



ROLE OF CHILDREN IN RIVER RESTORATION

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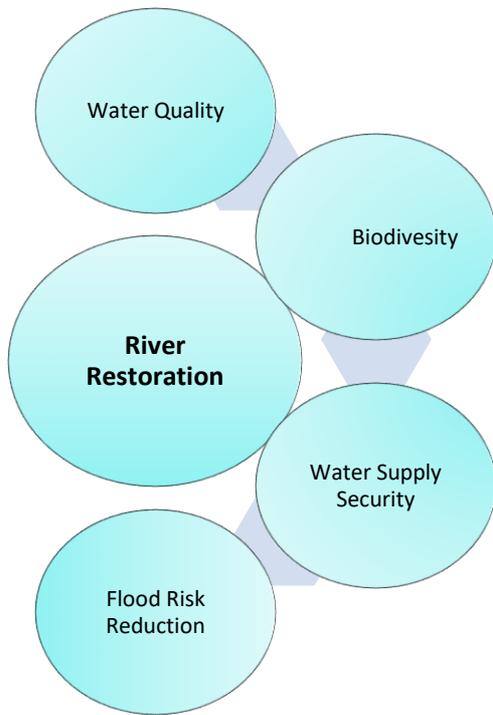
o you know what our rivers are going through in this era of urbanization and industrialization? Do you know what happens to aquatic life because of the harmful effects of plastic pollution and oil spills? That's not all, do you know that our rivers are getting converted to sewages, due to extreme pollution? So then, don't you think all rivers deserve a second chance?

This is where river restoration comes in. So, what is river restoration? River restoration is the process of managing rivers to reinstate natural processes, to restore biodiversity, and to provide benefits to both people and wildlife. Reintroducing natural processes can reshape rivers to provide the diversity of habitats required for

a healthy river ecosystem and ensure their long-term recovery by addressing the root cause of the issue. A lot of technicalities you think. Well, let's say, **river restoration is a way through which we are helping rivers go back to their natural form.**

Children play a major role, when it comes to awareness and impacts these environmental issues have. They are the future stakeholders and should be aware in what crises these rivers are in, but a large portion lacks the exact knowledge on what to do about it.

The responsibility of acting and making changes in one's life to be more in line with protecting the environment is for everyone – adults and children alike. For children and young adults mainly, it is especially important, given how what we do now directly impacts how we live in the future.



It is thus, recommended that we begin to adopt an eco-friendly lifestyle from a younger age and take any steps possible to reduce our effect on the environment.

Why is River Restoration needed?

Rivers and their catchments provide a wide range of natural, economic, and societal services. River degradation has led to an extensive loss of habitats and additional pressures on the aquatic and terrestrial species that use them. Damage to river systems has been so extensive that an urgent need has emerged, not only to conserve, but to restore these systems.

The increasing pressure on the environment due to human interactions have costed our ecosystems and biodiversity at great levels.

Environmental degradation, human health deterioration, global warming, ozone layer depletion, infertile lands, these are the outcomes of unsustainable human interactions.

Its high time now, that proper measures are taken to save planet earth and focus on a sustainable future. River restoration is a promising starting point and engaging the younger generation to do the same is a necessity.



There are limitations to what we as the younger generation can do, but it is necessary for us to learn to function within those limitations and bring about positive change around us. A few measures that you can take are given below.

Measures that can be taken by young generation to combat river pollution:

- *Don't waste water*
- *Reduce gas usage*
- *Conserve energy at home*
- *River restoration in school curriculum*
- *Less is more*
- *Take actions around you*

