



CASE STUDY

Emmanuel Catholic College

The school

Emmanuel Catholic College (ECC) is a flourishing and vibrant, co-educational Catholic secondary school that has established itself as a successful and thriving educational community. Catering for more than 800 students in years seven to 12 from surrounding districts, the college ethos is the development of the whole person through a rich learning journey and a supportive and caring community.



The litter problem

ECC had a problem with large amounts of litter being dropped by students. A cleaning service picks up rubbish in the mornings but by the end of the day the school grounds were heavily littered.

Coordinating the program

A Litter Task Force was set up with teachers and students to deal with the issue.

The committee initially called for staff volunteers. It was chaired by the deputy of the senior school and attended by the Student Leadership Coordinator and a group of four to five teachers.

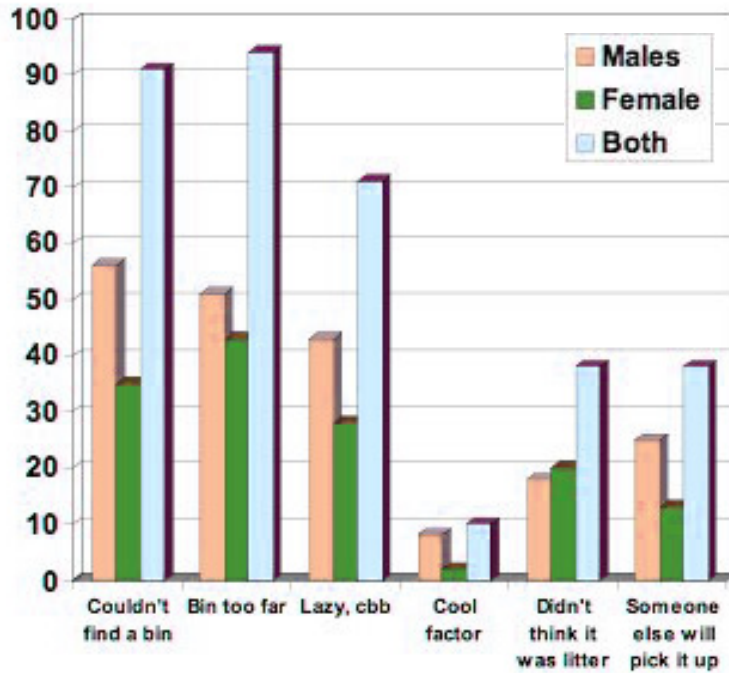
Originally it was driven by staff but after a few meetings the Student Leadership Team nominated students to join the committee. They then came up with some student driven projects and were the face of the program to the school community.



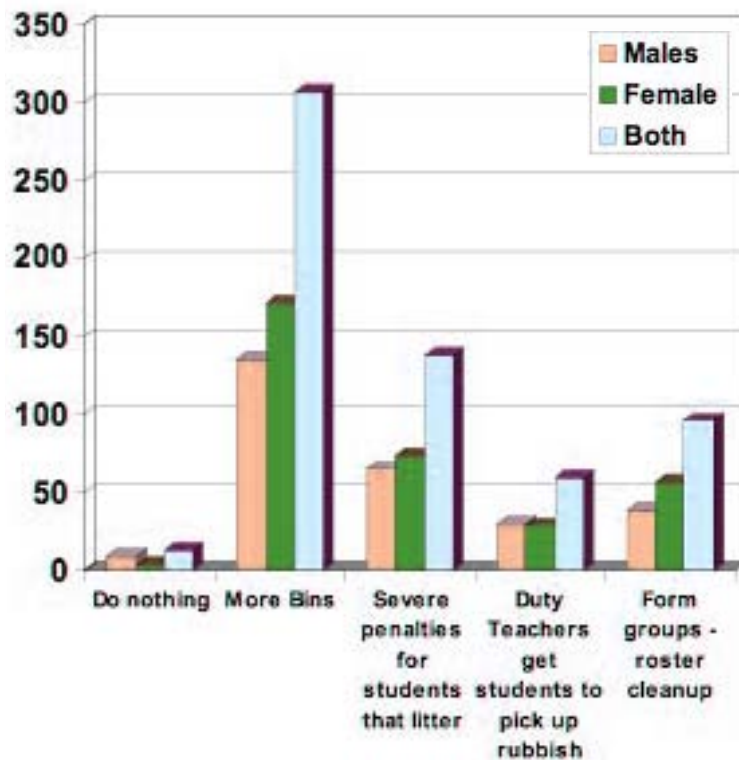
Pre-program research

The Litter Task Force undertook a number of steps to do an audit of the college's rubbish issue. The students adapted the survey supplied by Keep Australia Beautiful to make it more relevant to the school and this was given to the rest of the student body.

