoming adults who will put a priority on protecting the places that are important to them.

"For the kids, there is usually a sense of impotence, that the 'big' things happen out of their hands. The Global Earth Exchange was something all of us could do together."

—ANDREA FRIEDMANN, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How old should children be to participate? The **Earth Exchange** is appropriate for children of all ages. It is especially powerful for ages 5 to 10. However, many pre-teens and teens who are committed to recycling and sustainability practices find this to be an exciting new way of caring for the Earth. Older kids can also be invited to assist with younger ones. This opens up new levels of interaction and "play" for all ages.

What is a wounded place? A place can be “wounded” in many ways. It’s wounded if it has undergone damage by natural or human causes. It’s wounded if the eco-system isn’t thriving. It’s wounded if you feel sad or concerned about what’s happened, or about to happen, to it.

People in many countries have gone to clearcut forests, polluted rivers, the habitats of endangered bees and bats and dolphins, the edges of urban sprawl, littered beaches the sites of gas drilling, and even a melting glacier. They’ve even gone to the bone marrow transplant wing of a major metropolitan hospital and to a family farm destroyed in a fire.

How many people should participate? Your ***Global Earth Exchange*** might consist of just you and one child, or it could be a large school or church group. There is no maximum or minimum.

ABOUT THESE SUGGESTIONS

These are suggestions that you may use for your event with children. For more general guidelines, please see the Earth Exchange Guidelines on our website, RadicalJoyforHardTimes.org.

The Earth Exchange consists of four steps:

1. Meet with friends at a wounded place
2. Sit a while and share your stories
3. Spend time on the land getting to know about it now
4. Give back by making or doing an “Act of Beauty”. You decide what is “beauty.”

For your **HEALING MOTHER EARTH** event we invite you to interpret these steps in any way you wish. Mix them up. Use your imagination, your traditions, and the circumstances of the place and the people to guide you. Just be sure that everyone joins in to make some beauty for the place.

The most important considerations to keep in mind as you conduct your Earth Exchange are:

- Protect the safety and health of yourself and your group
- Offer the event free of charge
- Respect the community, including the non-human community, where you do your event
- Welcome all who wish to participate

Suggestions for your Earth Exchange

- At the beginning of your **Earth Exchange**, let the children know that this is a place where Mother Earth is hurting, and they will be helping her to feel better. Maybe they have visited a relative or friend who is sick and have brought flowers to cheer that person up. The Earth Exchange is a chance for them to cheer up the Earth.
- Consider explaining briefly to the children what happened to the place. You don't have to be an expert; just give them a background for understanding. By learning what has happened, they will be aware of not letting such things happen in the future.
- Take some time to explore the place. For adults, we usually take time for exploring after we've shared our stories about what the place means to us, but children will be eager to play and discover what's there soon after they arrive.
- Suggest to the children that they use their senses: listen to the river, look for butterflies or other insects, look at leaves moving in the breeze.
- Play. Make a fairy house. Sing. Say a prayer. Do a ceremony. Hug a tree.
- After the children have explored, ask them to tell about what they discovered.
- Ask the children what they'd like to do—and follow their suggestions.

Making Your Act of Beauty

For many people the highlight of the experience is making the Radical Joy for Hard Times bird out of materials that you find on site: sticks, stones, sand, plastic bottles—even your own upraised arms. If yours is a large group, you might ask some of the children to find materials for the wings, others for the eyes, etc. Make sure everyone of all ages has an opportunity to participate.

"We've done Earth Exchanges for all ages, but the most exciting part for me was creating with the kids. You can feel Mother Earth rejoicing as they come up with fun, imaginative ways to express their profound love and connection to her!"

—ANN HESS, MACHIPONGO, VIRGINIA

How to Join the Global Earth Exchange

The **Global Earth Exchange** is free. It's easy to register your event on the Earth Exchange Network on our website, and you can always change the details later on.

Send us Photos and Stories of Your Event!

Finally, take photos at your **Earth Exchange** and send them to us at trebbejohnson@gmail.com. We look forward to posting them on our website. If you write us and tell us about your event, we'll include your story too.

Please contact us if you have any questions or would like additional information.

trebbejohnson@gmail.com

570 727 4272

Tambien tenemos ayuda en español.

Wir bieten gerne Hilfe auf deutsch an.

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING THE GLOBAL EARTH EXCHANGE.
YOU AND MOTHER EARTH WILL BOTH FEEL BETTER FOR IT!**