

Christmas season reminders to be good...for goodness sake

From mindful gifts to buying local – the opportunities to make a difference are endless

Who doesn't like being noticed for being good? Be noticed this Christmas by making small changes, from mindful gifts to buying local.

It can be really hard to find balance in life, let alone at Christmas time with the many expectations of gifts, food and family commitments. But, if we keep it simple and focus on being mindful, the results can be significant, not only for you and your family, but for our community and the environment too.

Mayor of Tweed, Councillor Katie Milne said the number one reminder to buy less 'stuff' could actually make you and your loved ones feel good too.

"Planning is the key - make a list and stick to it. There are so many creative, local businesses in the Tweed. Consider gifts that are useful, homemade, second hand or those that will bring a new experience to someone's life," she said.

"Please think carefully if considering buying a pet as a present. Our pound is always very busy after Christmas with unwanted animals.

"Christmas is a great opportunity to focus on sustainable presents. Ditch the wrapping paper and wrap with love and something reusable. And remember, the best gift for your kids is a healthy planet," she said.

Director Sustainable Communities and Environment, Tracey Stinson said the festive season is an opportunity to reflect but also to think about resolutions for the future, and the type of future we want to live in.

"Maybe think about how you can make small changes in the New Year such as making a pledge to avoid plastic and single use items, plant more trees or help our local wildlife affected by the bushfires," Ms Stinson said.

Here's 10 Christmas season reminders to keep you on Santa's 'good' list:

- **Buy less and buy well** – buy one or two quality items instead of cheaper items that are more likely to end up in landfill.
- **Give useful gifts** – stainless steel drink bottles/straws/clothing pegs, beeswax wraps, a reusable cutlery set, shampoo/conditioner bars, bamboo toothbrushes, silicone food covers, reusable tote or beach bags, lunch boxes/bags, notebooks, wooden musical instruments and craft supplies.
- **Wrapping that stands out** – tea towels and shirts, twine, reusable bag, music sheets, kids' drawings, scarfs, butcher's paper, branches or leaves and cinnamon sticks.
- **Natural table settings** – pine cones, leaves, palms, wood off-cuts, river rocks, potted plants and flowers.
- **Local experiences** – pottery/jewellery classes, tours, lunch/dinner voucher with babysitting coupon, boat cruises, hotel stays, horseback riding, painting/creative workshops or movie passes.
- **Give to charity** – do something good for others this holiday season, such as volunteering, donating to local Christmas appeals, or buying gifts for children less fortunate.
- **Make** - Christmas decorations, baked goodies/snacks, treats for pets, IOU coupons, plants/cactus, decorated jars/tin cans.
- **Hacks for food waste** – freeze prawn and meat scraps, make a list and shop to it and give guests leftovers to take home.
- **Unique gifts** – antique, vintage one-of-a-kind items from secondhand stores and visit op- shops.
- **Plan your trips** – tick off a few errands at once or go shopping with a friend.

For more information, waste tips or ideas on how to do more good this season, email waste@tweed.nsw.gov.au.

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