When asked why they litter, this was the student response:



When asked for a solution to the litter problem, this was the student response:



This and other results from the survey were used to plan the program activities.

Program implementation

Time

The Clean Schools campaign ran over a 10 week term in 2011.

Displays

Graphic arts students designed posters with an anti-litter message which were displayed in identified litter problem areas around the school.

Daily messages

The running total of the house competition was published in the school Daily Bulletin. These were updated every week and read out to students in their form classes. Updates were also given at the various assemblies.

Activities

The students created their own Rubbish Task Force video, that was shown to every student in the school. The film showed interviews with individual students around the school on their thoughts about litter.

ECC customised the student survey to create their own. Using the results of this survey, student leaders created a power point presentation, including before and after photos around the grounds and facts and information about litter, that was shown to the whole school.

The students also took a pastoral care period in each year group to give a presentation to their group. The team created a power point based on one provided by Keep Australia Beautiful and altered it to include some of the local and college environment.

Competitions

Initial research indicated a need for more bins as a solution to the litter problem. Therefore, a house bin competition was developed.



Four different coloured bins, representing each house, were purchased with the assistance of a local company who supplied the bins at a heavily discounted rate. These were stationed in a central area of the school and the students were encouraged to put their rubbish in their house bin. The bins were weighed once a week by the House Captains in Year 11 and 12 who were on a roster. These weights were recorded and added to the total.

At the end of the term the house that had collected the most rubbish during the term was presented with the Golden Bin Award.

Enforcement

Teachers were encouraged to hand out yard duties for students caught littering. They would be required to collect litter for a period of time. However, Keep Australia Beautiful recommends that this not be used as a method of enforcement rather that students are rewarded for picking up other people's litter.

ECC stopped selling certain items in the canteen when the litter got out of control for a number of days.

Celebration

The end of the campaign was celebrated with the presentation of the Golden Bin Award. The house that won was awarded points towards the College House Shield.

Community involvement

Articles were placed in the newsletter seeking parent help in certain areas. Some parents volunteered to help with a mobile phone recycling initiative.

Outcome

ECC reduced the school litter by approximately 50 per cent. Now, in 2012, there was a noticeable change in the amount of litter at the beginning of the year compared to the beginning of 2011.

The enormous success of the program can be attributed to the student implementation. The majority of the activities were developed by students who addressed the school saying, "this is a student issue." As far as the rest of the school was concerned no teachers were involved, which developed an incredible sense of ownership over the program.

Plans for the future

The Litter Taskforce met at the end of 2011 to discuss plans for 2012, which include ongoing litter education and joint projects on recycling with the Bush Rangers team. The 2011 program worked reasonably well but there were some issues which needed to be addressed, in particular weighing the rubbish.

Some students have been commissioned to come up with a new video for 2012 updating students on the work of the Litter Taskforce.

In Term Two the Taskforce commenced the running of a 'litter hotspot'. This is an area, identified by students, as the most littered area in the school. A specially painted bin is kept in this area until it is deemed clean. This area is posted in the daily bulletin and the students on the Litter Taskforce talk to the people in that area to work out why it is a 'litter hotspot'.

The lesson for litter education will likely take place in Term Three and include a viewing of the new video, looking at the power point from Keep Australia Beautiful and getting the students to address the issue of litter and the environment further. The year seven students had a whole unit dedicated to litter in Term One 2012 through their Christian Service Project.



ECC host a Catholic Colleges Networking and Leadership Day attended by a number of leaders from different Catholic Colleges around the state. In 2012, time was set aside for discussions about litter and environmental issues and what different schools did in regards to litter. The biggest issue that arose was having enough time and resources to allocate to the problem of litter. The Networking Day 2013 is going to continue to look at this issue in more depth. In the meantime, ECC and Keep Australia Beautiful are being approached by other schools about the work done at this school, which the staff and students on the Litter Taskforce are generously sharing.

The Clean Schools program has developed a bit of a cult following at ECC, yet there are fluctuations in the results. As part of the school's involvement in the Our Education Network they are looking at changing the mental models of the students, so this is designed to be a long term project to change the culture of the school to a litter-free, Clean School.