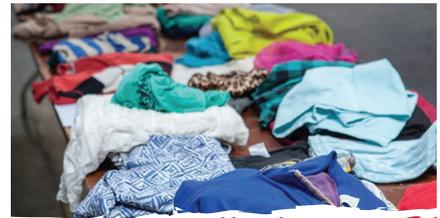




Community Swap



WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING Project Guide

Waste Reduction & Recycling

Generation Earth Program

Generation Earth is a Los Angeles County Department of Public Works environmental education program presented by TreePeople. Our goal is to educate and empower teens in Los Angeles County to be an active part of the solution to environmental concerns in their community. We offer do-it-yourself environmental projects that help youth make a positive difference at school, at home, and out in the world. Our programs are built to support the needs of teachers, students, schools and community youth groups.



Generation Earth Project Guides

Generation Earth Project Guides are designed to assist students in the completion of an environmental project. These Guides provide the instructions, tools and support materials needed to learn about the subject, and take the steps to completion of a project that positively impacts the community.

Waste in Los Angeles

Waste is a vital issue in Los Angeles County. Every day, each person disposes of approximately 5.0 pounds of trash. Together, the 10 million residents, businesses and manufacturers in L.A. County send 9.36 million tons of trash to the landfill every year.¹ We generate enough trash to fill the Rose Bowl in just 4 days! These resources are generally transported to one of 10 solid waste landfills around Los Angeles County. What does that mean for you? It costs money to dispose of all this waste, valuable open space is used to create landfills to store the waste, and waste pollutes the environment.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The 3 R's of waste reduction are reduce, reuse, and recycle. The most impactful is to reduce the amount of materials used. The second is to reuse the materials we already have as they are, and lastly, recycle material back into the cycle of production and consumption. Recycling comes last because it takes resources to haul, clean and reproduce a product. Not only do the 3 R's reduce pollution and landfill waste, they also save energy used in the sourcing of virgin materials, transportation of materials, and production of materials to goods. When fewer virgin materials are used to produce new goods, more resources are available for a longer period of time. Often times, items that are no longer needed by one person, may still have a use by someone else. Instead of throwing items in the trash or leaving them on the curb to possibly pollute the neighborhood, donating to a second hand thrift store, listing items through online classifieds or exchange platforms, or sharing with the community, are viable solutions.

Community Swap Project Guide

This Guide will help your group promote the reuse of items and reduce waste in the process. A student-run swap can be used as a platform to support the under-served communities of our city, bringing environmental education and empowering individual neighborhoods to share resources and grow together.

How A Community Swap Works

- Members of the local community are invited to clean out their shelves and closets and bring any unwanted, good-condition, portable, reusable items to donate on the day of the Swap.
- Items can include books, clothing, housewares, lightly used electronics, toys, and more.
- Volunteers receive the donations at the front of the swap, then sort and place items on tables in categories.
- Participants are invited to look through all of the donated items and take anything for free.
- Participants can bring and take as much as they want. This includes participants who do not bring items to swap.
- Items leftover at the end of the Swap are donated or properly recycled.



The Steps

1. Did You Know?

This topic sheet provides information about consumerism. It can be used as an introduction to the topic to share with others and poses thoughtful questions for discussion.

2. Preparation Checklist & Timeline

A checklist is provided for planning and completing first steps. The timeline provides the tasks needed to complete and when.

3. Promotion Plan

Guidelines are provided to ensure promotion of the event in the community.

4. Event Set-Up & Supplies

Guidelines are provided to set-up the event before participants arrive. A supply checklist is provided.

5. Event Day Management

Important points are provided for during and after the event. Signage categories are also provided.

6. Volunteer Roles

Volunteer roles are provided including the numbers needed and the assigned tasks.

7. After Swap Donating

Guidelines are provided for any leftover donation items.

8. Evaluation

Complete the project by answering questions that serve to evaluate the process and offer next steps for potentially taking on additional waste reducing projects.

