



Scouts Australia Environment Program



Image by Angus Whitby

RUBBISH RELAY

Aim

Raise youth awareness of different types of rubbish and how they should be disposed of for best environmental practice.

Educational objectives

- Identify different types of rubbish and identify how they can be disposed of

Age range

8-15 years old (may be able to be adjusted to other age groups)

Summary

This activity helps youth to identify different types of rubbish and how it can be disposed of in a fun and competitive way.

Equipment

Collection of rubbish (eg: landfill, organic waste, plastics, glass, paper, cans, batteries, paint, mobile phones, etc. Adjust choice to age), selection of bins/buckets/something to mark disposal areas.

Preparation

Collect rubbish, ensuring none is hazardous to the youth. Group the rubbish into bags for patrols to sort through. Label the bins/buckets/disposal areas with categories such as "landfill", "recycle", "compost" and "special".

Duration

The activity will take approximately 30 minutes.



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Setting

This activity can be carried out in any setting.

Background

The disposal of unwanted or unusable materials is a growing problem in Australia and around the world, with 43.8 million tonnes of waste generated in 2006-07 in Australia alone. Waste includes household waste, commercial waste, hazardous waste and biomedical waste. The amount of hazardous waste has been increasing, doubling between 2002-03 and 2006-07.

Waste is an issue because it attracts rodents and insects which harbour gastrointestinal parasites, yellow fever, worms, the plague and other human diseases. Exposure to hazardous wastes, particularly when they are burned, can cause various other diseases including cancers. Waste can contaminate surface water, groundwater, soil, and air which causes more problems for humans, other species, and ecosystems.

There are many methods of waste disposal, including landfill, incineration, recycling and resource recovery. Ideally waste generation should be avoided and reduced in conjunction with the disposal methods.

Step by step guide to activity

Introduce the topic of waste and explain why it is important to reduce waste where possible. Outline the basic methods of waste disposal (recycle, compost, landfill and hazardous waste). Line each patrol up at one end of hall/area and have bins/buckets labelled with "Recycle", "Compost", "Landfill" and "Special" at the other end. Give each patrol a bag of waste and explain that they have to sort their waste into these categories, as a relay. Only one person can be running between the bins and patrol at a time to place the waste. The rest of the patrol can

discuss which categories the rest of their waste fits into while another patrol member is running. Points are given for speed and correctly identifying the category of waste an item fits into. Once all waste has been sorted, call all patrols to gather around bins for discussion.

Evaluation

Sort through the waste bins as a group, holding up items for kids to yell what category they fall into. Draw attention to trickier items such as plastics (look at codes) and hazardous wastes. Ask who sorts their waste at home. For those who don't, point out how easy it is and how much it helps the environment.

Further activities

There are plenty of Scouts Australia activities about the environment; please speak to your local environment team member or take a look on Scout Central or your state website.

There are some great interactive recycling games online:

- <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com.au/kids/games/actiongames/recycle-roundup/>
- <http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/FunStuff/clean-up-the-river---an-interactive-recycling-game.html>
- <http://www.visyenviromaniacs.com.au/games/recycleFrenzy/>

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