

# NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM

NEW WAYS WITH LESS WASTE

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## Low Waste Lunches for Early Childhood Services

Low Waste Lunches are a great way to get children to begin to think about “Rubbish” and what they are throwing in the bin.

“Rubbish” is actually made from valuable resources, for example trees (i.e. paper), crude oil (i.e. plastic), coal and natural gas. It takes a lot of water, chemicals and energy to make “Rubbish”, so it’s important to try and AVOID, REUSE and RECYCLE where possible.

All of us throw things out everyday without considering the environmental impact of what we are doing.

### Low Waste Lunches - AVOID

- Plastic wrap and foil
- Disposable items like plates knives and forks
- Paper lunch wrap
- “Gimmicky” packaged items e.g. chips, small yoghurts, individually wrapped serves of food.

### Low Waste Lunches - REUSE

- Use re-useable containers that can be washed out
- Use a re-usable drink bottle which can be used many times
- Use recyclable and/or compostable packaging over disposable packaging (e.g. Plastic wrap)
- Cheese and biscuits or yoghurt which are taken from larger containers and repacked into a re-useable smaller container will avoid extra packaging waste and ensure that your child can reseal the food if needed
- Are often much healthier. You can ensure your child is eating fresh food packed in suitable quantities and not eating “gimmicky” snack foods.

# Low Waste Lunches

## A comparison

### Lunch Box 1

#### Low waste lunch

Sandwich  
(cloth serviette/reusable container)

Yoghurt  
(from 2 kg tub in re-useable container)

Sultanas  
(from 250g packet in re-useable container)

Piece of fruit/cut up  
(use in compost or worm farm)

Cheese and Crackers  
(in re-useable container)

Juice or water  
(In a re-useable drink bottle)

#### What you throw out

Nothing.  
All containers are taken home, washed and re-used.

**Compare the cost of each lunch.**

### Lunch Box 2

#### Waste-ful lunch

Sandwich  
(wrapped in plastic wrap)

Yoghurt  
(60g disposable container)

Sultanas  
(15g disposable box)

Packet of chips/muesli bar  
(in non-recyclable packaging)

Cheese and Crackers  
(individual serve in disposable container)

Popper style drink  
(125ml disposable pack)

#### What you throw out

Plastic wrap  
Yoghurt container  
Sultana box/muesli bar package  
Plastic individual serve container  
Popper pack

*Thank you to Mullumbimby Community Preschool for this example.*