

# METRO | Making a Great Place

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## Toxics-free child care: featured facilities

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Hear from local child care providers that took simple steps to reduce the use of toxic cleaners, helping kids and the environment.



**ChildRoots, A Center for Young Children**

### **Southeast Portland**

ChildRoots, A Center for Young Children, makes sustainability part of everyday business. The noticeable absence of plastic and disposable products. The use of natural materials blending seamlessly with a color palette that brings the outside in. Upon entering the southeast Portland child care center, it's clear things are a little different here.

Executive Director Christina Unga considers health and environment when making purchasing choices for ChildRoots. Materials are chosen for their safety and lifespan, with preference for items that can be repaired and reused. The center has had the benefit of being designed from the ground up with safer building materials and a ventilation system that keeps air fresh. Beyond the built environment, ChildRoots also works to keep toxins out of its cleaning products, personal care products, art supplies and food.

Unga has learned to be more environmentally savvy by researching, “asking lots of questions” and hearing from inquiring and informed parents, many of whom chose ChildRoots for its environmental commitment. She admits it can cost more to be eco-friendly but notes, “Not every green choice comes with a higher price tag. When we find ways to reuse items or to eliminate waste, we are saving money.”

Through simple cost-cutting steps such as replacing paper hand towels with T-shirt scraps, using chalkboards instead of paper and markers, and using the nonprofit School and Community Reuse Action Project for art supplies, Unga has kept costs down while finding new ways to make ChildRoots environmentally sustainable.

<http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=38689>

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