

Community

Make a story book for a young refugee

Write a story or rewrite a favourite one, illustrate it, bind it and send or take it to a refugee centre near you, with a letter of welcome to the new kids who have come to Australia to live.

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/links.html>

Visit an aged care home

Visit a local aged care home. You could practice some songs, and give a concert, or interview the residents. Back in class you could write about what you learnt about life through talking to your interviewee. You could then return and present your work to your interviewee.

Knit some woollen squares

Homeless people can get very cold in winter. The ABC 702 station has a 'knit in' every year. They want as many knitted squares as possible by July to make blankets. Why not knit some squares?

Find out more at: <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2007/07/23/1912042.htm>

Bring in food for the homeless

Bring in cans, boxes, and packets of food and donate to the hungry who live in the streets of Brisbane or your local area. Or cook something healthy and deliver to a centre for the homeless. Contact a local centre first and find out what they need.

Find out more at: <http://www.salvos.com/brisbane/> or <http://www.rosies.org.au/>

Volunteer at a soup kitchen

On any one night in Australia there are approximately 100 000 people without a home. There are heaps of services for the homeless that require volunteers, such as working in a soup kitchen. In addition, get your school library to subscribe to *The Big Issue* – half the cover price goes to the homeless vendor. For more ideas see:

http://www.actnow.com.au/Action/Homelessness_ACTION.aspx

Is your school uniform made in a sweatshop?

The FairWear campaign actively encourages Australians to think critically about where the clothes we wear are produced and under what conditions. Home workers are mostly women who make clothes in their houses situated in the suburbs of Australia for as little as \$3 to \$4 an hour. Home workers make clothes for our major retailers, designers and even suppliers of school uniforms. Find out more and download the school wear kits: <http://www.fairwear.org.au/>

Help out at an animal shelter

Thousands of animals are abandoned every year in Australia. The RSPCA alone receives over 140 000 animals each year and of these 30—55% can not be saved or rehomed and are euthanized.

The RSPCA and The Animal Welfare League are the two largest animal shelters but there are also many other shelters around Australia. All depend on the work of volunteers. To find your local RSPCA branch:

<http://www.rspca.org.au/localsites.asp>

Buy nothing day

Tired of our conspicuous over-consumption? Buy Nothing Day draws attention to the harmful effects of over-consumption by industrialized nations (such as Australia, North America and Europe). It's a day of peaceful, often humorous actions and activities to confront the shopping audience with the consequences of over-consumption and the influence of advertising on our daily lives. Get some inspiration from past activities: <http://www.buynothingday.co.uk/>

Environment

Adopt a beach

There are 60,000 Coastcare volunteers in 2,000 Coastcare groups around Australia, tackling problems like dune erosion, loss of native plants and animals, storm water pollution, weeds and control of human access to sensitive areas. Join an existing group or start your own.

<http://www.coastcare.com.au/> Example: Year 10 students from Christmas Island District High School WA, conduct a yearly environmental campaign to clean up Greta Beach to make it a safer place for nesting Green Turtles – see: <http://www.coastcare.com.au/CaseStudy.aspx?cID=23>

Create a Reuse Centre

Create a centre that can be used to redistribute items within your school for use in arts, crafts, science and technology projects. Or you could set it up as a profit-making business, selling items to other schools, community groups and individuals. For inspiration see Reverse Garbage, Brisbane:

<http://www.reversegarbage.com.au/>

Ban plastic check-out bags in your community

In the marine environment, plastic bag litter is lethal, killing thousands of whales, turtles and other sea life every year. Planet Ark has worked with communities like Coles Bay (Tas), Kangaroo Valley, Huskisson and Oyster Bay, Sydney (NSW) to ban plastic check-out bags in all of their retail outlets. If these towns/suburbs can live without plastic bags, then maybe yours can too. Visit:

<http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/7/story.htm>

Help the rescue of dancing bears

Sloth bear cubs are taken from their mothers in the wild and sold in markets to spend their life muzzled at the end of a short rope dancing for paying onlookers. Support the work of Wildlife SOS, India through Humane Society International (Australia) and join their campaign to rescue dancing bears in India. The program rehabilitates the bears and offers training in a new occupation to the bear handlers. To read more about this issue: <http://www.hsi.org.au/>

Clean Up Australia

Commit yourselves to Cleaning Up Australia together. There's a Schools Clean Up Day so that you can participate in Clean Up Australia as part of a school activity. Find out more at:

<http://www.cleanup.org.au/> Find out about Clean up the World too.

