

Yanchep District High School

- Worm Farm at The Worm Shed • Paper Recycling

Background

Year 3/4 teacher Naomi Shaw and the students at Yanchep District High School, 60km north of Perth, are finding solutions to the challenges faced by many schools when introducing Waste Wise programs.

The school caters for about 630 children aged from Kindergarten to Year 10.

With determination, passion and a 'never give up' attitude, Yanchep District High School has implemented a successful program that is diverting a significant amount of organic and recyclable waste from landfill.

Food Scraps

Lunchtime food scraps were first collected for the school's worm farm back in 1999. Plastic containers, donated by a dog food company, were used to collect food scraps. The first hurdle in the food scrap collection was the birds which were being drawn to the scraps between recess and lunch. Food was then brought into the classrooms and collected immediately after lunch.



CHICKENS (OFF SITE) NOW ENJOY THE FOOD SCRAPS COLLECTED FROM THE SCHOOL.



A STUDENT COLLECTING ORGANIC WASTE AFTER LUNCH.

The second hurdle was the concerns of parents and teachers regarding the hygiene of children handling the food. Education of the school community on the benefits of waste diversion proved convincing and eventually food scraps were collected by parents and teachers for chickens at home and the school worms were instead fed paper and lawn clippings.

The worms continue to thrive as students recently discovered during a 'hands-in' incursion to The Worm Shed where they learnt more about caring for the worm farms.



ALL HANDS ON DECK AT THE WORM SHED.

Paper Recycling

Persistence paid off at Yanchep District High School after it secured a recycling company to take its paper and cardboard, despite being located 60km north of Perth and far from recycling centres.

The school was told recycling would come to town once the local population in Perth's far northern suburbs had grown sufficiently. This would only be a matter of time, they were told, and so in preparation the school began placing paper in a separate bin. The paper continued to be picked up along with the general waste and by now, the school, not content to wait for the recycling message to catch up to Yanchep, steamed ahead with Waste Wise support to bring recycling to town.

SITA now collects the paper for recycling while students collect, weigh, graph and report on the amount of waste collected and diverted from landfill.

Supporting the Program

To ensure the environmental program becomes sustainable, Ms Shaw plans to develop a school-based committee to see it continue in her absence.

As the students move through the years, there should be additional support from the more senior students as they will have grown up with the environmental principles of the program.

Awards and Public Recognition

2005 – Ms Shaw's efforts won her an Environmental Excellence award from the Wanneroo Shire.