9. Resources

Some resources are provided for curriculums, partners, donations and a vocabulary list.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the U.S. the average person consumes 2x as much as they did 50 years ago.²

Why do you think this has changed?

Consumerism is the concept that an ever-increasing consumption of goods is advantageous to the economy – it promotes the idea that the more we buy the better off we are as a community or country. As a result, more products are created.

The production, processing, and consumption, of goods requires the extraction and use of natural resources (wood, ore, fossil fuels, and water).

How does this impact the environment?

According to the Global Footprint Network, at current American levels of consumption it would take 4.1 Earth's worth of natural resources to produce the quantity of goods needed to sustain the entire planet's population.³

To keep costs low, many goods are produced in developing countries.

How does this affect the people who make the products?

Many goods are produced in developing countries where workers are paid low wages and the natural environment is negatively impacted. It requires the creation of factories and factory complexes whose operation creates toxic byproducts, pollutants, and waste that can create public health issues.⁴

Planned obsolescence is a policy of designing a product so that it requires replacement due to it being out-of-date or less functional than a newer version of the product.

What products do you use that are created to become obsolete before their function expires?

Some businesses design goods using techniques to decrease the time between their consumers purchasing their product, disposing of it and purchasing a new version of their product again. It is a business strategy achieved by frequently changing software compatibility, design or fashion, using non durable materials, or making an item more than the cost to replace it.⁵

99% of total goods consumed are used and then disposed of within just 6 months.⁶

How does a linear use of materials differ from a cyclical use?

Unfortunately, the majority of goods that are used run a linear path from resource extraction to production to consumption and finally to disposal at a landfill. Participating in reuse closes the loop, extends the life of a used object, and also cuts the need to utilize resources and transportation to produce a new object. There are a number of ways to dispose of items in a way that helps their reuse: list unwanted items online for free, arrange to have items picked up by second hand thrift stores, find a charity or an organization to drop off unwanted goods for donation, or swap them with other people in the community.

PREPARATION CHECKLIST & TIMELINE

There are many steps to take to ensure a quality, well-run event. Use the resources provided to get organized, set a date, and complete the tasks necessary.

Preparation Checklist

- Use the Community Swap Preparation Checklist on pages 6 - 7 to plan and complete the first steps.
- Work as a team to assign who will be responsible for completing these tasks.

Timeline

- It takes 2 - 3 months to plan and produce a community swap event.
- Once a date is set, use the Timeline on pages 8 - 10 to complete the necessary tasks needed to ensure a successful event.

Helpful Hints

Review the Preparation Checklist and Timeline ahead of time to understand what will be required.

Fundraising

While it is highly encouraged to keep the swap event free of charge, there are other ways to raise funds.

- Donation jars that indicate the project or club they are funding.
- Silent auctions for items or services donated by local businesses.
- Include a textile or e-waste drive during the event that can earn money for the group. Arrange the drive at least 30-60 days before the event. Ask your Generation Earth Teacher Facilitator for support.

Community Swap Preparation Checklist



Choose a Location

- Large enough to hold 150 – 200 people and 16 or more 6' tables.
- Have one main access door to help control the flow of traffic and incoming donations.
- Easily available to a nearby parking lot.
- Handicap accessible.



Choose a Date

- Consider a weekend to attract the most participants.
- Check with the local community and campus calendar to ensure there are no other conflicting events happening.
- If held on campus, check with school administration to ensure the date and location is available and can be reserved.
- Avoid local holidays or religious observances to allow for more people to participate.



Choose a Time

- Plan to have the swap open to the public for 3 to 4 hours.
- Plan for a volunteer and space commitment of 5 to 6 hours total, which includes an hour for set-up and an hour for breakdown.



Get Permission

- Choose a team to compile the information about the event and present.
- If holding on campus, make sure you have permission from the Principal and Plant Manager.
- If holding off campus, make sure the location point-person gives permission to use the parking lot, restrooms, garbage and recycling bins and dumpsters, and will help promote the event.