<http://www.cleanuptheworld.org/en/>.

Plant trees

Together, plant trees in your school, your sister school or a local site that needs revegetation. There are lots of ways to get started and lots of places to get help. Contact your local council. Join the UN Billion Tree Campaign <http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/index.asp>.

Get involved in Planet Ark National Tree Day <http://treeday.planetark.com/>. Check out: Greening Australia: <http://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/> and Landcare: <http://www.landcareonline.com/>

Measure your ecological footprint

Measure each school's impact on the environment by using an ecological footprint calculator. Try: Planet Slayer: http://www.abc.net.au/science/planetslayer/greenhouse_calc.htm. Work together and find ways to reduce each school's impact. Start with saving energy tips from the Australian Greenhouse Office: <http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/gwci/actions.html>.

Help native animals

There are lots of ways you can help native animals. Contact your local council or environment group and find out if there are vulnerable or endangered native animals that live in your area. Some schools have built ponds for frogs and others have planted vines for butterflies or trees for birds and koalas. Some schools raise money to support captive breeding programs for bilbies or Tasmanian devils. What can you do? Check out the Kids Guide to Threatened Species:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/kids.html>

Poverty

Join the campaign to ban landmines

War creates poverty. Every day, 40 people are injured or killed by landmines and unexploded ordinance. Most of the casualties are civilians and most live in countries that are now at peace. For more information about the issue: <http://www.icbl.org/> Want to help? Read 'Eight things you can do for a mine-free world': <http://www.icbl.org/action>.

Buy gifts that give twice – support fair trade

When you buy a gift from Oxfam or Good Shepherd Trading Circle you are helping people in majority world (developing) countries work their way out of poverty. Both organisations are non-profit and support the development of community micro-enterprises such as toy making and the production of home wares. Organise a stall at your school and advertise the products in school or local newspapers. Next time you have a school chocolate drive consider using fair trade chocolate. For more information about fair trade: <http://www.checkoutfairtrade.org.nz/> Location of shops and to purchase goods online: <http://www.thetradingcircle.com.au/> or <http://www.oxfamshop.org.au/>. Chocolate: <http://cocolo.com.au/>

Use ethically made sports balls at school

About 80% of footballs used in Australia are made in Pakistan. Workers earn very low wages and some are children. But you can buy sports balls that are fair trade accredited. This means there is no child labour used, workers get paid a fair wage (about twice as much as for stitching a non-fair trade ball) and the community benefits too. Do some research and present a case to your school and sporting club to get fair trade sports balls when they need to buy new equipment. To find out more and purchase online: <http://www.etiko.com.au/> Balls also available at Oxfam shops.

Join HOOKED

Students for Trade Justice is the peak representative body for youth, students and community concerned about issues of trade justice within Australia and New Zealand. Help break the cycle of consumerism and exploitation. Be the change you want to see in the world. www.hooked.org.au

Child slavery

Craig Kielburger was just 12 when he started an organisation (with six friends in Canada) to help child slaves. *Free the Children* works with children and young people around the world to help child slaves by lobbying for change and building schools for freed child slaves. <http://www.freethechildren.com/>

Water for Life

Millions of people around the world don't have access to clean drinking water. Because of this many children and adults become ill and die. There are many organisations working with communities to build wells and provide clean, safe water. Students are helping too. When an eight year old boy, Ryan, from Canada found out that some people didn't have clean water to drink he started raising money to build a well. Find out more at Ryan's Well: <http://www.ryanswell.ca/> See also World Vision: <http://www.worldvision.com.au/waterhealthlife/>.

Campaign tools

For ideas about how to plan, evaluate and publicize a campaign visit: <http://www.icbl.org/resources/campaignkit/>. The site also contains ideas about how to fundraise.

For help contact: Together for Humanity admin@togetherforhumanity.org.au
Or

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Together we can make a difference