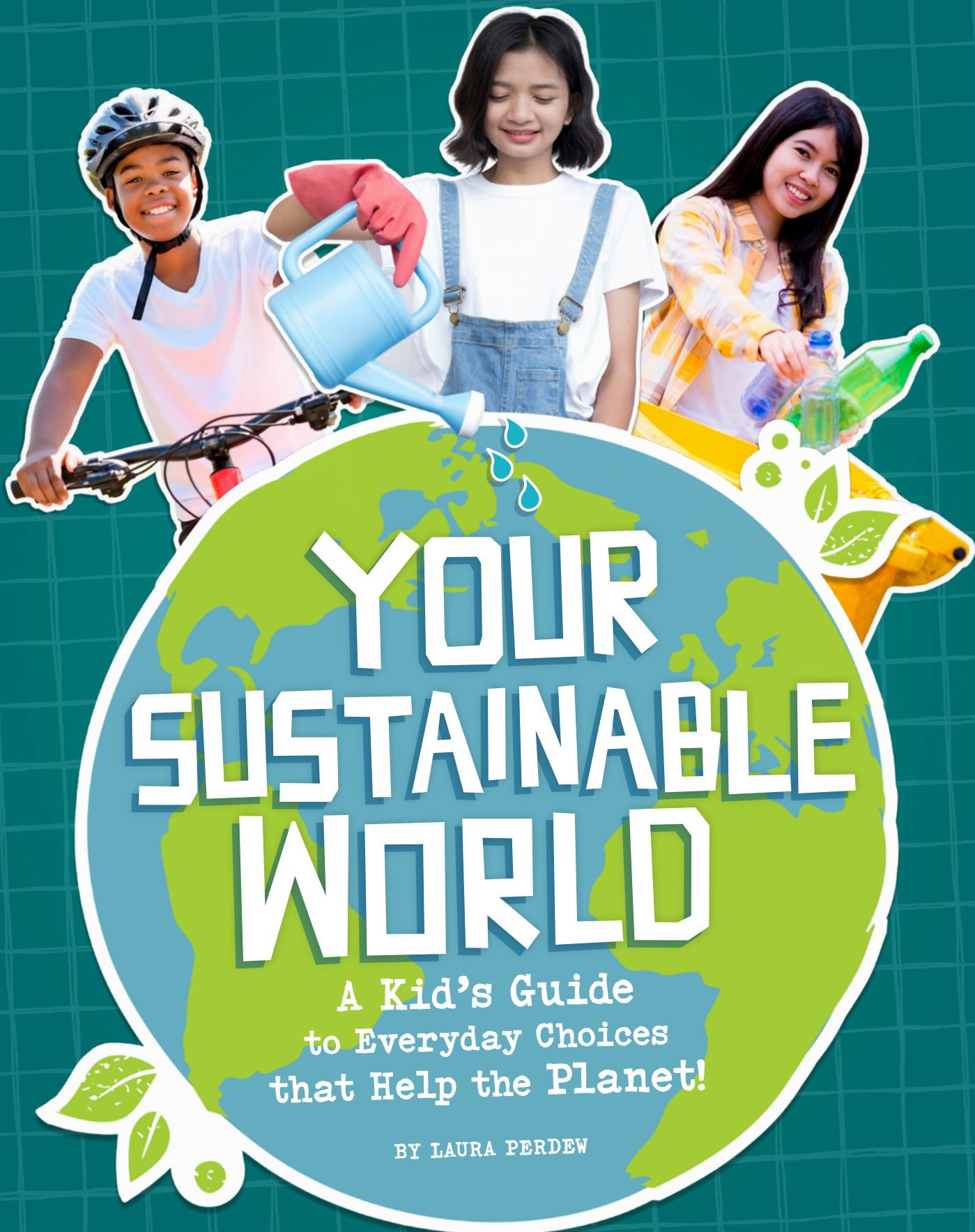




YOUR SUSTAINABLE WORLD

A Kid's Guide
to Everyday Choices
that Help the Planet!

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IT'S YOUR PLANET TOO



Every day you make a lot of choices. You choose what to wear. You pick activities to do with friends. You decide what to eat and drink. Each one of those choices has the power to help the planet.

