

Penguin Friendly (zero waste) School Fete or event

Through working with St Kilda Primary School and Albert Park Primary School (located in South East Melbourne and the Port Phillip Bay catchment) the *Penguin Friendly Events* project has developed a how-to-guide for schools to run zero waste event. The *Penguin Friendly Events* project engages positive messaging with emblem animals (Little Penguin) to achieve zero waste goals. The project's 5 step approach allows any school to understanding:

1. Waste and litter is generated at an event and how to prevent it
2. Managing the event's waste and litter
3. War on Waste Washing up Kit
4. Starting small and setting realistic expectations
5. Involving students, parents and teachers

The 5 steps within this guide can be implemented by any school or community group regardless of the size of the school or event, the number of people involved or how sustainable the school is (many schools implement these steps to save money).

Students, teachers and parents at both schools learnt how their litter was hurting the local [Little Penguins](#) (St Kilda colony) and were also inspired by the [BayKeepers film](#) and ABC's [War on Waste](#) program. Their commitment to take action saw the project renamed from zero waste to Penguin Friendly and the washing up kit renamed to the War on Waste Kit.

All schools within Melbourne can implement a Penguin Friendly event (since their stormwater and litter flows to Port Phillip Bay). Schools in other catchments can adopt another local animal that is being impacted by litter.

Organisation / Business Snapshot [80 Words].

This joint project was implemented by City of Port Phillip, Port Phillip EcoCentre, Albert Park Primary School and St Kilda Primary School. All organisations have a strategic commitment to reducing waste and litter through:

- [Toward Zero Sustainability Environment Strategy](#) – City of Port Phillip
- Empowering and engaging community, to actively cultivate long-term social and environmental well-being – Port Phillip EcoCentre [Strategic Plan 2015 - 18](#)
- [ResourceSmart Schools](#) Waste Module especially A2.8 Do school events target zero waste – both schools

Background [80 Words].

Every year a school will organise and run a variety of events to build and strengthen their school community or to raise important funds for the school including fetes, grandparents' days, footy day, 100-day Kindergarten celebrations or a BBQ. Waste and litter that is generated has:

1. A cost to school (time and money) to collect and remove the waste and litter
2. An environmental cost of the litter when it is blown or washed from the school into the stormwater drains, then into local creeks and rivers

The Penguin Friendly Event project was developed as a place-based, cross-sector project that used positive interventions to prevent school event litter and waste going to landfill and the environment.

Project [160 Words].

What were the aims / objectives?

How were they measured?

What was done?

Key actions

Who was involved?

What did they do / how did they contribute?

The aim of the Penguin Friendly Events project was to pilot a range of actions to identify the common leverage points that when implemented by any school they would reduce an event's waste and litter.

Through educational and leadership sessions prior to the school event the students and teachers learnt about the importance of the Little Penguins and the impacts of litter especially plastic. Students brainstormed and implemented projects to help the penguins that gave them leadership roles and involvement before, during and after the event.

By working with the parent/ teacher event organising committees the project identified how to reduce waste during the planning stages and how to audit and manage waste and litter on the day.

After auditing how waste and litter was generated at Albert Park Primary School's Fete (term 1 2017), both schools developed their own War on Waste washing up kit to replace single-use items (plates, cups, cutlery). Bin caps (recycling and landfill) and bin signage was also used.

When piloted at St Kilda PS Fete (term 4 2017) the washing up kit prevented 2,800 single-use items being used thereby halving the waste/ recycling volumes from their previous fete.

Outcomes [80 Words].

Data that was collected during the project which contributed to the evaluation

What was achieved?

Qualitative and quantitative data and findings

Students and staff completed litter and waste audits throughout the day at both fetes. The results combined with observing people's behaviours identified a range of easy actions that will be implemented at their next fetes and events.

For example locating all the food and drink stalls in the same location with well positioned and signed bins reduced litter and contamination in the bins. Signage at each stall of what goes in which bin also reduced contamination. For food/ drink stalls who sign agreements there were clauses on what products they are to use and avoid (eg no plastic straws or ice to come in eskies not bags). Clauses also include taking waste way with them (the bar taking the empty bottles and cans).

“Quote Place your copy here [1-2 lines, 10 Words]”

“I have volunteered on many of the school stalls today and being part of the washing up stall is the best by far. Everyone is so friendly, supportive and I am not having to sell anything (like on the other stalls)”

Parent volunteer St Kilda Primary School fete

Success factors [80 Words].

What worked well in the project?

What worked well was the sharing of the following collective knowledge and expertise allowing an overarching and holistic approach to event litter and waste prevention and reduction than what would have eventuated working in isolation:

- Local government school and event waste management and collection - Port Phillip Council
- Student leadership and environmental behaviour change - Port Phillip EcoCentre
- School operations, student leadership, classroom curriculum, school events, student and parent involvement – Albert Park and St Kilda Primary Schools
- Project management – All

Challenges [80 Words].

What challenges were faced? What would you do differently next time?

Since both school events were in different terms there was the challenge to have both schools attending the project coordination meetings and proposed on-line educational sessions. The result was delivering face to face sessions at both schools and not implementing the online sessions. Future projects could overcome this by working with one school at a time (though the sharing and learning between the two schools was a real strength of the project).

The delay in funding was also a challenge that prevented sufficient lead time for the student education and leadership sessions prior to the Albert Park Primary School fete. The students, teachers and EcoCentre staff did a great job adapting and some of the student sessions were delivered after the event to take their knowledge and learnings from the 2017 fete and prepare the school for their 2018 fete.

Take home learnings [80 words]

Overall findings and learnings from the project. Did it work? If someone else was to replicate the project, what advice would you have for them?

Providing a connection to the local environment (Little Penguins) on why litter and waste are bad inspired students, parents and teachers to take action. Another key learning for schools was to include waste actions within the planning stages and not to only think about waste and litter once they have been generated. The involvement of students, teachers and parents in the planning and implementation not only reduced waste and litter it also improved overall event communications and has led to other joint sustainability ideas.

Next steps [80 Words].

What next for the project / organisation? Will you continue to deliver the project, build on the learnings, etc.?

Great momentum has been created by this project and there are many schools interested in how they can also run Penguin Friendly Events or develop their own War on Waste washing up kits. There are future opportunities to share the findings of this project through teacher presentations at Conferences (like [Steps to Sustainability Conference](#)) or network meetings (like [Teacher Environment Network](#), [MWRRG](#) or [LGPro Behaviour Change](#)) or student led workshops (like [School Sustainability Festival](#)).

Further information

For more information contact:

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or visit <http://www.ecocentre.com/programs/penguin-friendly-events>

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Signage installed at both schools:



This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Litter Innovation Fund, delivered by Sustainability Victoria



This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Litter Innovation Fund, delivered by Sustainability Victoria



Examples of bin stickers for both schools:



This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Litter Innovation Fund, delivered by Sustainability Victoria



This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Litter Innovation Fund, delivered by Sustainability Victoria



War on Waste washing up kits for both schools:



Washing up process:



Students auditing and in shark and stingray costumes promoting waste and litter messages

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