



Mary DeMocker's children, Forrest and Zannie, and her husband, Art, prepare to participate in a blockade formed by 100 kayakers to protest coal and oil exports on the Columbia River.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY DEMOCKER

CLIMATE, from page 4

toward real solutions.

The comprehensive guide lays out 100 methods, each with various options for parents to choose from based on factors such as the amount of time they want to spend, their budget and the age of their kids.

On Saturday, April 14, DeMocker will be at Powell's City of Books in downtown Portland to discuss climate-conscious parenting. A question-and-answer session and book signing will follow her 2 p.m. talk, and 350PDX director Adriana Voss-Andreae will be onsite to help connect interested audience members to local climate campaigns.

Street Roots spoke with DeMocker recently to find out more about parenting in the age of climate change.

Emily Green: *At what age do you think children are ready to learn about climate change, and how do you recommend telling them that their planet is heading toward catastrophe?*

Mary DeMocker: I don't tell any kid under age 14 that their planet is headed toward catastrophe. I think there are distinct periods of childhood that we need to honor where children are developmentally. And we also need to honor who they are as individuals.

I would tell a young child that we need to work together to make sure that we're protecting our forests and protecting the climate. It's more about living well on a day-to-day level and making good decisions to support our animal friends, to support people in other countries, to support the health of humans and animals and the planet.

My kids, because we didn't use TV at all in the home, they didn't see frightening images, and we were very careful not to bring that to them when they were young because it's not fair to burden them with adult problems. For young children, they need to have an adult filtering the information so that it's age appropriate.

For an older child, an 8- to 10-year old, that's different than it is with a 4- or 5-year old. They're starting to be much more out in the world and getting much more

information on their own, separate from you and your family life. They're going to start getting information in schools and on their cereal boxes – endangered pandas on their Panda Puffs cereal. They're going to have questions about it, and they need to know that we're working on things – that adults are working very hard – and they need to hear about the different solutions that are out there.

And if they're interested, they need to know about different ways they can engage in those solutions. To know that Earth Guardians exists, for example, would be really empowering for a 10-year-old, who is hearing about climate change and watching the news or reading about it or talking about it with friends. (Earth Guardians is a worldwide group of youths fighting climate change together through litigation and other actions.)

What gets tricky is that there are a lot of different opinions out there about how dire the situation is. There are some scientists who say we may have passed the tipping point. And I hope they're not right, but I'm certainly not going to tell a very young child that. To an older child, I think it's appropriate to say, hey we're in a big race, and we're going to have to work hard on this, and there are lots of people working on it, and we're going to get this done.

Moving to teenaged children, they're in an amazing time. Teenagers right now, my own kids, all of their friends, all of the teenagers that I see and sometimes work with on this climate stuff, they are amazing. They are so brave, and they are so able to look this crisis in the eye and say, "We've got this. We're not letting it go down. Not when we're on this planet, and not when we have decades ahead of us to live on this planet."

I am lucky to be around a lot of young people in Eugene that are engaged in a really positive way in the Our Children's Trust lawsuits against the federal government.

I've learned a lot from the teenagers in my community about despair and about positive ways of engaging, and those are the things that I point readers to: Look at what these young people are doing, look at what

ESSENTIAL READING FOR YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS

In "The Parents' Guide to Climate Revolution," author Mary DeMocker lays out 100 approaches to cultivating a climate-conscious and empowered family. One way is to get kids reading. These are DeMocker's favorite books for inspiring and motivating youths into action.

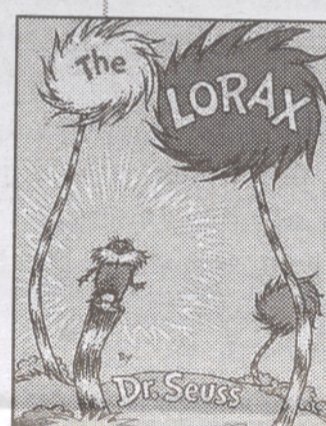
For children 12 and under

"Follow the Moon Home: A Tale of One Idea, Twenty Kids, and a Hundred Sea Turtles" by Phillippe Cousteau and Deborah Hopkinson

This story teaches children what a powerful difference young people can make in the world. The book ends with a message of advice to young activists from activist-author Phillippe Cousteau.

