

Organising an ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN



What's the problem with litter?

Litter has many forms and sources, from a dropped sweet wrapper or car ashtray emptied in the street, to dumped bags of rubbish or demolition rubble.

It affects the appearance of an area and the impression people have of the area's quality. Although litter is often viewed as a minor environmental concern compared to global warming or deforestation, on a local scale it can cause serious problems...

- Litter is a health hazard which attracts rats and flies which spread disease.
- Litter can kill wildlife e.g. squirrels and hedgehogs can choke on bits of plastic bags.
- Litter ruins the appearance of our towns and countryside and discourages tourism and job creation.

What you can do...

There is no simple solution to tackling a litter problem. Short term campaigns may have an impact for a while but the problem always returns. Solving a litter problem requires the co-operation of a wide range of people and a permanent long-term programme.

5 steps to litter clean-up!

1. Analyse the problem
2. Collect information
3. Devise an action plan
4. Measure success
5. Maintain success

Action Step 1

Look at the problem in your school or youth club!

Decide on an area to clean up - your school, local area or a particularly ugly spot. Pin-point exactly the area you want to concentrate your efforts on. The first task is to find out where the problem is and what may be causing it.

Action Step 2

Collect information

Divide the area into easily identifiable sections and allocate responsibility for each section. Decide how much time you are prepared to spend on the campaign.

Collect the litter in each section making a note of:

- ✓ What it is...
- ✓ Where it was found...
- ✓ When it was found (day and time)...

Graph it using the information collected under the following headings:

- Different types of litter e.g. tissues, crisp packets, plastic bottles, drinks cans, plastic bags, food etc.



• When they were collected e.g. morning, lunchtime or afternoon.

• Amount of litter collected

Using this information you will be able to identify problem areas, sources of litter and reasons why litter is occurring in these areas.

Around shops, canteens, lunch areas and main entrances to buildings are common areas where litter occurs.

Survey your litter bins...

There will probably be areas that are litter free or fairly clean, so you should check out the distribution of litter bins. Some of the worst litter problems occur in the areas where there are not enough litter bins or where they are placed in inappropriate places.

You could draw a rough map of your school, youth club or local area and mark in where all the bins are located. Now, mark in where the particularly bad litter areas are located. Is there any connection? You may find that there is an absence of bins in areas where litter is at its worst!

Action Step 3

Devise an action plan for your school or youth club!

Once you have collected information on the litter problem, the next step is to plan a litter campaign. There are 4 main areas you should focus on:



1) Activities to raise awareness

Making sure that people know about the litter campaign is **very important**. Posters, photographic displays of "black spots", anti-litter exhibitions and questionnaires are just some ways you can get your principal, youth club leader, local community, local county council etc. interested in getting involved.

2) Fund-raising to purchase litter bins

You may need to get extra litter bins. Run a sale of work, a sponsored walk or approach local businesses to sponsor the new bins.

3) Litter Patrol

Organise a litter patrol between different groups. Each week a



different group can be responsible for gathering any litter that may occur.

Action Step 4

Measure success

To see if the campaign is successful, check the amount of litter being collected on the cleaning rota and compare this with your initial findings. Hopefully everything will work, if not you might need to make adjustments to the action plan.

Action Step 5

Maintain success

To keep the litter problem from returning, the campaign must be ongoing. So getting your school, youth club or local community group to take on the project will ensure continued success.

