



Lillypilly Preschool, 2013

Case Study Lillypilly Preschool

Bin Trim – Waste solutions for a sustainable business

Now that the children of Lillypilly Preschool know where waste goes and how to reuse it, they are making a far bigger difference than their teachers anticipated.

What's in the bin?

With 68 children aged between two and five eating, playing and resting their way through the day, Lillypilly Preschool's main forms of waste are food, nappies, drink containers, paper and food packaging. Some paper and plastic was already being recycled, and some food waste was being separated and sent to the on-site compost bin and worm farm. However, a Bin Trim assessment revealed plenty of waste that could be recycled was still ending up in general waste bins. Waste generated by the Centre's youngest children, for example, was all going to landfill. These children were being cared for in a separate room that didn't have a recycling bin or receptacle for food waste.

Priority materials for recycling or reuse:

- Food
- Paper

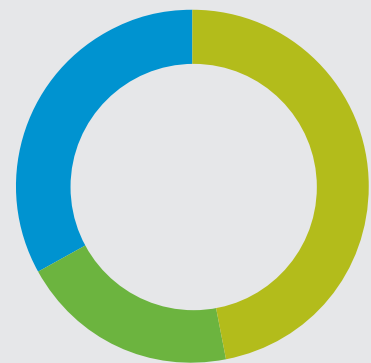
Actions to reduce waste and recycle more

After Lillypilly's Bin Trim assessment, owner Helen McCabe equipped each lunch table with three colour-coded containers for recycling, general waste and food waste. The children know exactly what to put where thanks to a large, easy-to-understand display that uses pictures and colours to explain the different types of waste, and which container to put it in. They gain a greater understanding of the potential reuse of waste by being involved in its disposal: 'The children love taking the scraps out to the compost and feeding the worms,' McCabe says. Watering the garden with 'worm wee' is also a sought-after job.



Potential recycling

Bin Trim identified that Lillypilly Preschool had the potential to recycle 33 per cent more.



- 47% General waste
- 20% Currently recycled
- 33% Potential recycling

Bin Trim savings

- All food waste now diverted
- All plastics and paper now recycled



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Instead of paying for an additional recycling bin, parents are being encouraged to reduce the amount of food packaging and drink containers that come to school.

Actions implemented included:

- Introduced three-bin waste separation system on each lunch table
- Created visual displays to show children where to put waste
- Incorporated lessons about waste and recycling into curriculum
- Involved children in taking waste to compost and worm farm
- Encouraged children to help use the worm farm to fertilise the garden
- Children and parents asked to pack lunches in reusable containers.

Results and savings

The Centre is now redirecting much more of its waste to the recycling bin, compost and worm farm. Parents will be further educated about reducing packaging in lunchboxes through a quarterly newsletter and new display, but so far the children are proving to be effective change agents by asking parents to buy in bulk and choose reusable packaging to reduce waste. Juice packs, yoghurt suckers and disposable wrappers are being packed far less often into children's lunchboxes as a result. 'We get a lot of feedback from families; children are definitely influencing things at home,' McCabe says. 'The program has had far more far-reaching ramifications than we could have hoped for.'



For further information

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