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Blue Zones helps local schools move on from plastic

Blue Zones Project - Southwest Florida recently helped local school districts eliminate some plastic use.

In honor of Earth Day on April 22, Lee and Collier County schools are minimizing plastic bottle use as part of becoming Blue Zones Project approved schools.

Through this initiative, the schools have the option to add hydration stations throughout campus. These wall-mounted water stations offer a tidier and more hygienic option than traditional water fountains. Students and faculty are able to bring reusable bottles and refill them at the hydration stations throughout their day. Of the 31 approved Blue Zones Project schools, approximately 1 million plastic water bottles have been saved to date and are no longer ending up in a landfill, according to a Blue Zones Project spokesperson.

"In PE, one of our learning goals is to teach the students the importance of staying hydrated," said Coach Sandy Winslow at Corkscrew Elementary School. "We have encouraged the students to bring their own water bottles to PE so they can stay hydrated and fill up their bottles during or after class. Classroom teachers also continue to promote the hydration stations to their students and have done a great job setting the example by bringing their own bottles as well. One of our wellness challenges for the staff is to drink half our body weight



COURTESY PHOTO

Blue Zones Project approved schools in Lee and Collier counties have committed to minimizing plastic bottle use.

(in ounces) of water every day."

Earth Day Network's mission is to diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide. Growing out of the first Earth Day, Earth Day Network is the world's largest recruiter to the environmental movement, working with more than 50,000 partners in nearly 192 countries to build environmental democracy. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world. We work through a combination of education, public policy, and consumer campaigns.

For more information about Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, visit southwestflorida.bluezonesproject.com. ■

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