Don't Waste-Water

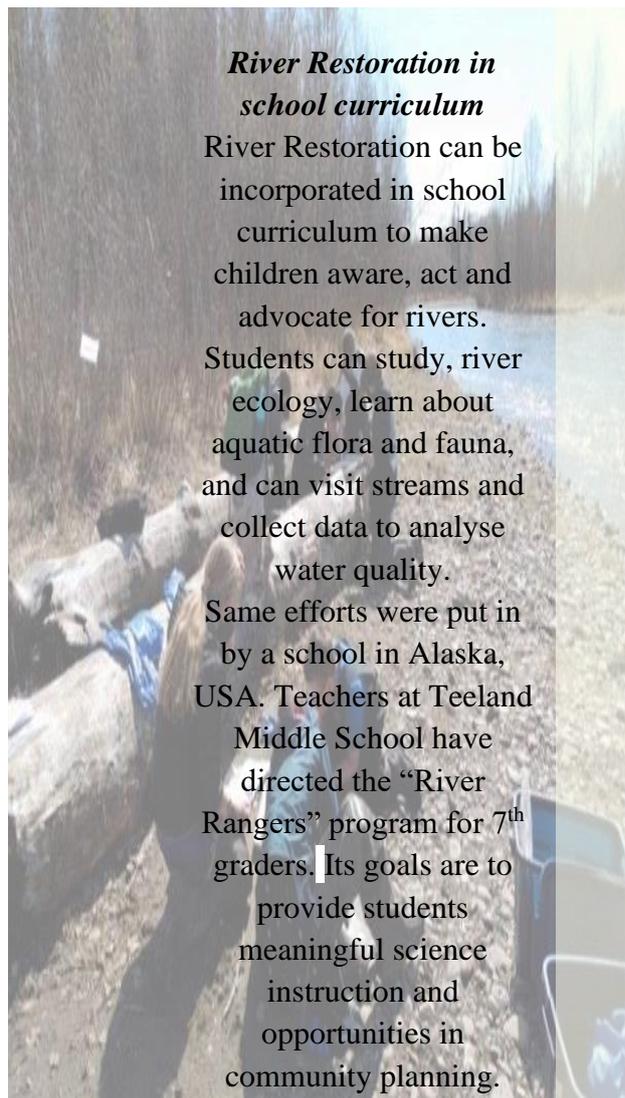
With freshwater sources drying up or becoming polluted, water has come to become an extremely precious commodity in need of conservation. Seems like an easy thing to do, but what we don't realise is the many ways in which you can work towards ensuring less water usage. One such way is by turning off the tap when you are washing your face or brushing your teeth. The potential water saved in such a scenario might seem minute, but every drop makes an ocean and every drop counts. Also, take shorter showers - hot water showers are tempting, but are extremely wasteful. If possible, use a bucket and mug for your bath as it limits how much water you consume.

Reduce Gas Usage

Both petrol and diesel are not just exhaustible resources but are also extremely polluting sources of energy. An increase in the number of cars and big vehicles on roads has led to growing CO2 emissions which are very harmful to our health and the environment. You can help reduce emissions by carpooling to school or sports practice – it's great for the environment and is also super fun! Alternatively, you could get some exercise in and ride bikes or walk if the distances are short.

Conserve energy at home

Resources available around the house can be easily conserved once you put your mind to it. For example, water (already mentioned above), electricity, gas etc. Turning off fans and lights when not in use, minimizing the use of air conditioners are all ways to reduce electricity consumption. Using gas at the lowest intensity, boil water using a kettle instead of an open lid container, etc. are ways to reduce gas usage. There are numerous creative ways that can be employed to conserve resources around the house – you can make it a game and come up with new ones!

