

## Holistic Moms Network teaches kids to lead healthier, greener lives

by Nancy Massotto/Holistic Moms Network

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When Michael Massotto was a preschooler, his class designed a pretend supermarket to encourage the children's imagination and social skill. He decided to set up the organic section - something that made his mother proud.

Michael's mom, Nancy Massotto, is Executive Director of the [Holistic Moms Network](#), a national non-profit organization for parents interested in holistic health and green living. Based in Caldwell, the organization was founded in 2003, when Michael was just a toddler.

"Parents are facing many new challenges with regard to children's health," said Dr. Massotto, "and many of us are looking for simple, natural ways to protect their well-being as well as the to restore the health of the environment." Living by example, says Dr. Massotto, is one of the most powerful ways our children can learn to live a healthier lifestyle and to be environmentally conscious.

"Being a new parent can be rather alienating," explains Dr. Massotto, "and even more so when you are making 'alternative' or holistic choices for your family." Members of the Holistic Moms Network may choose natural childbirth, breastfeeding, holistic medicine, or organic foods, for example, as lifestyle options for raising healthy kids. The organization offers a place where holistic-minded parents can come together to support each other and to learn more about these options.

"Raising my children holistically means having an approach to health and well-being that connects mind, body, and spirit and that also recognizes how the choices we make impact not only our own health but the health of our environment," said Dr. Massotto.

Teaching her children about holistic options "empowers them to make informed choices" and offers life lessons that they can make a difference in their health and the health of the environment. On a recent Saturday, Michael joined his mother to walk their local neighborhood to distribute compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) on behalf of Project Porchlight, a non-profit organization promoting CFL use to conserve energy and reduce our negative impact on the environment. "It was fun and I liked giving away lightbulbs that are good for the earth," said Michael, now 7.

Like other holistic parents, the Massottos purchase local, organic foods, utilize holistic medicine including chiropractic and homeopathy, and have made a number of changes to live more sustainably, such as using or making non-toxic cleaners for their home.

"Each and every one of us can make simple choices to improve our health and the health of the environment, even if it's changing a lightbulb." says Dr. Massotto. "And these choices can easily involve the whole family."

For more information about the Holistic Moms Network, visit their website at [holisticmoms.org](http://holisticmoms.org) or contact them at 877-HOL-MOMS.

To learn about Project Porchlight please visit [projectporchlight.com](http://projectporchlight.com).



Photo courtesy of Nancy Massotto  
Nancy Massotto and her son, Michael.