

Change Choices Good, Better, Best

Waste in our school



Stepping Up to Sustainability



Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' will practice sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!



Waste

This is an area where we all can make a contribution to living lightly on the planet

An integrated approach to waste management deals with waste in several different ways, with the aim of reducing the amount of waste that ends up in landfills.

Integrated waste management reduces the need for new raw materials, and so helps prevent environmentally harmful processes such as mining, power generation and water exploitation. Less waste means less pollution. Waste can be minimized by:

- **Reducing.** This is the most important step - if we do it well, there will be less to re-use and recycle.
- **Re-using.** Where possible, re-use a product several times. If you cannot use it again, find someone who can.
- **Recycling.** If products cannot be re-used, then recycle them. The first step is to separate your waste at home into organic waste, plastic, glass, cans and paper - all of which can be recycled for re-use.
- **Recovering.** As waste in landfills rots, methane gas is given off and this can be collected for use as fuel.

Did you know?

About half of the refuse we throw away each day can be turned into compost, thus reducing waste, recycling valuable resources and enriching the soil.

Did you know?

Cristiano Ronaldo and Ronaldinho took to the field in the 2010 Fifa World Cup in South Africa wearing shirts made of recycled plastic bottles!

Did you know?

One litre of oil can form an oil slick on water bigger than two soccer fields. Never pour antifreeze, oil or other chemicals onto the ground, into stormwater sewers or down the drain.

Good Change Choices



Improve lawn mowing procedure.

Leaving the grass clippings on the lawns instead of bagging all clippings reduces bags used to get rid of the clippings and also reduces the amount of total waste that has to be removed from the school. Leaving the grass clippings on the lawn will result in a greener, healthier lawn.



Re-use scrap paper.

Scrap paper that is still in fairly good condition can be e-used for low priority notes.



Spell check and proof documents on the computer screen.

This will save you printing out your assignments or projects twice, especially if you find grammatical errors or mistakes.



Use a reusable lunch box.

Put your lunch in reusable containers. You could also include a cloth napkin, which can be washed and re-used. You create less waste by using washable containers to pack your lunch.

Better Change Choices



Separate all school waste into paper, tins, glass, card, organic waste, plastics and other.

Ensure all your sorted waste goes to a well managed recycling depot. You could also find suppliers who take back used items, such as printer cartridges, for recycling and refilling.



Conduct a school waste audit.

A waste audit is one of the first steps in starting a recycling and waste minimisation programme. Find out what is being used and what is being thrown away in your classrooms. Abide by the rules of reduce, re-use, refuse, recycle and respect.



Set up a recycling depot at your school.

Involve the whole school and even your community. It is a good idea to choose one or two recyclables to start your new programme (such as cardboard and mixed paper). Once your programme is up and running smoothly, expand it to include more recyclable materials. Focusing on recycling one commodity at a time allows you to work out the difficulties that may arise.

Best Change Choices



Set up an organic compost heap.

A compost heap is a good way of getting rid of organic waste without removing it from the schoolgrounds. It can be very efficient if managed properly. Compost can be used to fertilise the school gardens or even sold to the local community.



Start a recreational area clean-up initiative.

Have an annual clean-up day for your school where everyone cleans up different local areas such as parks, streams and rivers as well as the school itself. Ensure that the clean-up days have an educational component so that everyone is encouraged and motivated to use less and therefore create less waste in their lives.



WESSA Share-Net

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For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 2124 or 2144; e-mail us at sharenet@wessa.co.za or visit our website www.wessa.org.za

Main funding agent of the WESSA 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' project.

Did you know?

To reduce littering, supermarkets charge for plastic packets. As a result, fewer packets are being asked for meaning less waste and litter in the future.

Did you know?

Grass clippings take about 7 to 14 days to break down when left on the lawn.

Did you know?

Many companies use recycled paper to manufacture toilet paper. Recycled toilet paper is often cheaper than ordinary toilet paper.

Did you know?

About 35% of municipal solid waste (before recycling) by weight is paper and paper products. Recycling one ton of newspaper eliminates 3 cubic metres of landfill.

Practice the
lifestyle choices
we all have to make!!