

Bubbles, Not Balloons Campaign

Releasing balloons does not seem like it would be harmful to the environment but, all balloons released into the air eventually pop and become litter on the ground or in the water. Balloons can be blown miles away from where they were released; often ending up in the Bay or the Ocean. Animals (often sea turtles) ingest the balloons, thinking they are actually yummy jellyfish or other prey. Since the balloons cannot be broken down or digested, they can harm the animals that ingest them. Currently the Virginia Aquarium and Clean Virginia Waterways are conducting a study into the impacts of balloons as litter.

Your school can raise awareness for this important cause by starting a 10-point Bubbles, Not Balloons Campaign. Here are some steps for an easy campaign:

- Have students create posters that list other ways to celebrate without releasing balloons.
 - You can visit Clean Virginia Waterways' website <http://www.longwood.edu/cleanva/OurWorkBalloonLitter.html> for ideas for celebrations without balloons
- Have students "Make the Promise!" Send students home with the promise and have their families sign to promise not to release balloons or have the whole school sign one!
 - *Visit the Balloons Blow website for the promise to not release balloons and student packet filled with stickers, pencils, and more!*
<http://balloonsblow.org/make-the-promise/>

Take a step further:

- Host a contest for the most creative way to celebrate without releasing balloons. (10 more points)
 - Students can submit a piece of art or writing that demonstrates their new way of celebrating without balloons.
 - The art projects can be displayed in the school to raise awareness for the cause and the winning writing piece can be published in the school newsletter.
- Host/participate in a beach or waterway clean up near you and collect data (and balloons) for the Virginia Aquarium! (5 more points)
 - If you find balloons you can help the Virginia Aquarium gather data for their groundbreaking research on balloon litter. Here's the link to the research site: <https://sites.google.com/site/virginiaballoonstudy/home>
 - Make a Trash Talkin' Turtle (5 more points) Students fill a turtle replica with trash found on a beach clean-up. For more information on how to make your own Trash Talkin' Turtle visit <http://www.virginiaaquarium.com/conservation/Documents/trash-talking-turtles-first-edition.pdf>

More Information on Back



Bubbles, Not Balloons Campaign

~ There are many beautiful alternatives to releasing balloons ~



Blow bubbles



Make a planter



Tie a forget-me-knot



Colored lights



Butterfly garden, Birdbath



Light a candle



Write in chalk



Plant bulbs



Sponsor a bench



Make a stepping stone



Wildflowers, Birdhouse



Plant a tree

Balloons Blow... Don't Let Them Go!

BalloonsBlow.org

Lynnhaven River Now is available to help you along the way to becoming a Pearl School with activity ideas and help! Please send questions to Education@LRNow.org or call 505-0773.