

#brightfuture – Unilever Challenge

Firstly, thank goodness Marmite-gate is over!

What a week last week was. Just as I have a post about Unilever to write, the Marmite hits the fan and we almost have to start rationing the stuff. Thankfully, all is well and the dispute got resolved. I can't live without marmite crumpets of a Sunday morning!

(Note to self: I had no idea until last week that Unilever owned Marmite. You learn something new every day...)

I was set a challenge the other week, by Britmums and Unilever, to think about the small changes we can make in our own lives in order to make the world a better place for our children. A very thought provoking and profound topic of discussion, and usually one of those subjects I am only likely to start talking about after I have had a couple of G&T's, but here I am, sober as a judge whilst drinking a cup of tea and discussing this important issue with you all.

So, how can we create a #brightFuture for our children?

What better way to think of an answer than to ask...yep, you guessed it, my children!



Question 1: What little changes we could make as a family in order to change the future for the better?

Luke, age 8: We could stop making so much rubbish and recycle more. Lots of rubbish we make in our house isn't recyclable and we can't use it again. I think that is silly and we don't need to be making so much rubbish.

Zak, age 7: We could make sure we turn the lights off when we aren't in that room. You leave the light on in your bedroom all the time Mummy and you aren't in there, you're always in the kitchen (Ah, nothing like a gender stereotype eh?!)

Ben, age 2: Where juice? (Insightful isn't he?!)

Question 2: What do we do already that is helping the world in a small way?

Luke, age 8: I turn the tap off when I am brushing my teeth. I don't need the water on until I am ready to wash the toothpaste away.

Zak, age 7: I make sure I take my rubbish home or put it in a bin. Throwing rubbish on the floor is bad and can hurt animals and make the world a mess.

Ben, age 2: Wee-wee coming! (Not sure how that's helping the world but, you know...)

Question 3: Why is it important we look after the world?

Luke, age 8: Because we won't get another world. This is the only one we will ever have and if we ruin it, we will have nowhere to live.

Zak, age 7: Because we will kill all the plants and animals if we aren't careful, and then we will have no food or nice things in the world to look at.

Ben, age 2: Where Daddy? (Good question, probably looking after a corner of the world known as the pub, poppet)



So, there we have it, from the mouths of babes. Their view on what we can and should be doing and why.

It's really interesting asking your kids what they think about 'grown up' subjects like this. They often surprise you and come out with fantastic ideas and insightful comments...and they are also pretty good at making me feel stupid or have me questioning my actions.

When questioned, 83% of British parents felt the birth of

their first child made them want to change some aspect of their lives for the better. Nine out of 10 parents, and 8 out of 10 children, agree that if everyone does small things to improve the environment, “together we can make the world a better place”. [This is where the Unilever #brightFuture initiative comes in.](#)

Unilever’s **#brightFuture** initiative focuses on small changes that can make big differences, and how we can build a world where everyone lives well and lives sustainably. Since the launch of the Sustainable Living Plan, Unilever has helped **482 million** people to improve their health and hygiene, including through hand washing, improving self-esteem and oral hygiene. This is exemplified in the work undertaken by Domestos that has committed to helping **25 million** people gain improved access to a toilet by 2020. Access to clean sanitation can protect people from preventable diseases, reduce mortality rates, help reduce school dropout rates and improve quality of life.

Persil has backed a global initiative called, ‘Learning for Tomorrow’. Partnering with UNICEF, they aim to help give children in some of the world’s toughest areas the opportunity of a quality education. Something that here in the UK it is all too easy to take for granted.

Lastly, the Dove Self-Esteem Project has worked closely with leading psychologists, academics and experts to create materials and resources that help young people develop a positive relationship with their appearance. The project has now reached over **19 million** young lives. Self esteem is such an important factor in the success of someones life. If you have confidence, that is half the battle won and in this day and age, with social media and suchlike playing such a HUGE part in our lives, it is all too easy to compare yourself to others and do yourself a disservice. Be the best you can be, hold your head up high, and believe in yourself.



Ensuring our kids are educated in looking after themselves and the world around them is one of my main aims as a parent. I want them to have respect for themselves, others, the world around them and to understand that actions have consequences.

We as individuals can easily make small changes to how we act and behave to better our world for ourselves and for future generations. It might not seem like you're doing much, but when you combine these small good deeds and changes together

with everyone else, the impact can be seen and *will* make a difference. From little acorns as they say...

What changes could you make?



Disclosure: This post is an entry for BritMums #brightFuture Challenge, sponsored by Unilever