

# ZERO WASTE Education

The Zero Waste Education (ZWE) programme has been educating children about the topic of sustainable resource use since 1993. This award-winning programme is now offered to over 480 schools throughout New Zealand to students in years 1-8 each year.

Additionally there are three units for preschools. Note that these are only available in some council areas across New Zealand. Contact our office to learn more.

If your school is offered Zero Waste Education, it is provided by your council and usually from the Waste Levy funds. This free Council programme enables children to investigate the link between the earth's natural resources, the products they use and see around them and the resulting waste (natural resources we no longer want) that pollutes our environment.

This comprehensive programme consists of different units each focussing on a specific solution to our waste problem. As the units alternate each year students will constantly receive new material. They will have received 9 units by the time they leave Year 8. More details on each of these units can be found overleaf.

**Preschool**  
ZERo the No  
Rubbish Hero

**Years 3/4**  
Reduce Unit  
and Reuse  
Unit

**Years 7/8**  
Resource  
Sustainability  
Unit and Water  
Unit

**Years 1/2**  
Is That Really  
Rubbish and  
The Litterless  
Lunchbox

**Years 5/6**  
Recycle Unit  
and Compost  
Unit

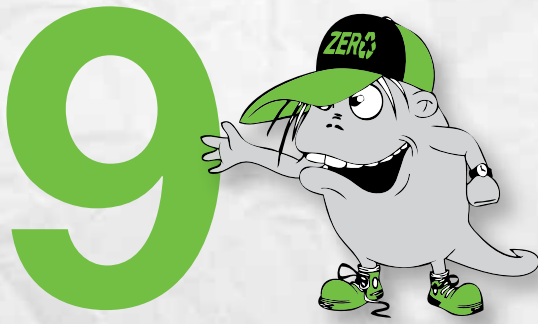
## Timetabling

Preschools are offered one 45 minute lesson. The two Year 1/2 units comprise of two 45-minute lessons. The six Year 3-8 units each comprise of four 45-minute lessons. All units are taught by a specialist teacher. Teachers can opt for one 45-minute lesson per day, or 90-minute sessions comprising of two lessons (with a 10 minute break mid-session).

## The Educators, Unit Plans & Student workbooks

The programme is taught by a specialist educator with extensive knowledge of waste minimisation in a real world context. Unit plans are provided prior to the visit to assist teachers in undertaking curriculum planning. These unit plans also contain suggested hands-on extension activities, writing tasks and links to resources. Students undertake formative assessment tasks in class under the guidance of the programme educator.

For each unit, students also receive their own workbook / worksheets to complete and use to teach their family and friends. A small amount of homework may be required of the students. A marking template is given to each classroom teacher as required.



# ZERO WASTE Units

Education

All units are supported by workbooks / worksheets, interactive games and activities, DVD's, relevant photos and website references.

## ZERo the No Rubbish Hero (Preschool)

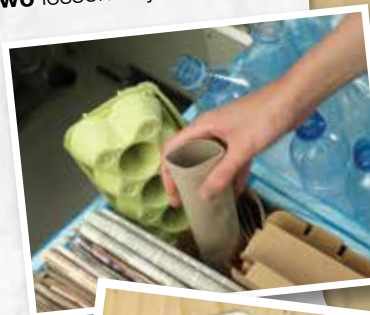
Young children are introduced to the idea that our rubbish makes a giant rubbish pile and we can choose to make that pile smaller. In one session a specialist educator leads children to investigate one of 3 ways of stopping that Rubbish via interactive play. Early childcare centres have a choice of a focus on Compost, Reuse or Recycling. Note this unit is only available in certain council areas. Please contact our office to learn more.

## Is That Really Rubbish (Years 1/2)

This unit focuses on items of rubbish commonly found in the children's homes. They are asked to consider the question "Is that really rubbish?" before exploring whether the items could be used again, placed in a recycling bin, or fed to the worms in the compost/worm farm. The classroom becomes a place of waste minimisation in action with students playing with simple toys made from reused materials, as well as seeing a real worm farm full of wriggly worms. The programme is taught over **two** lessons by a specialist educator.

## The Litterless Lunchbox (Years 1/2)

Students are introduced to the concept of 'litter' (things we don't want anymore) and explore their lunchboxes to discover what litter hides within. After examining the connection between the litter in their lunchboxes and the litter evident in the environment, the students embark on a litter hunt in the school grounds. Armed with their new knowledge it's now time for the students to explore some simple alternatives to the litter-filled lunch menu they can share with their caregivers, and a reduction in school litter. The programme is taught over **two** lessons by a specialist educator.





