



Centre name: Mount Ousley Preschool

Project name: Reduce Plastic Waste

Why: We are now aware of the damage plastic waste is causing to the environment globally and we want to make a difference locally by reducing the amount of single use plastic waste at pre-school.

We aim to do this together, children, educators, families and the local community.

How: Through data collection of waste we will measure how we reduce overall waste, particularly the soft plastics. This project will educate children; families, educators and communities to be able to reduce the waste problem. The funds used will go towards education and the development of creating bees wax wraps as an alternative to soft plastic, development of a soft plastic collection point for recycling, as well as systems for sorting waste. We will educate children, educators, families and communities on composting, and using worm farms to eliminate organic waste from landfill.

Outcome: We calculated we throw away an average of 30 plastic wrappers every day, that is almost 8000 wrappers a year just from our small preschool.

We

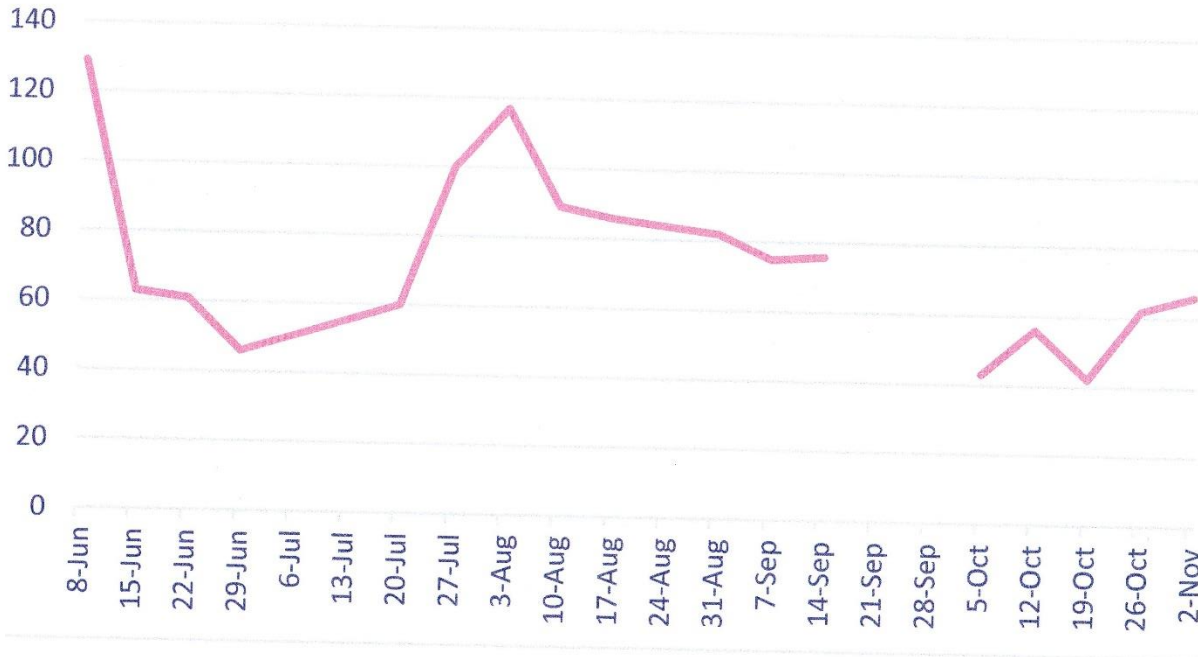
- measured the plastic non-recyclable rubbish each day and aim to reduce the overall quantity of non-recyclable or re-usable waste over the next 6 months by three quarters. The families and centre have reduced the waste from 100 to 65 over the past 2 months. See graph
- gained the support of families to reduce plastic waste. A presentation on the aims of the project were shared with families and they are on board to support our changes.
- recycle, and re-use as much waste as possible. Including implementing composting and recycling systems.
- eliminated the use of plastic bags at the service by implementing other strategies including re-using other items instead of plastic shopping bags. Eg, bread bags for soiled clothing.
- provided education to families, children and educators on ways to reduce waste and plastic use. We joined the plastic free Wollongong campaign. We visited the Wollongong Botanical Gardens to learn together about waste sorting and worm farming.
- Gained support from the Preschool community who donated bee's wax for the workshop to make bees wax wraps for members of families and community to use instead of soft plastic. Penny from Wollongong City Council partnered with us to hold the workshop.

The children

- Assisted in counting the plastic coming in to the service from their lunches through a tally app on the iPad. This information was placed on a graph to show the children the impact they have made.
- Watched the film Plastic Planet on the impact plastic is having on the environment and asked their ideas on how we can improve the environment.
- Built a worm farm and use it daily to increase their knowledge and experience of the interdependence between humans, animals and plants.
- Use bee's wax wraps knowing it is an alternative to single use plastics and highlights the importance of bees in our lives.
- Recycle and re-use materials for use in the art and craft.



Weekly Plastics Count



Learning about worm farming at Wollongong Botanic Gardens



Building our own worm farm