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Inspired By Kids: Green Kids Conference

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My two children amaze and inspire me everyday. My almost 5-year-old is always coming up with the most incredible ideas. Out of the blue, she'll say stuff like, "Mami, why don't we visit the North Pole tomorrow so I can see real penguins?" I love that about kids. So I was really looking forward to attending the first [Green Kids Conference](#) held in San Jose, California last weekend. It didn't disappoint.

Eleven-year-old Pavan Gowda is the founder of both the conference and [Green Kids Now](#), an organization that encourages children to get involved in saving our planet by conserving water and energy, effective waste management and other environmentally-friendly measures. In its first year, the conference sold out weeks before it actually happened with about 800 people attending.



I was lucky to get an opportunity to speak with Pavan for a little while – he was pretty busy helping his mom, the president of the organization, run the show – and I was immediately amazed by his passion for the environment. He told he'd thought of the idea for the conference because when he went looking for one, he couldn't find anything similar for kids.

There were a ton of super interesting exhibitors including the [Marine Science Institute](#) (they brought a bunch of sea animals, including starfish for the children to touch), [Global Exchange](#), [SmartelligentZ](#) (an after-school science program), [Environmental Volunteers](#) (which teaches kids to love science and nature), and [Good and Green Radio](#).

My favorite exhibitors were the kids from [Neighborhood Christian Center](#) who attend a green summer camp where they learn how to live green in a sustainable way. The kids were all in elementary school and their exhibit included information about how long it takes for all types of different materials to biodegrade and how composting works, among other green topics. I found them not only knowledgeable, but also passionate and totally into sustainability.

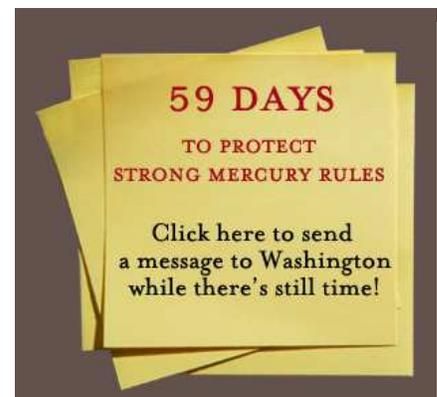
The conference also included performances and presentations. I couldn't be at two places at the same time, so I wasn't able to attend all of these, but the opening performance was by a musical group called [Zun Zun](#), which celebrates the environments and cultures of the Americas through music. I was truly blown away by their Water Music performance and they had all the children (and grown-ups) dancing to their catchy tunes in no time.

I was also able to catch the final presentation by the kids of [SmartelligentZ](#), the after school science program, and I was really impressed. Their theme was redefining the three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) into Rlife, Rfuture, Rolutions. It was smart and easy to understand and relate to.

It was truly inspiring to see so many kids care so deeply about what's going on with our planet today because they are the future, and if they're already so involved that gives me hope for my own children and grandchildren's future. Kudos to the parents (I got to talk to many of them and they were sincerely interested in what we're doing at MCAF) and teachers and other adults in their lives who have taught them this is a serious issue that requires their attention and involvement!

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