"One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of Gambia" by Miranda Paul

One plastic bag can break into hundreds of pieces of trash, but what if that bag were turned into something beautiful instead? This is the story of a girl in Gambia who finds a unique solution to her village's plastic bag problem.



"The Lorax" by Dr. Suess

Since 1971, The Lorax, who speaks for the trees, has been teaching children about the dangers of a culture that consumes until there is nothing left.

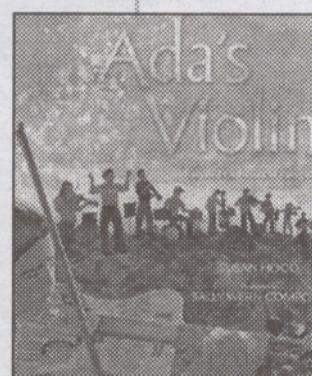
"The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope" by William Kamkwamba

This is the true story of a young boy who built a windmill with tractor and bicycle parts to bring energy and water to his drought and hunger-stricken community in Malawi.

"Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story" by Ruby Bridges

Ruby Bridges was the first African-American child to integrate into a white school in 1960. This is her story, written for children, in her words.

"Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay" by Susan Hood



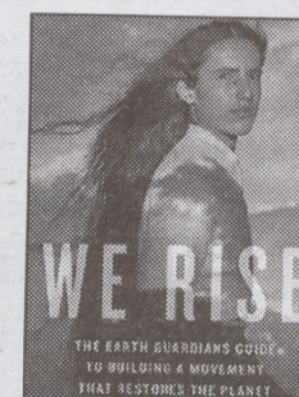
This is the true story about the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay. It began when people in an impoverished village near a trash heap wanted to find a way to make music. Today the orchestra plays concerts around the world with its instruments made from trash.

"Heroes of the Environment: True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect Our Planet" by Harriet Rohmer

The true stories of 12 North Americans who fought to protect the environment and won, including youths in Ohio and Rhode Island.

For teens

"We Rise: The Earth Guardians Guide to Building a Movement that Restores the Planet" by Xiuhtezcatl Martinez



The 17-year-old leader of the group Earth Guardians shares his story and lays out effective activism strategies in this new book.

"The Legacy of Luna: The Story of a Tree, a Woman, and the Struggle to Save the Redwoods" by Julia Hill

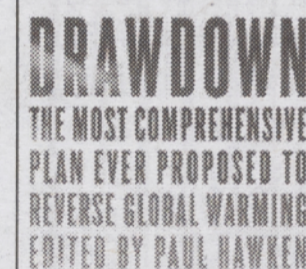
Hill writes about her experience in 1997, when she climbed into a Redwood tree to save it from logging that was destroying old-growth forests.

"I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban" by Malala Yousafzai

When Malala was 15, she stood up to the Taliban, refusing to give up her right to an education. She nearly paid for that decision with her life but lived to inspire youths around the world ever since.

"Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March" by Lynda Blackmon Lowery

Lowery was the youngest person to march from Selma to Montgomery in the 1965 voting rights march with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This is her story as she told it.



"Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming" edited by Paul Hawken

This book is full of innovative solutions to global warming, from agricultural practices and green energy to cultural changes and emerging science. This book shows that reining in greenhouse gases is possible, and we already know how to do it.

"March" by John Lewis

This trilogy of books written by political icon and civil rights activist John Lewis offers younger generations his perspective as a young activist in the 1950s and 1960s, putting a human face on the historic events they've read about in their textbooks.



See CLIMATE, page 10