

MINIMIZING WASTE - SUPPORT PACKAGE

Valentine's Day



When Valentine's Day approaches, many of us shop for the traditional Valentine's Day gifts of flowers, chocolates, and greeting cards for family and friends. But what if you could show them your love in a way that is Earth-friendly and doesn't come from a store? Imagine how many Valentine's Day cards are exchanged in a single classroom. Now consider the volume from your whole school, or all of Nova Scotia! That would be a lot of new material that may end up in the garbage or recycling bin. Don't worry, there are greener options that are just as meaningful. You could go as far as learning how your loved ones receive love through learning about the five love languages. Recipients may appreciate this consideration more than anything you could purchase in a store. Keep reading for more ideas how to make Valentine's Day green, rather than red!

Action Plan

Step 1- Check out the [Valentine's Day Slideshow](#) on the Green Schools NS website, or you can invite your Engagement Officer for a virtual visit with your class to start thinking about how Valentine's Day celebrations can include caring for the Earth. This can get them ready to have a green Valentine's Day!

Step 2- Turn off electronics.

Consider Valentine's Day as a good time to turn off and unplug your electronics. Go screen-free and spend quality time with your loved ones using candle light. You could even turn down the heat and cuddle up under a blanket with hot chocolate, a good game, or a shared book.



Step 3- Make upcycled decorations, cards and gifts. When possible, make something new from something that would otherwise be headed to the recycling bin. Check out our Green Schools Pinterest Board for some of the many ideas!

Step 4- Buy green. If you have decided to purchase gifts or cards, consider buying something with minimal packaging, made from recycled material. What is the ultimate destination of the purchase? Is it recyclable? If you're wrapping your gift, use reusable material or bags. If you choose to use paper, choose recycled paper that can be recycled afterwards. If purchasing cut flowers, look for sustainably or locally grown, look for the [Sierra Eco Logo](#). You could purchase a living plant instead; it will stick around long after Valentine's Day is over, and it provides oxygen! Look for chocolate that was grown and made with the Earth in mind, such as fair trade, organic, or sustainably certified. The videos below can help you learn more. Look for chocolate with the least amount of packaging or packaging that is recyclable (foil is not).

Step 5- Consider your Valentine's Day meal. Why not try to use local ingredients? Consider it a Valentine for your local farmer! Make enough food for the meal and if there are leftovers, package them for lunch. Sort any



food waste properly and use your compost in the garden in the spring. What a nice Valentine gift for the earthworms!

Step 6- Ask your Engagement Officer for the [Gift of Time Support Package](#) so you can learn the five love languages. They are: Act of Service, Gifts, Words of Affirmation, Quality Time and Physical Touch. If you know how your friends and family give and receive love this will be the best Valentine's Day ever because you can speak their love language.

Resources

[Green Schools NS Valentine's Day Slideshow](#)

[Green Schools NS Green Valentine Pinterest Board](#)

[Green Schools NS Upcycled Valentine's Day Card Activity](#)

[Green Schools NS: Gift of Time Support Package](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Cape Breton Highlands Academy](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: West Pictou Consolidated](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Duc d'Anville School](#)

[Love Hurts: In Search of Eco-Friendly Flowers - Roses are red, but not so green](#)

[Videos Barry Callebaut Group - "Forever Chocolate" - making sustainable chocolate the norm!](#)

[Mojo Lifestyle - Learn About Organic Eco-Friendly Flowers](#)

[Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - Food Wastage Footprint Video Playlist](#)

