



press clip

Make sure lunch is litter free

Anything that can't be eaten should be brought home to be washed and reused

EVER considered just how much rubbish is produced every lunchtime in school playgrounds across the country?

Yoghurt containers, chip wrappers, plastic sandwich bags and juice boxes are all destined for rubbish bins, ending up as landfill or possibly in waterways, endangering marine life.

This year, send the kids back to school with a litterless lunch and a clear conscience.

According to Pei-Shan Wu, founder of eco-friendly products website Ash n Juls, Australians produce unsustainable levels of waste each year.

She says teaching kids how to reduce waste at lunch time is an excellent way to show how they can immediately minimise their environmental impact.

"The goal of packing a litterless lunch is having no waste to throw out when you're finished eating. Anything that can't be eaten should be brought home to be washed and reused. With all the great products available today

reducing lunchtime waste couldn't be easier," she says.

Pei-Shan shares five practical tips to packing a litterless lunch.

■ 1. Reusable food containers: savvy parents should ditch paper and plastic bags and pack kids' lunches in reusable, eco-friendly containers such as food-grade stainless steel lunch containers that can be used throughout the school year. The Buffalo stainless steel lunch box is a stylish example ideal for sandwiches, wraps and sushi.

■ 2. Refillable drink bottles: refillable stainless steel drink bottles encourage kids to enjoy tap water throughout the day.

Being BPA free, they are a safe substitute to plastic bottles, which are a major contributor to landfill.
■ 3. Buy in bulk and save: Cut back on packaging, avoiding individually wrapped snacks such as yoghurt, dried fruit, chips and juices.

Buy larger sizes and portion into reusable containers, saving resources and money.

■ 4. Shop and cook with kids: Involve children in preparing meals for a fun family activity.

Kids are more likely to enjoy eating their own creations and less likely to throw away food knowing the work that went into it.

■ 5. Buy fresh: Eliminate quick-fix pre-packaged lunches so only compostable scraps such as apple cores and banana peels remain after eating.

Not only is it healthier for the family, it supports Australian farmers.

Already popular in the US and Canada where schools have implemented litterless lunch programs, Pei-Shan says the concept need not stop at schools.

"Think about what you take to work or the waste that is produced when you buy a fast-food meal. Start replacing pre-packaged meals and snacks with home-made meals stored in reusable containers," suggests Pei-Shan.

"Have your favourite cafe pour your coffee into your own travel mug instead of a takeaway cup and feel good knowing you're taking concrete steps to reducing unnecessary waste."

- contributed by Ash N Juls'



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