

# Factsheet



## Waste Free School Lunches



### Why go Waste Free?

In the average school lunch you're likely to find plastic used to wrap up freshly made food, or as packaging for processed foods. Some of this plastic ends up as litter on school grounds and can travel into the environment. Waste Free Lunches tackles the issue of waste, while also encouraging healthy eating, reduced food costs and conserving important resources with minimal effort.

- By choosing reusable packaging for school lunches we can reduce these figures.
- Processed foods with excess sugars, often come individually wrapped. By encouraging waste free lunches, sugar-filled snacks can be replaced with healthy alternatives such as fruit, cheese, vegetable sticks, etc.
- All excess food can be stored for later, reducing the food waste in our bins.
- When you purchase items in bulk, you can save money, and help reduce the resources needed to produce packaging.

### TOP TIPS TO AVOID LUNCH WASTE?

- Cut up fruit and vegetables. Your child can take a few pieces at a time and save the rest for later, rather than throwing away a half eaten piece of fruit.
- Buy family size yoghurt pots and decant into small leak proof re-usable containers, or better still, make your own.
- Don't use cling film, foil or plastic sandwich bags – use a lunch box, or reuse an airtight container such as an ice cream tub or tupperware instead.
- Avoid individually wrapped multipack items.
- Avoid individual drinks cartons – use refillable drink containers.
- Leftovers from a meal cooked the night before make a great next day lunch e.g. lasagne or pasta bake – saving you money, time AND waste!
- Use a cloth napkin rather than a paper napkin
- Ask your child to bring home lunch leftovers. This will allow you to learn about your child's lunch preferences, preventing foods he or she dislikes from being thrown away.
- Encourage your children to help plan, prepare and pack their own lunches. They will also learn invaluable food preparation skills for later in life.

# Factsheet



## Waste Free School Lunches



### Class Room Activities:

- Make your own packaging
- Discover where packaging comes from
- Have a nude food zero waste lunch day and measure the waste reduced
- Start a worm farm or composting

- Take a FREE class excursion to the Regional Resource Recovery Centre and see what happens to your waste

### Free Incursions:

Our tour guides can run a free waste avoidance lunch activity incursion at your school. To book call **9256 9555** or email us **tours@smrc.com.au**.

## Did you know?

- **Packaging waste in landfill produces the same amount of greenhouse gas as 860,000 cars.**  
(source: <http://environmentvictoria.org.au/index.php?q=content/packaging-0#.VOKVysZsG9S>)
- **The chemical industry admits that food packaging contains substances that can migrate into food.3 One chemical is of particular concern, BPA, because it can mimic our hormones and disrupt reproductive development. Monitoring has shown more than 90% of people have “detectable levels of BPA in their bodies”.**  
(source: [www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/cookware-plastics-shoppers-guide-to-food-safety](http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/cookware-plastics-shoppers-guide-to-food-safety))
- **More than one million birds and marine animals die each year from consuming or becoming caught in plastic and other debris.**  
(source: [www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/ocean\\_plastics/](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/ocean_plastics/))
- **Australians waste over 4,000,000 tonnes of food each year - that’s \$8bn worth – enough to fill 450,000 garbage trucks!**  
(source: National Waste Report 2010)
- **Whilst we throw out almost half of what’s grown, 2 million Australians don’t have enough to eat and are in need of food aid.**  
(source: [www.foodwise.com.au/](http://www.foodwise.com.au/))

## Find out more...

To find out more about recycling and to download education kits, visit [recycleright.wa.gov.au](http://recycleright.wa.gov.au)