

Dear Cedar Grove Families,

Our PTA has made it easy for us to reduce our impact on the environment while raising money for our school! Please consider ordering from DwellSmart as you make preparations for your children to go back to school; the newsletter below gives some great ideas. It will be necessary to use a specific URL in order for Cedar Grove to get 'credit' for your purchase. Please see the link on the PTA page of our school's website. (You will need to copy and paste this address.)

http://www.cedargrovepta.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=85

You will find other products available as well.

Thank you for supporting our PTA and supporting our efforts in 'Growing Greener for 2012 and beyond!'



For Back to School, DwellSmart has a complete assortment of eco-friendly supplies. And, our feature article below includes tips for packing a "green" and healthy lunch.

DwellSmart has a large assortment of pencil cases and boxes as well as writing utensils and arts and craft supplies. TerraCycle reuses drink pouch materials and chip bags to make pencil cases in many sizes and styles.



We are pleased to introduce Lunchskins, an assortment of sandwich, snack, and sub bags. They are made with a certified food-safe cotton fabric and hand-sewn in the USA. Lunchskins are dishwasher safe and available in a number of attractive designs and colors.



DwellSmart has several styles of [backpacks and messenger bags](#). With prices starting at just \$12.99, you will find a number of stylish backpacks made from recycled materials. Many schools participate in recycling programs with TerraCycle; please [click here](#) to learn more about these programs.



Feature Article - Packing a "Green" Lunch

A great goal for the coming school year is to pack **"green lunches"** for your kids that not only are nutritious but are also free of waste. A typical child packing a disposable lunch produces 67 pounds of waste per school year. An average-sized elementary school can send as much as 19,000 pounds of lunch waste material to landfills each year. Below are some simple steps for making those lunches less wasteful.

Use reusable bottles for drinks and use containers for food items. [Disposable bottles](#) are a tempting convenience, but you'll save money and reduce waste by filling a [reusable bottle](#) with filtered water from your tap or with milk or juice from a gallon jug. Put chips, veggies, crackers, cheese and other lunch items in reusable plastic containers.

You may also consider avoiding the small, prepackaged yogurt containers. It is cheaper to buy the larger containers and scoop portions into reusable lunch containers. An added benefit of this approach is that you can gradually move kids away from the super sweet, flavored yogurts to more healthful plain yogurt mixed with fresh fruit.

Another step is to eliminate the throw-away plastic. Wrap sandwiches in reusable [Wrap-n-mats](#) or [Lunchskins](#), instead of plastic film or sandwich bags. The wrap-n-mats are quite practical because they unfold to form a placemat for your child's lunch. And they clean very easily with a wipe of a damp sponge.

Compared to disposable plastic forks and spoons, stainless steel cutlery or heavy duty plastic cutlery is inexpensive, especially when you consider the amount of re-use over their lifespan (even allowing for periodic episodes where they go missing).



[Cloth napkins](#) are a great substitute for paper towels and napkins. Your child can bypass the trash line in the cafeteria. And, you can save or

compost any leftovers.

When choosing lunch boxes, bags, or bottles made from plastic - look for those that do not contain lead, [BPA](#), or [phthalates](#). These unhealthy substances can leach into lunch foods over time. Avoid products made with vinyl (often identifiable with a "number 3" recycle symbol) - they are particularly bad for leaching phthalates, especially when exposed to heat (avoid putting plastics through the "dry cycle" in your dishwasher). See our full line of [school lunch supplies](#).

Finally, don't forget about the "upstream packaging". When shopping for food, use [reusable produce and carry bags](#). And when preparing lunches, [compost](#) any leftover food scraps.

You and your kids can feel good about these small daily steps to reducing your impact on the environment.