Secure Materials

- Check that approximately 16 or more 6' tables are available for use.
- If needed, consider renting or getting a table donation for use by the local Councilmember's office.
- Arrange for garbage and recycling bins to be available.
- Brooms and other cleaning supplies will be needed for after the event.
- See pages 13 - 14 for full list of materials needed.



Get Volunteers

- At least 10 to 20 students or volunteers are needed.
- Plan for more, to ensure coverage if someone drops out.



Locate Leftover Donation Venues

- Identify a thrift store donation center for any leftover clothing or items.
- Identify a clothing donation bin for clean clothing that is unfit for wearing.
- Identify a dry cleaner that can take any leftover metal hangers.
- Identify a grocery store, pharmacy or other store that will take any leftover plastic bags at plasticfilmrecycling.org.
- See page 18 for more details.

Community Swap Event Timeline

It takes 2 to 3 months to plan and produce a community swap. Once the date is set, work backwards and assign tasks and due dates.

2- 3 Months Before the Event

- Identify and secure a location for the swap.
 - Evaluate the desired site and ensure it is suitable.
- Prepare a swap event plan for the event day including time (event set-up through take down), location, and desired participants.
 - Use the details determined in the Community Swap Event Preparation Checklist.
- Present the swap event plan to key stakeholders to obtain permission.
 - Investigate the need for volunteer safety and photo release waivers.
- Designate roles or teams for different tasks, including the Swap Event Manager (see pages 16 - 17) for any questions or concerns regarding the event.
- Create a promotion plan (see pages 11 - 12).
 - Assign tasks to promotional team members.
- Begin the promotion plan.
 - Make, distribute, post flyers, ads, etc.
- Secure tables for use.

1 Month Before the Event

- Locate a nearby thrift store donation center to take any leftover items (see page 18).
- Recruit volunteers for before, during, and after the event, including any delivery of leftover items to donation centers (see pages 16- 17).
- Solicit other student groups or local community organizations to have an outreach booth at the event, if desired.
- Secure parking and vehicle loading for donation pickup and drop off.
- Distribute and collect any necessary volunteer waivers and photo release forms.

1 Week Before the Event

- Continue Promotion Plan.
- Coordinate with the location staff about key details, including: entry time, getting keys, where to take trash and recycling, location of brooms and other needed supplies.
- Verify swap site layout, including: where the intake and sorting tables; reusable bag station; trash cans and recycling bins; display tables; and partner organizations will be located.
- Verify restrooms for community and volunteer use.
- Secure all needed supplies (see pages 13 - 14).
- Arrange a place for volunteers to store their personal items during the event.
- Create category signs (reusable if possible).
- Assign a Volunteer Manager for the event day who will ensure volunteers are signed in, trained, and given tasks.
- Arrange water and snacks for volunteers.
- Continue promotion.
- Ensure all necessary volunteer forms are received.

Create A Larger Event

A swap can be a great platform to invite others to share what they do by providing outreach tables.

- Invite local non-profits and community organizations to share their materials.
- Invite other schools or nearby campus clubs to pass out information.
- Highlight or advertise other sustainability projects happening on campus.

1 Day Before the Event

- Pick up water and refreshments.

Event Day!

- Have fun and be safe!
- Take pictures.

After the Event

- Return tables.
- Donate leftover items (see page18).
- Send email thank you notes to the volunteers.
- Send email thank you notes to the site host.
- Send email thank you to any partners, non-profits and clubs that participated.
- Share the event results, photos and data.
- Complete an evaluation (see page 19).



PROMOTION PLAN

Create a promotion plan for reaching the largest audience possible for the swap. Assign tasks and deadlines for the promotional campaign. Consider the following:

Who is your promotion team?

- Designer for the flyer
- Copy writer for the flyer
- Advertisement/press release writer
- Social media post and account manager
- Flyer distributors
- Phone/email outreach?

Who do you want to reach in the community?

- Who is your audience?
- Will some materials need to be in another language?

What do you want to communicate?

- The reasons for the swap
- Date, time and location (is a map needed?)
- Free for all participants
- Details for involvement
- Items accepted
- Any additional activities happening such as drives, etc.
- Phone number or email for more information

How do you want to communicate?

