

EDUCATIONAL AREAS ON PAPER AND BOARD COLLECTION AND RECYCLING



Background (REF: 1)

Fun activities are a great way to learn how about the environmental benefits of recycling and how to separate waste correctly. This is especially true for children who in addition have a powerful influence over the recycling habits of a household.

Such activities can be even more effective if they are performed at the point where the actual process of recycling happens or where separate collection is done. For paper and cardboard specifically, such activities can illustrate how separately collected paper becomes usable again after the process of recycling.

Due to this, recycling yards/sorting plants should have facilities and reserved areas for children to play games or engage in other activities/crafts so that they understand the concept of a circular economy and learn the importance of recycling.

ACTION

Integration of a reserved area in recycling yards and/or sorting plants in order to inform visitors (e.g. children, students, retired people) on paper and board collection and recycling

Examples of good practice implemented

Recycling yard in La Rioja (Spain) (REF: 2)

This treatment plant in La Rioja (Spain) has educational facilities including a visitor centre and an environmental classroom, where students and general public can learn about recycling of solid waste, using different didactic methods.

They also offer the possibility of a guided tour through the whole plant, to understand how they add value to waste and the importance of everyone in this closed loop. **The visit involves environmental educators performing different activities such as handmade crafts or games to reinforce the message of how important it is to correctly separate the waste that we produce in our houses.**



Figure-1. Educational area in the recycling yard (La Rioja, Spain). Source: Ecoparque de la Rioja



Figure-2. Sculpture made of paper in the recycling yard (La Rioja, Spain). Source: Ecoparque de la Rioja

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Keep in mind that...

- ⚠ It is important to plan dates and methodology for the collection of information to calculate the related KPIs.
- ⚠ The first condition in order to implement this Good Practice is to have space for it. Maybe the room is there but it is being used for other functions (i.e storage area). In this case, you should reorganize the spaces to make one of them an educational area.
- ⚠ Make sure that the area that you are reserving for the educational activities is far enough from dangerous items (such as glass, machinery, operational tools, etc.).
- ⚠ Identify the activities you want to perform in this area and design the space so that it is adapted to these activities.

How to start?

- ✓ Use recycled materials for the decoration of the area to make people understand the concept of circular economy.
- ✓ Decoration must be appealing for children and adults.
- ✓ Plan open days for visiting in order to show the new or existing installations.
- ✓ Organize an informative campaign so that schools and other institutions know of the existence of the facilities.
- ✓ Include a person responsible of the educational activities.

Potential benefits



Educating children early is likely to have an impact on the entire household



Visiting recycling yard can be very impressive for children and the message to communicate could be more easily understood



Practical demonstrations- show children what can (and not) go in the paper recycling bin - can be easily remembered



Figure-3. Game area in the Recycling yard (La Rioja, Spain). Source: Ecoparque de la Rioja



References:

1. PLANET ART (2017) – National recycling week.
2. ECOPARQUE DE LA RIOJA (SPAIN)– Programa Residuo Responsable.