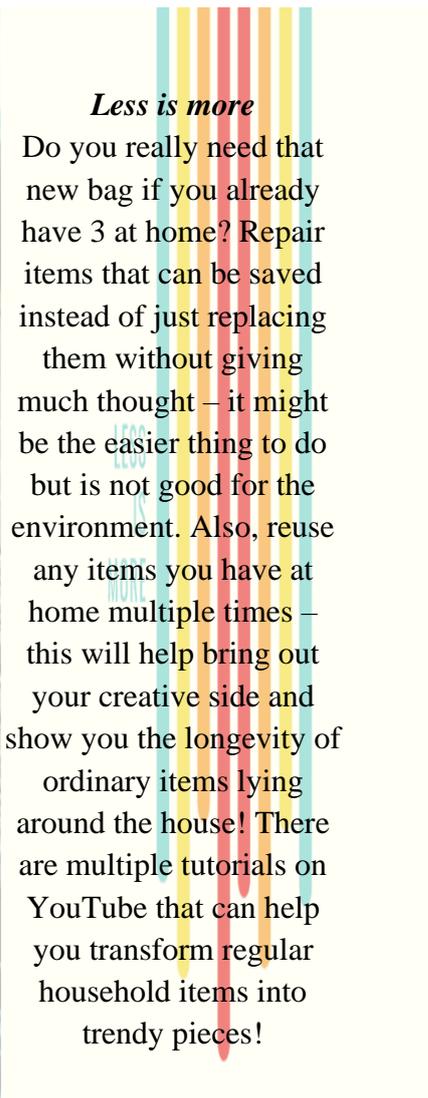


River Restoration in school curriculum

River Restoration can be incorporated in school curriculum to make children aware, act and advocate for rivers.

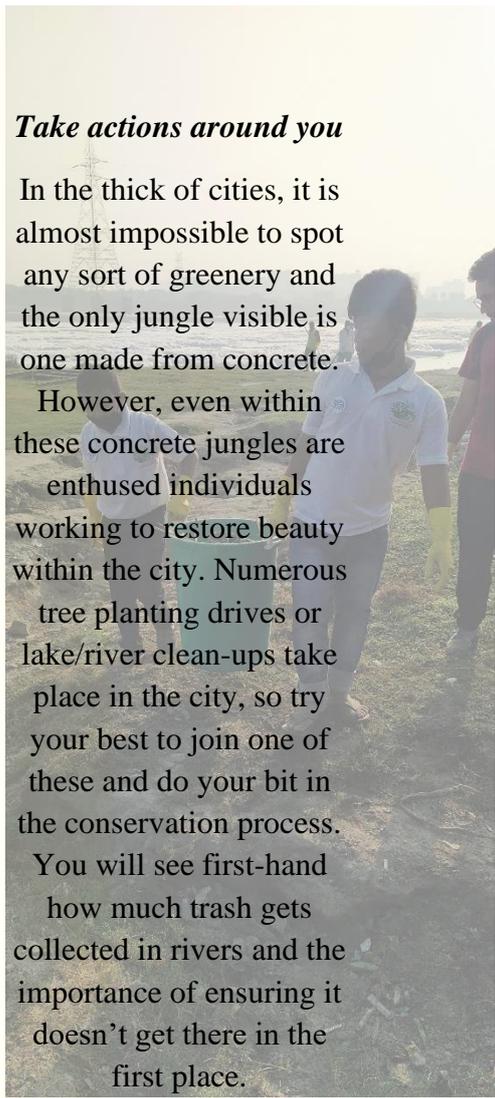
Students can study, river ecology, learn about aquatic flora and fauna, and can visit streams and collect data to analyse water quality.

Same efforts were put in by a school in Alaska, USA. Teachers at Teeland Middle School have directed the “River Rangers” program for 7th graders. Its goals are to provide students meaningful science instruction and opportunities in community planning.



Less is more

Do you really need that new bag if you already have 3 at home? Repair items that can be saved instead of just replacing them without giving much thought – it might be the easier thing to do but is not good for the environment. Also, reuse any items you have at home multiple times – this will help bring out your creative side and show you the longevity of ordinary items lying around the house! There are multiple tutorials on YouTube that can help you transform regular household items into trendy pieces!



Take actions around you

In the thick of cities, it is almost impossible to spot any sort of greenery and the only jungle visible is one made from concrete.

However, even within these concrete jungles are enthused individuals working to restore beauty within the city. Numerous tree planting drives or lake/river clean-ups take place in the city, so try your best to join one of these and do your bit in the conservation process.

You will see first-hand how much trash gets collected in rivers and the importance of ensuring it doesn't get there in the first place.

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e are living in a generation where if adequate actions are not taken to save our rivers and environment then our future generation will never be able to experience the natural beauty of our resources. Man, actions have made our renewal resources non-renewal and instead they all look like sewers because of over exploitation. It is high time to act and work with our planet earth to a sustainable future.