

Lesson 3 – Extension 1 – Schoolyard waste and litter audit

Doing a waste and litter clean-up in the schoolyard can make children aware of how much waste is discarded by them and their peers. It could motivate students to approach the canteen managers about the types of food and packaging that is served there.

Meets HASS ACHASSK12I Influences on consumer choices and methods that can be used to help make informed personal consumer and financial choices

Sustainability OI.6, OI.8, OI.9 All actions for sustainability require us to evaluate past practices and make balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts

You will need

- Gloves for each pair of students
- Bags, such as used bread bags, for the collection of waste and litter

Method

Do a rubbish audit of the school grounds after lunch one day. Give the children gloves and bags, such as used bread bags, and ask them to collect the litter and discarded food/waste in the school grounds (not in the bins) for 15 minutes, in zones around the school. Once collected, lie a tarp or groundsheet down in a sheltered area of the school yard, and sort the litter into categories. Discuss the food waste and packaging found in the school yard. If there are particular kinds of problematic packaging arising from the canteen, propose alternative food packaging to the canteen manager or school management (e.g. *muffins could be made and sold without packaging, food could be served on washable plates*). If there are particular types of food/waste/litter derived from home, discuss ways that this could be reduced (e.g. *instead of small yoghurt containers, yoghurt could be decanted into containers at home, from a larger container*).

The Tasmanian School Canteen Association promotes the provision of nutritious, safe and healthy food services in schools and a whole school approach to healthy eating. They run the Smartfood Award, an accreditation program (Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze) and member schools have access to extra resources to support their accreditation. See <http://tascanteenassn.org.au/>



Photo: Simon de Salis

If there is time, ask the students to develop fliers or posters to encourage people to generate less waste and litter, and/or prepare an article for the school magazine about what they found in the school yard.