You help when your choices are sustainable. Sustainable choices save natural resources. They protect plants, animals, and nature. These choices are good for the planet now and for the future.

Unfortunately, many activities today are unsustainable. Our activities use natural resources faster than they can be replaced. Land, water, and air are being polluted. Burning fossil fuels for energy has caused climate change. It has led to global warming. Living unsustainably harms the natural world. It harms people too.



But you can help change that! By living sustainably, you play a role in protecting the planet. It starts with new choices and habits. Even small ones add up. Together they can make a big difference. Let's learn more about making sustainable choices in your everyday life!

The 5 Rs

Actions you can take every day to live sustainably!

REFUSE

Just say no! Don't buy items that create trash. Avoid wasteful packaging and single-use items.

REDUCE

Live with less. Don't buy things you don't really need. Buy new items only when necessary.

REUSE

Use items over and over again for as long as you can.

REPURPOSE

Find new ways to use an item instead of throwing it away.

RECYCLE

Put unwanted items in the recycling. That way the materials can be used again.



TREAD LIGHTLY



Energy is an important part of our lives. It keeps the lights on. It recharges our devices. It fuels our cars. But most energy is produced by burning fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and natural gas. When we use that energy, we leave a carbon footprint.

But you can reduce your own carbon footprint. How?
Use less energy!

Your Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint is **not** one you can see like in the sand or dirt. It's a measure of **how** much carbon dioxide is released into the air as a result of **your** energy use. Any activity that uses fossil fuels leaves a **carbon** footprint. Burning fossil fuels puts carbon dioxide **into the air**. **This** gas traps heat in the atmosphere. Our increased use of **fossil** fuels has caused global warming.

Footprints at Home

To use less, become an energy expert. Do you know what uses the most energy in a home? Heating and cooling. Save energy by fully closing the door when you go outside or come back in. You can also ask an adult about resetting the thermostat.

In the summer, keep your home warmer. To stay cool:

- Set up fans
- Make ice pops
- Wear loose, light cotton clothing
- Spray a cool water mist on your skin
- Open windows



In the winter, keep the heat lower. To stay warm:

- Wear layers
- Open curtains when it's sunny and close them after dark
- Drink hot chocolate
- Snuggle under a blanket
- Slip into thick socks or fun slippers



Power Down and Unplug

Look around your home for devices that aren't being used or that are turned off. Are they still plugged in? Believe it or not, they're using energy. Sneaky energy users include TVs and game consoles. Appliances like toasters and microwaves draw power. Make a list of what you find. Decide with your family which things you can unplug.

Chargers plugged into an outlet but not a device are also energy thieves. So unplug your device once it is at 100 percent. Then unplug the charger too.

All done in a room? Be sure to switch off the lights!



TIP

Heating water is an energy hog. So take a short shower instead of a bath. How fast can you soap and rinse and still get clean?



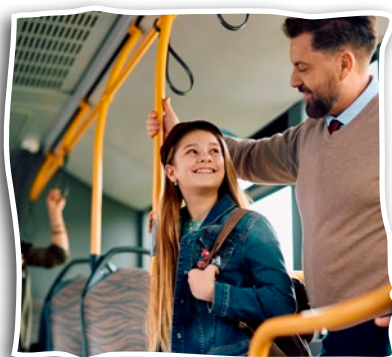
Good Green Fun

When you pick activities to enjoy with a friend, choose ones that don't require electricity. Create an art project from recycled materials. Make up a scary story. Start a neighborhood kickball game. What else can you think of?

Footprints Outside the Home

We use a lot of energy getting around town. Most people drive gas-powered vehicles, which have large carbon footprints. Taking fewer trips saves energy. You can also help by:

- Walking
- Biking
- Skateboarding
- Carpooling with friends
- Taking the school bus
- Taking a city bus, train, subway, or other public transportation



Talk with your family about what might work. These options often require more time. Think of what you can do to be ready to go. For example, want to walk to school with family or a friend? Wake up earlier. Pack your bag the night before. Or grab your own breakfast. Help out so less driving is more doable!

Being an energy expert reduces your carbon footprint. Know what else it lowers? Electric bills. And the car's gas tank won't need to be refilled as often. Using less energy helps save your family money. It helps the planet too!