

Turning the Tide on Trash: A Learning Guide on Marine Debris

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One of the more ubiquitous pollution problems that threatens our coastal waters and habitats is marine debris.

Marine debris, which is trash floating on the ocean or washed up on beaches, can be a tremendous problem with serious consequences for marine life, human safety, and the economy of coastal communities. This is an issue that will require constant attention for generations to come, and this learning guide is focused on the education of the decision makers of our future, our children.

Unlike many other pollution problems, children can play a direct and significant role in reducing and preventing the marine debris problem. Every child that learns to dispose of trash properly can become one less source of litter and marine debris. Every child that volunteers to participate in a beach cleanup campaign can help to improve the current marine debris situation. In addition, educated children not only grow up to be environmentally conscious, but they influence their parents to prevent pollution.

This learning guide is a school curriculum for grade school children and is focused on the education of our children by instilling in them an appreciation of the ocean and aquatic environments. It provides the teacher with the necessary tools and resources to make the learning process more interesting and fun. The learning guide is full of activities and games to help students learn more about the types, sources and effects of marine debris and provide them with prevention information so they can become part of a solution to the problem.

Recognizing the ubiquity of marine debris and the importance of educating children all over the country and the world, we have translated this learning guide into Spanish. The Spanish version of "Turning the Tide on Trash" will be an excellent teaching tool in the Gulf of Mexico area, the wider Caribbean, and other hispanic communities around the U.S. and the world in preventing pollution of our coastal waters by marine debris.