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How One 16 Year-Old Got a City to Say No to Plastic Straws

And you can make a difference.



By [Alexandra Lim-Chua Wee](#)

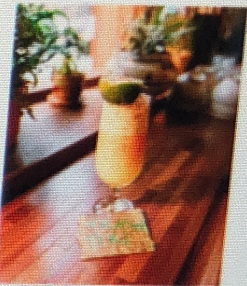
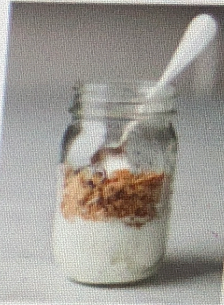


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Did you know that in the U.S. we use about 500 million straws per day? Many of these straws -- too small to be recycled with other plastics -- will head straight to landfills and eventually float into our oceans. The city of Monterey, California is working to say no to straws for 30 days -- and perhaps even beyond and it's all thanks to 16-year-old, Shelby O'Neil.

The city's [No Straw November](#) campaign, which launched last week, is encouraging local business and residents to refuse single-use plastic straws or seek other sustainable options, for one month. "I started this campaign to raise both social and personal awareness on issues of single-use plastic pollution," O'Neil says. "Try keeping track of how many straws you are offered or refused. This could help each of us realize how much single-use plastic we use in a one month or a year."

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