

## May mud pies make summer flowers in Oshawa

### Energy Conservation Week Fair offers environmental tips for all ages

**“Starting early and teaching your kids is great,” Joan Kerr, Foundation for Building Sustainable Communities**

OSHAWA -- The Radovich family planned on spending their Saturday morning reading a few books at the library, but ended up making mud pies and watching a puppet show.

They took part in the Energy Conservation Week Fair put on by the Foundation for Building Sustainable Communities at the Legends Centre.

May Ho-Stepanek, program coordinator for Plant a Row Grow a Row, showed Danielle, 4, and Bailey, 2, how to make soil balls.

“This is a great way to encourage kids to plant flowers, trees, and vegetables,” Ms. Ho-Stepanek said. “When the children get the chance to make a soil ball, they get to find out it’s more than just soil that grows plants.”

In an activity that ran every hour on the hour for kids at the fair, Ms. Ho-Stepanek made soil balls consisting of clay, compost, sand, soil and seeds.

“It’s perfect for summer,” she said. “You can just toss this in the ground and watch your plant grow.”

Danielle and Bailey made soil balls with sunflower seeds.

At first, Danielle liked the mess in front of her that looked like cookie dough. When she rolled her dirt mix into a ball with her hands, she realized mud pies don’t smell as good as they looked.

“It’s dirty.”

But once it grows, the flowers will be pretty.

The fair showed people how to save energy in many different ways from heating, windows and water to transportation and gardening.

“If we can promote that being sustainable is easy, more people will do it,” Joan Kerr, director of FBSC said. “Starting early and teaching your kids is great.”



**Making seed balls.** OSHAWA -- Danielle Radovich, 4, learns how to make a seed ball at the Foundation for Building Sustainable Communities' Energy Conservation Fair at the Legend Centre. May 23, 2009 *Stefanie Swinson / Metroland*