- Create and send ads
 - School PTA newsletter
 - Local newspapers
 - Radio stations
 - Neighborhood/City Councils
 - Churches/Places of Worship
 - Organizations that help families in need
 - Partners with the school or event space

Newsletter & Community Event Calendars

Find out:

- Who is in charge of the calendar listings for the newsletter
- Length, format and deadline
- Preferred way to receive the information
- Who from your team will write the article
- Who needs to approve the article

- Create and distribute flyers
 - Community centers
 - Local businesses
 - Student volunteers, ask students to take home flyers to give to neighbors
- Social media
 - Online blogs
 - Facebook Event
 - Neighborhood websites
 - Tweets
 - Instagram
 - Community event calendars
- Face to Face
 - Door Knocking
 - Classroom Announcements
- Signs and banners

Flyers

- Create flyers that are appealing to your audience.
- Present information in a way that it is easily understandable.
- Information should be as concise as possible, and include the important details (why, when, where, what, who).
- Include appropriate graphics and/or photos.
- See sample flyer below.

Sample Flyer

SWAP OUT Free

Clean out the clutter and bring your reusable, portable, unwanted items to the Swap Out or take home items others have brought all for FREE! No need to bring or take to enjoy. Items include clean, lightly used clothing, books, music, electronics, housewares, accessories, toys, games, and more! Please no unclean or dangerous items, food, toiletries, or furniture.

Sunday, April 15, 2016

12pm - 3pm

Pine Tree High Auditorium

Special thanks to Fiesta Event Rentals and Fais Do-Do.

EVENT DAY SET-UP

Create a map of the site and plan your set-up to create optimal flow of traffic.

Volunteer Table and Sorting Station

- 3- 5 long tables.
- Located nearest the entrance.
- Run by the assigned Volunteer Manager.
- Serves as volunteer sign-in and training location.
- A go-to for any questions from participants.
- Serves as donation in-take area, first stop for participants.
- Include an area that is not accessible to the public for sorting.
- Includes a space for volunteers to be stationed to sort, and other volunteers to take them out to the display tables.
- Ensure enough space for clothing sorting which takes up the biggest amount of room.
- Create a big enough flow space where some volunteers can be stationed at the tables assigned to sorting, and other volunteers can get through them easily to pick up sorted items and take them out to the display tables.
- Tape list of category items on the sorting tables or on the wall above the sorting tables to indicate the different items you are separating on to different tables (category suggestions on page 15).
- Have cardboard boxes available for either packing up donations after the swap or broken down for recycling (store under the sorting tables).
- Have bag or box available for unwearable clothes to be recycled as scraps.
- Secure a place for dangerous or unswappable items (food, cosmetics, knives, cleaning products, inappropriate items.)

Supplies

Set-up

- 16+ 6 foot tables
- 1-2 rolls of masking tape for hanging signs
- 20 sheets of paper or poster board for category signs
- Colored markers to make the category and directional signs, write on boxes, etc.
- Scissors for cutting boxes, signs, etc.
- Other small necessities, safety pins, rubber bands, etc.

Volunteer/Donation Check-in Table

- Hand-sanitizer
- Sign-in sheets
- Pens
- Name tags
- First aid kit
- Tissues or face mask for people with dust allergies

List continued on next page

Recycling Station

- Located outside the sorting area.
- Set-up area for reusable bags including paper bags and large sturdy bags that can be used by participants taking home swap items.
- Hangers for recycling.

Swap Display Area

- 10 -12 tables.
- Located along the walls and spaced at least four feet apart in the middle of the room.
- Block off any doors or areas where the public is not allowed.
- Clear the area of any items that could be mistaken as a free swap item, including lamps, decorations, books, etc.



Supplies continued

Volunteer Refreshment Table/ Area

- Cups, napkins, plates
- Food
- Water

Sorting Tables

- Large and thick garbage bags for garbage (10+)
- Clear bags for recycling collection (10+)
- Large bags for leftover clothing donations (10+)
- 2 large boxes for clothing hanger collection and dangerous item collection
- Gloves for sorting out items
- Face masks (for those who have dust allergies)

EVENT DAY MANAGEMENT

Below are helpful hints for event day management.

