

Workshop #7
Family Workshop: Zero Waste

Age Groups

- Intended for families, therefore all age groups.

Learning Objectives

- Gain further understanding on the implications of waste
- Understanding how to reduce household waste
- Greater understanding of the NYC Zero Waste mission

Materials/Resources Needed

- Old t-shirt
- Scissors
- Needle and thread
- **Prep:** provide the link to brochure on local policy, if possible bring a few pamphlets/Resources from the Sanitation Department

Estimated Time	Activity
10 minutes	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Briefly go over the history of NYC waste management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask them the probing questions written below ● Start a discussion about the Zero Waste Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Question to ask for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have you heard of the zero waste plan? ■ What do they mean by zero waste? ○ After this intro, go over a brief description and definition of Zero waste and the OneNYC plan (info below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask: How do you feel about making this transition? ■ Do you think it is possible? Why or why not? ■ What does this change look like already within the community? ● Having given the participants an idea of what zero waste means, have a brainstorm session on possible ways to cut back on waste production (there is a general list below if participants need help getting started) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write down responses on a large sheet of paper
15 minutes	<p>Activity: Making a Reusable Bag</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring in an old t-shirt, or maybe one that you don't wear very often ● Cut the sleeves off of the t-shirt and the bottom ● Turn the shirt inside out, and sew the bottom together ● Turn the shirt right-side-in ● https://www.mommpotamus.com/no-sew-t-shirt-tote-bag-tutorial/

5 minutes	<p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have families write down some “next steps” to help them transition towards producing less waste ● Have them share what they decided as a family, to get more ideas on the table for community partners.
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History of Waste Management in NYC

- In 1881 the New York City Department of Street Cleaning, which is now the Department of Sanitation, was formed. It’s been dealing with solid waste produced from residents, businesses and all members of New York Since.
 - It also does services such as plow the streets, do street cleaning etc.
- Ask: Prior to landfills and incinerators, where do you think most of the trash went?
 - Prior to 1895, NYC was dumping 75% into the Atlantic Ocean. Some waste continued to be dumped into the ocean until the 1940s
 - Discussion question: Why is that a bad thing?
- Ask: How do you think our solid waste is disposed of right now? Where does the trash go when you throw it away and after it’s collected?
 - Much of NYC’s solid waste is sent to landfills in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Virginia, some of it is sent to New Jersey to be incinerated (destroyed by burning) → what problems arise from this?
 - Lots of gas/transportation means lots of emissions, and burning leads to emissions as well.
 - Landfills pollute our air and waterways.
- Ask: How much waste do you all think NYC produces right now.
 - In 2017 NYC produced 3.2 billion tons of waste, and 644.3 tons of recyclables
- What are some of the benefits of recycling and reusing?
 - Aids in cutting back on solid waste which is contributing to emissions and pollution
 - Saves money if you can repurpose and reusing products for new purposes. Like a shopping bags or washing plastic ziplock bags.

Ways to Cut back on waste

- Donate! And also buy used goods
 - Instead of throwing away old toys or outgrown clothes→ donate them to local organizations or give them to friends/family that might need them.
 - Schools will sometimes take old toys, but always ask first

- Electronics, furniture, kitchenware, etc. can usually be donated as well
- recycle
 - Can recycle glass, aluminum cans, tin cans, plastics (always check for the recycle label, typically on the bottom of containers/bottles)
 - Look into the recycling program for your building for specifics on sorting/location
- Use a re-usable water bottle, or old glass bottle/jar to drink from as opposed to buying plastic water bottles
- Try to avoid using bags from the grocery store and bring a bag or backpack from home.
- Compost food scraps- reference the brochure for more details on these recent changes

Transitioning into a Zero Waste city

- Waste is an inevitable result of an urbanized landscape, and the management of this waste must be adjusted to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing population, and the increasing level of consumption.
- Traditionally and historically, waste has been treated in ways that are temporary solutions, without recognition of the long term effects of these strategies, or for the ineffectiveness of these strategies when there are growing levels of waste
- In the past decade, changes in policy have addressed the ecological and societal impacts of the throwaway consumerist economy
 - Zero waste targets
 - 100% diversion from landfill
- There is a transition occurring from emphasis on waste management, to a time of integrating waste policy to reduce municipal and industrial waste.

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- “The Plan for a Strong and Just City”
 - An organized list of four visions for NYC that describe a more ideal physical city, as well as a city that addresses social, economic and environmental issues. This plan is overseen by the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability and shares responsibility with the Mayor’s Office of Recovery and Resiliency. The visions are growth, equity, sustainability, and resiliency.
- Vision 3: Sustainability
 - “New York City will be the most sustainable big city in the world and a global leader in the fight against climate change.”
 - New York residents dispose an average of 15 pounds of waste per day.
 - Goal 2: Zero Waste
 - The ultimate goal of the zero waste mission in NYC area is to eliminate the need to send waste to out-of-state landfills, thus minimizing the overall environmental impact of the city’s trash, and achieving Zero Waste by 2030.
 - 1 million New Yorkers receive curbside organic waste pick up, and the city hopes to make this service accessible to 3 million more residents by the end of 2017.
 - New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) has made recycling pickup available to every NYCHA development.

- Zero Waste Schools is a program developed in 2016 that helps foster a culture of recycling and sustainability in the students as well as in their practices inside and outside of their schools. The City plans to extend this program so it is available in all public schools.

Sources:

2017 NYC Sanitation Annual Report

- http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/pdf/about/inside-dsny/2017_AnnualReport.pdf

A Timeline of Solid Waste Management in New York City

- <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/macbride13/research/a-timeline-of-solid-waste-management-in-new-york-city/>

Recycling Facts

- <https://www.grownyc.org/recycling/facts>

15 Ways To Reduce Landfill Waste

- <https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/15-easy-ways-to-reduce-landfill-waste.php>

Silva, A., Rosano, M., Stocker, L., & Gorissen, L. (2017). From waste to sustainable materials management: Three case studies of the transition journey. *Waste Management*, 61, 547-557.