

Pupils at Woodward teach us trash lessons

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If you want to know how to make less garbage, ask the 200 kids at Woodward Avenue School in east Hamilton.

They've gone from 90 bags a month to four.

Caretaker Mike Hillman says: "I used to have two bags from the lunchroom each day, 40 in an average month. Now it's down to nothing. That's really incredible, and the kids are basically doing it all themselves."

The big change is a six-week-old litterless lunch program launched with coaching from Environment Hamilton, \$1,100 donated by local residents and businesses, and a big commitment from principal Joyce Munro, teachers and parent volunteers.

The cash went to buy each child a cotton canvas lunch bag, a reusable plastic sandwich box and two other containers for fruit, veggies or other snacks. Juice boxes are recycled and the teachers take food scraps home to their own green carts for composting.

Brenda Johnson, project manager for Environment Hamilton, presented the school with an award for its success yesterday and announced that Scott Stewart, Hamilton's general manager for public works, plans to make Woodward "a champion pilot school" where city staff will collect the organic waste.

Munro says: "We're starting to see a ripple effect. Children are coming back to me with stories of how their parents are reducing garbage, and parents tell me their children are going out and picking up litter in their neighbourhood. If Woodward Avenue can do it, there's no excuse for other schools."

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