



Litter Prevention Toolkit Discussion Guide - Schools

A Guide for Engaging School in Litter Prevention

Schools are powerful hubs for fostering change and creating a cleaner, more sustainable future. By engaging school leaders, teachers, and students, you can inspire action to prevent litter, protect the environment, and promote community pride.

This guide equips you with strategies to connect effectively with schools, spark student involvement, and set up fun, impactful activities like litter clean-ups.

While not exhaustive, this guide offers practical prompts and ideas to get started on your journey to make schools part of the "Bin It or Bring It Home" movement.



Why Schools Matter

Context

- Schools are centres of influence where positive behaviours can take root and grow.
- Litter from schools often makes its way into local waterways, contributing to environmental degradation.
- Clean school grounds create a safer, healthier, and more welcoming environment for students and staff.

What's in It for Schools and Students?

- Cleaner Playgrounds: Reducing litter creates a more enjoyable and safe space for recreation.
 - Educational Opportunities: Teaching students about litter prevention builds lifelong habits and global awareness.
 - Community Leadership: Schools that take action inspire their local communities and demonstrate environmental stewardship.
 - Fun Engagement: Activities like litter audits and waste-free lunch challenges make learning interactive and meaningful.
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The Bigger Picture: Benefits of Litter Prevention in Schools

1. Protecting Local Ecosystems

"Every piece of litter stopped on school grounds is one less that can pollute nearby rivers and harm aquatic wildlife."

2. Inspiring Change Beyond the School Gates

"When students embrace litter prevention, they bring these habits home and encourage their families to follow suit."

3. Fostering Responsibility and Pride

"Encouraging students to care for their school environment nurtures a sense of ownership and pride in their surroundings."



How Schools Can Make a Difference

Engaging Activities for Students and Staff

1. Litter Audits

- Develop a source reduction plan for litter by conducting classroom or canteen waste audits to identify key sources of litter.
- Use a simple record sheet to categorise and count waste, then set reduction goals.

2. Waste-Free Lunch Challenges

- Hold a 'Nude Food Day' where students pack lunches without single-use packaging.
- Celebrate successes with certificates or prizes.

3. Creative Competitions

- Organise poster design or art contests with themes like "Protect Our Waterways."
- Host a photography competition showcasing clean spaces or nature conservation.

4. Litter Clean-Up Events

- Arrange a school-wide clean-up day targeting playgrounds or nearby parks.
- Partner with local councils or organisations for supplies and support.

5. Set Up a Green Team

- Create a student-led team to champion sustainability initiatives in the school.



How to Engage Schools Effectively

Approaching Safely and Effectively

- Begin with the school principal, sustainability coordinator or school committee
- Provide materials outlining the "Bin It or Bring It Home" toolkits benefits
- Highlight how simple actions can lead to big impacts.

Key Messages to Share

1. "Litter-free schools are safer, cleaner, and more enjoyable for everyone."
2. "Your school can lead by example and inspire the community to take action."
3. "Small changes, like reducing single-use plastics, can have a big impact on the environment."



Overcoming Objections Using Recognise, Intention, Challenge, Hope (RICH Model)

- **Recognise:** “We know schools are busy places, and adding another initiative can feel overwhelming.”
 - **Intention:** “This isn't about adding more work—it's about embedding fun and meaningful activities into your existing programs.”
 - **Challenge:** “Imagine the positive message a litter-free school sends to students, parents, and the community.”
 - **Hope:** “By taking these small steps, your school can be a leader in protecting Melbourne's environment.”
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Resources and Support

- Visit www.cleanup.org.au/schools for activity ideas and resources.
 - Explore Melbourne Water's [Education Programs and Resources](#) for tools and activities designed to help students understand the importance of protecting waterways.
 - Tangaroa Blue Source Reduction Plan - <https://tangaroablue.org/source-reduction-plans/>
 - Visit <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/litter-toolkit> to showcase how local communities can get involved with the “Bin It or Bring It Home” toolkit.
 - Partner with local councils for materials like gloves, bags, and bins for clean-up events.
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Thank You

Thank you for supporting “Bin It or Bring It Home”. Your efforts in engaging schools not only create cleaner learning environments but also shape the next generation of environmental stewards. Together, we can protect our waterways, inspire communities, and make a lasting difference.