

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE WASTE AUDIT INSTRUCTIONS**

This is a great opportunity to ascertain how much waste and the different streams of waste your Centre is generating on an average day. If you have already separated a lot of your waste that is a good place to start and then it is a matter of ensuring that all landfill is actually where it should be destined. Some waste streams will be able to be reduced, and some will be able to be more correctly separated from landfill after conducting this audit.

A great initiative to undertake at the beginning of your waste reduction journey and once again when you are 6-12 months along to see the sustainability improvements your center has made.

If you are unsure about what items go in which bin, check out your local council website or ask your waste service contractor for guidance. If you are ever in doubt, it will need to be landfilled.

### **You will need:**

- The waste bins collected from the previous day across the whole center. (If waste is already separated into a stream, keep it separated but you will still go through it to check for contamination)
- All items on the **Waste Audit Equipment List**
- **Waste Audit Weighing Sheets**
- **Waste Audit Collation of Results Sheet**

### **What to do:**

1. *Gather all of the equipment required and have another member of staff or two to help you undertake this Waste Audit – many hands make light work.*
2. *Label each of the containers with the pre-made labels (using **useful waste signage labels**).*
3. *You will be collecting data to show the weight (kg) AND the volume (litres) of the waste your Centre generates. It is important when putting waste into each of the containers that you do not push down on it as this will affect the volume results. The volume is important as this is how much space the waste you generate takes up and subsequently how many bins are needed at your Centre. The weight is important because this is often how Centre's are charged to remove the waste they generate.*
4. *Set out a tarp in a cleared area and have the 5 labelled containers easily accessible on the edges of the tarp.*
5. *Tackle the waste that has already been sorted first. For example, if you are already collecting paper recycling and have it in some bins separately, then tip the contents into the container labelled Paper recycling (remember NOT to push the material down too much). Ensure you check that all the contents of your recycling can be recycled, if not it needs to go into the landfill bin.*

6. Once you have audited your pre-sorted waste, move on to the landfill destined waste (red garbage bin). **Be sure to record the waste from these landfill bins on a separate Waste Audit Weighing sheet**
7. Weigh each container of waste and record it on the **Waste Audit Weighing Sheet** (remember to take off the weight of the container each time).
8. **If a container is not 100% full**, use your eyes to estimate how full it is as a percentage (e.g. 60% full) then multiply your total container volume by this decimal (e.g. 60% full = 0.6 x 20L = 12L)
9. As you record each container of waste, then tip into the appropriate bin to be disposed of as normal.
10. Repeat the process of filling the containers (remembering not to push down on the material) and when they are full, record weight and volume on the **Waste Audit Weighing Sheet** and empty the container into the appropriate wheelie bin or bin that will be taken out to your skip bins.
11. Once all the waste has been sorted, tidy up the area that has been used and hose down the tarps and containers. Don't forget to wash your hands when you've finished
12. Now is the time to collate the information for your Centre using the **Waste Audit Collation of Results Sheet**.
13. You now have a comprehensive snapshot of the waste your Centre produces on a day-to-day basis.
14. As a team or executive, review the data and identify any areas where waste was not sorted correctly or ended up in landfill when it could be recycled
15. Create a plan of action for areas with potential for reduction, or start sorting the waste more appropriately in a practical way that all staff at the Centre can take part in.
  - Are there any problem areas?
  - Are there any known solutions to these problem areas or do you need to seek further clarification on those problem items?
  - It is a good idea to redo the above in 6-12 months' time to see the results of your sustainability actions.