## Reduce Unit (Years 3/4)

'Reducing the waste pile' is the focus of this Years 3/4 unit. Sensible shopping, recycling, composting and reusing are introduced as ways of making our waste pile smaller. Students are also introduced to the concept of waste, landfills and the five main natural resources that are used to make all the 'stuff' they consume.

## Reusing Unit (Years 3/4)

The concept of 'reusing' products and packaging and buying longer lasting items is further investigated. Students will put their knowledge and design skills into practice by reusing items of packaging from home to make a money bank or desktop tidier.



## Recycling Unit (Years 5/6)

Students delve deeper into the concept of recycling and key issues such as 'contamination' and their responsibilities as a recycler at home are reinforced. By investigating product lifecycles students are able to see how they can have a positive impact on the sustainable use of natural resources by recycling. Children also discover what actually happens to their recycling after it leaves their house, from recycling bin to new end product.



## Composting Unit (Years 5/6)

Composting is a topic that deserves its own comprehensive unit and is a key tool in tackling our growing waste problem. Children investigate the role of nature in turning organic waste in to new compost. The key composting elements of nitrogens and carbons are examined and the differences between landfills and composts are explored. Children will build their own 'mini-compost' (containing tiger worms), giving them the skills and knowledge to build and maintain large-scale composts at home.



## Resource Sustainability Unit (Years 7/8)

Natural resources - renewable and non-renewable - are the focus of this Year 7/8 level unit. Students investigate how the production systems we currently use are affecting our ability to conserve our natural resources for future generations. Alternatives to these linear forms of production are offered as well as insights into more sustainable business practices such as replacing waste streams with clean streams.



## Water Unit (Years 7/8)

Water is one of the most precious natural resources on our planet. In this unit students investigate how water is 'made' through the water cycle, how we use this water and what happens to the water we no longer want - waste water and stormwater. Water conservation and our role in the prevention of water pollution through stormwater protection complete this unit aimed at the Year 7/8 student level.

## Waste Assessments / Audits in schools

**Want to find out how much waste  
your school generates?**

Thinking of starting a composting or recycling system or wanting to know how well your existing systems are working? Then you need an assessment or audit of your 'waste stream'! We provide templates and guidance from our trained ZWE educator. There is the opportunity for adults and/or children to carry out the key research, reporting and hands on investigation. Our educator will also assist the school in more sustainable school procurement. A school waste assessment or audit is likely to result in cost savings to the school.







# WASTE Education NZ LTD

## More resources available to schools!

Here are just some of our other fantastic resources available to schools. It may be possible to link one or more activities. Contact your local ZWE educator for further details, conditions and if these are available in your council area.

### Worm Farming in Schools

**At ZWE we're wild about worms!** We have a limited number of quality wormfarms available for loan. Wormfarms are a fantastic tool in teaching a valuable method of waste minimisation and soil improvement. Every school lent a worm farm receives on-going support to ensure your worms have a long and wriggly life.

### Composting in Schools

**Did you know almost half of the waste that ends up in our landfills could have been composted?**

Composting is easy. If you know what you are doing! Our ZWE educators are available to advise you on how to best use your existing compost bin or build a special 'hot compost' from scratch. It's hot stuff!



### Whanau Waste Workshops

**Are your students waste experts but the rest of the whanau could do with a little help?** Our ZWE educator is available to run recycling, worm farming and composting workshops in your school. Let your school become a place of learning for the whole community!

## Sustainable school events

**Are you planning an upcoming school fair or running a regional schools' event?** Want to be a sustainable host? Let our ZWE team help take the guesswork and confusion out of your planning. We will help your school plan systems and establish links with appropriate service providers. Our ZWE educator can provide 'on the day' assistance and a waste audit to help measure the success of your efforts.

## Help with Community Clean-up days

**Is your class or school thinking of taking action to clean up a local reserve or beach in the local community?** ZWE will assist you by providing rubbish bags and organising the collection and safe disposal of any waste you find. To help measure your success our educator will also supervise a child centred waste audit of the rubbish collected.



## Feedback

We believe the programme has contributed significantly to the observed increase in waste minimisation practises in the eighteen District Council areas the programme is currently being used.

## Quotes from classroom teachers:

"Great!! Kids were engaged, focussed and contributed ideas."

"Booklets are great support to the programme, as were the DVDs."

"An amazing amount of information provided with both written and practical work included."

PROGRAMME SPACES ARE LIMITED SO BE QUICK!!

**ZEROWASTE**  
Education

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