

Kumon Associates Choose to Reuse

On average, every American family takes home 1,500 plastic bags each year. Most of these bags come from grocery, convenience and other retail stores. Even worse is their proliferation as litter. Plastic bags are so lightweight and aerodynamic, that even if we dispose of them properly, they can escape with the wind. They escape from our trash cans, garbage trucks and landfills and they go where the wind takes them – polluting our environment until they finally find their way to the ocean and kill birds and animals.

Plastic bags are in fact recyclable; however, less than 5 percent of disposable plastic bags are recycled in the U.S. As a part of its annual Earth Day activities, KNA's Green Team decided to hold a campaign to encourage associates to recycle plastic bags and switch to more sustainable reusable shopping totes. We called it "Choose to Reuse." Associates were offered a free Kumon tote bag in exchange for a dozen or more plastic grocery bags.

"I really wanted to educate my colleagues about how inconvenient and harmful plastic bags are" said Green Team member Cynthia Romaine. "Once people appreciate how bad the problem is, we offer them the alternative of the reusable Kumon tote and they are happy to change their shopping habits."

The Choose to Reuse campaign created a lot of excitement. Kumon associates lined up and chatted, and took selfies with one another and their new Kumon tote bags. Over 500 plastic bags were collected and sent to recycling. With time, the Kumon tote bag will become a popular and easily recognized fashion statement at grocery stores.