DURING

- Keep count of how many participants come to the swap. This can be achieved with a sign-in sheet, or assign a greeter volunteer to count the number of attendees when entering.
- Take photos and or video
- If there are any attendees that are unhappy during the event, (i.e. someone else got an item they were interested in) have the assigned point person available to deal with any conflict.
- Be mindful that during the event, many people can't tell the difference between a personal item and an item up for grabs. Constantly remind volunteers and attendees to keep an eye on their personal belongings, and that lost or stolen items are not the responsibility of the volunteer team.
- If an attendee brings an item that is too large to carry by one person, and there is a possibility that the item won't get picked up by another attendee, it's best to request that the item not be brought to the swap for ease of post-event wrap up and donation.

AFTER

- Clean up the floor
- Collect leftover items and sort depending on where the donations or items are going
- Make sure all personal belongings are retrieved
- Take any leftover lunch or opened drinks home or donate any unopened food to a local food shelter
- Collect any items that were brought such as tape and scissors
- Thank the volunteers
- Thank the location staff for helping, and ask if there is anything else they need from you
- Reflect, record data, share the results and photos, and celebrate!

Sign Categories

These can be handmade or printed ahead of time.

- Men's Clothing
 - Women's Clothing (2)
 - Children's Clothing
 - Shoes
 - Accessories/ Jewelry
 - House wares
 - Unwearable Clothing (torn, stained)
 - Unswappable items (Food, Toiletries)
 - Electronics
 - Games
 - Toys
 - Books/Magazines
 - Music
 - Arts & Crafts
 - Miscellaneous
 - Plastic Bag Recycling
 - Reusable Bags (Take one!)
 - Bottles, cans, paper, and metal recycling
 - Garbage (Landfill waste)
 - Hanger Recycling
- Additional signs:**
- Hold On To Your Personal Property
 - Donation Drop Off Here
 - Swap This Way

VOLUNTEER ROLES

Arrange a group of volunteers to help you with set-up and then divide up the volunteer tasks. Volunteers can be students, parents, teachers, or a community service group.

Volunteer Manager(s)

- 1 - 2 volunteers needed.
- Should be familiar with event details and the schedule of the day.
- Make sure to rearrange tasks as needed depending on individual strengths and flow of donations.
- Greet, sign-in, and train the volunteers. Include in the volunteer training, the location of restrooms, separating of donated items, separating of recyclables, lunch/break time, cleanup plan, and location of supplies.
- Organize the swap site layout set-up and break down.
- The Volunteer Manager should ensure that volunteers take breaks for snacks and water, and to use the restroom (not all at the same time).

Donation Intake

- 1- 2 volunteers needed.
- Remain at the front table to greet swappers and take their donations from them.

Runner

- 2 - 4 volunteers needed.
- Take separated items to the floor display area.

Sorter

- 2 - 4 volunteers needed.
- Take out any broken, unwearable, dangerous items, and separate others into category piles for the runners.



Floor Floater

- 2 - 5 volunteers needed.
- Answer questions.
- Make sure the floor table displays stay tidy, and grab any broken items to take back to sorting area.

Door Greeter

- 2 - 3 volunteers needed.
- Greet participants and direct them where to take their donations.
- Help carry large loads to the donation table.
- Keep track of how many people come to the swap.

Donation Analyst (Optional)

- 1-2 volunteers needed.
- Count by type or weigh donations and leftovers to estimate total goods swapped.

Photographer / Videographer

- 1-2 volunteers needed.
- Captures shots of the set-up and action at the event.
- Quickly edits final material for post-event promotion.
- Send photos or video to Generation Earth Teacher Facilitator.

Donation Deliverer

- 2-3 volunteers needed.
- Has access to a vehicle with enough room to deliver leftover items.
- Knows the location of drop offs, times accessible, and types of items that are accepted at each location.

