

Media Release

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COLES REWARD WASTE WARRIORS IN THE SCHOOL YARD

More than 80 schools recognised as Coles celebrates 10 year anniversary with REDcycle

Coles is rewarding more than 80 primary schools across Australia for sustainability in the school yard as it celebrates ten years of working with soft plastics recycling organisation, REDcycle.

The schools, whose initiatives ranged from making their own REDcycle bins in the classroom to building sustainable kitchen gardens and planting trees, will each receive a schoolyard 'buddy bench' made from 98% recycled plastic as part of Coles' Sustainability4Schools competition.

When Coles' partnership with REDcycle was established in 2011, it was the first of its kind for a supermarket in Australia and since then, Coles has placed REDcycle bins in all its supermarkets across the country for customers to drop off their soft plastic packaging.

Through its 10-year partnership with REDcycle, Coles has now facilitated the collection of more than 1.6 billion pieces of customers' soft plastic to be recycled into furniture, children's playground equipment, roads and even used in Coles car parks.

REDcycle founder Elizabeth Kasell said the Coles partnership has come a long way in ten years.

"We started REDcycle by hiring a trailer to collect plastic bags at schools in Melbourne and deliver them to local manufacturer Replas which would recycle it to into useful products," she said.

"A decade later, it's encouraging to see schools are initiating their own recycling programs and being rewarded by Coles for their sustainability in the school yard."

Coles General Manager Sustainability and Property Services, Kirsty Davis, said Coles was extremely proud of its partnership with REDcycle to drive sustainability for the next generation and wanted to reward schools for playing their part in protecting the environment.

"As part of Coles' "Together to Zero" strategy, we want to work with organisations like REDcycle and local schools to reduce waste and drive generational sustainability," she said.

"School kids across Australia have inspired us with their innovative and proactive ways to protect the environment and we want to reward and recognize their efforts by providing them with a bench made from recycled plastic."

One of the 81 schools to receive a recycled bench is Marmion Primary School in WA, whose year 5 students collect and promote the recycling of soft plastics through REDcycle.

Principal Ian Herbert said winning a bench made from soft plastics was a fitting reward for the students' recycling efforts.

“A focus on sustainability has been established at Marmion Primary School for many years and each year level within our school takes ownership for various recycling responsibilities,” he said.

“Our year 5 students are responsible for soft plastics recycling and since 2017 our school has recycled 943kg of soft plastics.”

“We also have an after-school sustainability club called the Eco Commandos, where members educate their peers by presenting at assemblies, writing for the school newsletter and even making beeswax wraps to present to families at our Kindergarten Orientation evening.”

The donation of benches supports Coles new national sustainability awareness campaign that sets out Coles Group's “Together to Zero” ambitions towards zero waste, zero emissions and zero hunger and encourages all Australians to work “Better Together” to help ensure Australia is a better place for future generations.

Since 2011, shoppers have helped Coles to collect more than 1.6 billion pieces of plastic and over 565 million pieces last financial year alone.

Waste warriors in each state

Top five Coles stores in each state:

Victoria

1. Greensborough
2. Woodend
3. Northcote (Separation St)
4. Yarraville
5. Northcote (Dennis St end)

Western Australia

1. Inglewood
2. Bassendean
3. Claremont
4. Victoria Park East
5. Mundaring

NSW/ACT

1. Broadway
2. Hornsby
3. Balgowlah
4. Chatswood Chase
5. Warringah

SA / NT

1. St Agnes
2. Dernancourt
3. Firlie
4. St Clair
5. Blackwood

Queensland

1. The Gap
2. Aspley Hypermarket
3. Toowong
4. Fairfield
5. Greenslopes

Tasmania

1. Kingston
2. Eastlands
3. Glenorchy
4. Sandy Bay
5. Meadow Mews

For a list of schools to receive a bench as part of Coles' Sustainability4Schools competition, visit www.coles.com.au/Sustainability4Schools.

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For further information, please contact

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