

Living Naturally on a Budget Meeting Notes

January 22, 2012

---Intro: We are all on a different path in our own parenting journey. Sometimes our paths intersect & we are open to learning from each other at those times. *You may hear some ideas that sound strange to you at this meeting. Please feel free to take what works for you & leave the rest behind. We agree that each mother &/or father are the expert on her/his family and make the right decisions for that family.*

All information below is opinion shared by SANP members during the meeting. These notes are to be used as a starting point to your own research. Feel free to post future questions to the SANP group for clarification or more information.

---Food/Diet

*Organic vs Non-organic: Refer to the list for the “dirty dozen” and “Clean 15” to know the most important produce items to buy organic.
<http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/>

*Organic vs Local-Figure out you personal priorities-lowering pesticides or environmentalism

*When buying non-organic produce you can soak in water , changing water several times, to remove some pesticides.

*Other ways to soak or wash produce: soak berries in vinegar and rinse to make them last longer. Keep a spray bottle of peroxide and another of vinegar, spray veggies with each one and rinse under water before using. Soak veggies in white wine vinegar to retain nutrients.

*Reduce food consumption and waste to save money- save end pieces of veggies to make your own stock, compost extras or feed to pets.

*Buying food-

-Farmers Markets:

http://www.picktexas.com/farm_market/santon.htm Look into individual markets and farms to see what their growing procedures are (organic or not, how local are they?)

-Greenling: <http://www.greenling.com/> All organic food distribution based in Austin, a lot of foods, deliver to your house. Can purchase the local box for seasonal produce.

-CSAs: <http://www.sanantoniofoodshed.com/> Sign up for shares of produce from a particular farm. Pay for a specified number of weeks upfront, then meet at a drop weekly to collect seasonal produce.

-Natural Health Source: Organic produce drop, \$50 every 2 weeks. Contact Janet Elizarraraz at SANP for more information.

-Azure Standard: <http://www.azurestandard.com/> distribution from Oregon, delivered to a drop point in San Antonio. All produce is seasonal, and they carry all groceries. To order, join the Yahoo group in SA for Azure Standard.

-Amazon: buy products in bulk for less than you can find it in the store. Subscribe and save to save an extra 15%

-Costco: carries many organic foods at a great price.

-Foraging: find dandelion greens in your own backyard (more nutrients than spinach!) Prickly pear cactus-wear gloves! Great book for identifying edible plants: Edible and Useful Plants of Texas and the Southwest: A Practical Guide

-Shop around for the best deal

-Plan meals to reduce spending and food waste

*Earthbound Farms Cookbook

---Gardening- Don't miss our meeting on gardening in February!

*Container gardening for small spaces

-Book- Container advantage

-Use containers from around your home. Drill holes in the bottom for drainage.

-Use a new cat litter box to grow herbs in

-Use a wooden pallet for vertical gardening-
<http://lifeonthebalcony.com/how-to-turn-a-pallet-into-a-garden/>

* Square Foot Gardening book for backyard gardening

---Personal Care Products

*Skin Deep Database- <http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/> In depth information on cosmetics and personal care products

* Make your own toothpaste and deodorant, or use a natural choice from the store

*No-poo: baking soda and water, then apple cider vinegar and water. Scrub onto scalp and rinse after each one. You want to remove dirt but not natural oils. Your hair will look better with a good quality haircut. When you go off of shampoo, your body will need 3-5 weeks to normalize because of detoxing. For dry hair, use coconut oil. For oily hair, use a castor oil mix. Every body is different, so you'll have to experiment and find what works for you.

* To save money in this area: Use less products, cut your hair short (less to wash,) shower less often.

* Dry skin: use coconut oil daily.

* Personal hygiene: diva cup and reusable menstrual pads, coconut oil as a lubricant

---Cleaning and household

*Use baking soda and vinegar to clean with.

*Groceryshrink.com for cleaning recipes: <http://groceryshrink.com/>

*Keep lights off when possible

*Keep thermostat adjusted to use less energy.