

Waikato

ENVIROSCHOOLS



Conscious Consumption - needs versus wants

The COVID Lockdown period has made us aware of what is really essential to life - the things we really **NEED** rather than all the things we **WANT**.

A **NEED** is something that you **MUST** have to survive for example, food, water and shelter.

A **WANT** is something that you would **LIKE** to have but you can actually survive without it. For example an ice-cream or phone.

Note: Parents/Guardians - You may want to do this break this activity sheet over 3-4 sessions.

Do you really need it or just want it?

1. Brainstorm a list (with words or pictures) of all the things a baby might be given (on a daily basis or at special occasions) as they are growing up to become an adult.
2. Once you've gathered lots of ideas, discuss the things that the child really **NEEDS**. Talk with your buddy/ parent/ guardian about this. As you decide which is a *real* need circle it in one colour. Circle all the other items which are **WANTS** in another colour.
3. Find something at home that is really special to you and that you have had for longer than a year. Share with your buddy/ parent/ guardian what the item is. How does it make you feel? What is it about the item that makes you feel this way. Do you **Need** the item or **Want** this item?

Where does it come from and where does it go?

1. Choose a Need item and a Want item from your brainstorm.
2. For both your Need and Want make a mind map and answer the following questions:
 - a. How much did it cost?
 - b. List all the things that it is made of. Where did you think those materials came from?
 - c. Where did it come from? How far has it travelled to get to your place? Why does this matter?
 - d. What do you think the working conditions were like for the people who made it? How much do you think they earned? Why does this matter?
 - e. How long do you think it will last? What will happen after it breaks or when you have finished with it? Why does this matter?
 - f. Is there a more sustainable alternative?
3. To help with some of these questions, Watch the video on [Youtube - The Story of Stuff](#)

Reflection

- What new information have you found out?
- What was surprising?
- What was concerning?
- Apart from how much it cost to buy something, what are some of the other costs of things we buy and use (to the planet or to other people)?
- How might this affect what you buy in the future?

Re-thinking what you really need and want

Watch [Youtube - The Great Realisation](#)

Think about your time in the COVID Lockdown.

- What was meant by the term **essential services**?
- Brainstorm all the things that have been really important to you
- What did you really need?
- What were things that you really wanted?
- What are things you thought you wanted, but decided weren't that important after all?
- What's something new that you did?
- What are some of the things you've decided are really important since the lockdown period?
- What are some special things you can do that don't cost money?
- What do you think is meant by the term **Conscious Consumption**?
- How could you keep ideas of Conscious Consumption going?



Share these ideas with your family. Can you make a plan together to be more conscious as consumers?

Have a de-clutter . . . create an op-shop box or hold a 'free-market' swap meet when you get back to school

When you've completed these activities, have a look in your bedroom or house for things you decide you no longer need or want (make sure you talk to your parents or guardians first - they may even like to do it with you).

- Go through your toys, books and clothes and decide which things you no longer need or want and that others may like. Make sure they are clean. Store them in a box until you can take them to the op-shop or organise a 'free-market' with friends or at school.
- To hold a 'free-market'
 - When you get back to school find some friends to help you organise a 'free-market'
 - Each person brings the things they no longer want
 - All items are put on display and people can choose some items they want to take home from what others have brought. There is no charge. Where more than one person wants an item, work out how you will decide
 - Tell the story of 'Conscious Consumption' and why you decided to organise this event.
 - Work out where to donate the remaining items to.