AFTER SWAP DONATING

Identify several volunteer staff, teachers, parents, or students who have cars with enough room to deliver any leftover donation items to the following locations:

Thrift Store Donation Center

- Donate any leftover clothing, or items.
- Determine if the donation center can pick up the donation items or call ahead to arrange times and exact location for a drop off.
- Allow at least 2 hours to arrive after the end of the swap.
- Inquire if there are any types of items they do not accept like baby toys, electronics, etc.
- Locate an alternative source to donate any items not accepted. Ask the Generation Earth Facilitator for help if needed.

Clothing Donation Bin

- For clothing that is clean, but unfit for wearing.

Local Dry Cleaner

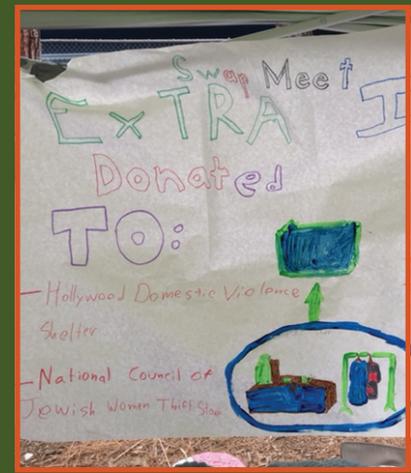
- Arrange to donate leftover metal wire hangers.

Grocery Store, Pharmacy or Department Store

- Recycle plastic bags.
- Coordinate ahead of time to determine best drop off location.
- Assure that the bags will be clean and contain no garbage or non-plastic bag items. Find the nearest location at plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Household Hazardous Waste Dropoff

- Safely dispose of any beauty products, cleaners, chemicals, prescription medications that were mistakenly brought to the swap. For a list of locations go to CleanLA.com or call (888) CLEANLA.



EVALUATION

Once the Swap Event is complete, answer the following questions to evaluate the event and introduce some possible next steps.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the most successful part of the project?
2. What was the least successful?
3. What would you do differently next time?
4. Was the audience interested in possibly having another swap in the future?
5. How much material was donated? How much was left over?

What's Next?

Another Project Toolkit

Are you interested in another project toolkit? Consider:

- E-Waste Collection Event
- Composting
- Ink Cartridge Collection
- Food Rescue Projects

Battle of the Schools

Consider competing in the Generation Earth Battle of the Schools competition.

- Talk to Generation Earth for more information.

Share!

Generation Earth would love photos and/or videos of the project!

- Send them to your Generation Earth Facilitator.

RESOURCES

CURRICULUM IDEAS

- The Story of Stuff <http://storyofstuff.org/>
- Effects of Consumerism <http://www.globalissues.org/article/238/effects-of-consumerism>

PARTNERS

- Swap Out LA www.facebook.com/SwapOutLA
- House Party Swap N Shop www.facebook.com/House-Party-Swap-n-Shop-75925044190
- Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils <http://empowerla.org/councils/>

DONATIONS

- Donation Town <http://donationtown.org/california-donation-pickup/los-angeles-ca.html>
- Baby 2 Baby <http://baby2baby.org/>
- Habitat for Humanity <http://www.habitatla.org/support-us/donate/>
- Downtown Women's Shelter <http://www.downtownwomenscenter.org/goods>
- Re-Bookit <http://rebookit.org/>
- USagain Donation Bins <http://www.usagain.com/find-a-collection-bin>

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Vocabulary

Consumption: The buying of goods or services, the using up of resources.

Virgin Material: Resources extracted from nature in their raw form such as metal ore.

Consumerism: The theory that an increasing consumption of goods is economically desirable; also a preoccupation with and an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods.

Extraction: The act of obtaining or pulling out something, such natural resources like mining for metal ore or logging.

Ore: A naturally occurring mineral or rock for which a valuable or useful substance, can be mined or worked.

Global Footprint Network: Develops and promotes tools for advancing sustainability. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Footprint_Network

Obsolete: When something is no longer produced or used; out of date because something newer exists.

