

Fort Polk Youth Leads Family to Adopt Recycling Practices



At Fort Polk, Net Zero Waste (NZW) is about changing culture, creating values for a sustainable future, and protecting the environment to ensure mission support. The NZW program impacts everything we do at Fort Polk, so what better way to institute the NZW philosophy than to get kids involved to help protect our communities, make better choices, and enable longevity for generations to come?

The Montgomery Family, which consists of Danielle (Mom), Justin (Dad; Assigned to Ops Group Task Force 5), Chase (7), and Brady (6), arrived to Fort Polk in August of 2017 from Fort Riley, Kansas. Their family's recycling commitment started when the youngest member, Brady, made a unique discovery.

At six-years-old, Brady Montgomery is a leader-in-the-making. His strong will and adamant determination ensures that his family does their part, which further proves that even kids love to recycle!

What makes Brady so excited about recycling? When they lived in Fort Riley, Kansas, Brady went on a preschool field trip to the local recycling center. He was able to see first-hand how the recycling machines worked, how much goes into recycling, and the impact humans have on the environment. He has been a strong defender of protecting the earth ever since. In the Montgomery household, Brady is the one who advocates that everyone recycles. If the family is hit or miss at recycling, Brady's strong will and admiration for recycling jumps in as he quickly reminds them how important it is for the family to do their part.

To help make recycling easier in the Montgomery home, Mom Danielle, makes recycling easy and fun. She uses extra boxes as storage and creates signs with the recycling emblems to help keep the family focused and organized. For now, everything is collected into a single-stream box in their outdoor garage. They collect different items such as mixed paper, cardboard, bottles, and aluminum cans. On recycling day, Brady and Chase look forward to arriving to the recycling center to their part, as different items get sorted.

Sometimes the family drives into Bay #2 at the Recycling Center, on the corners of Georgia and Maine, to drop off their items. The family also takes advantage of the 24-hour recycling containers, conveniently located outside the Recycling Center's gates. As for their cardboard boxes, they tend to discard them in any one of the green cardboard dumpsters located around the installation at Fort Polk.

By now, the Montgomery family has their system down to a science as it has integrated into their family's values. A little bit of effort goes a long way, all because one little boy decided to do his part to make Fort Polk a better place!