

Cami Child

Email: camireese04@gmail.com

Username: Camichild

Granada Hills Charter High School

Project Green Challenge Day 6

The story of Plastic Take Action Kit showed me that there are a lot more ways to fight plastic pollution than I thought. It's not only about buying zero waste products or carrying a reusable water, but also about spreading awareness and educating more people on this serious issue. Also, it was really helpful to see all the links and sources they provided for ways to reach out to people in higher positions and ways to express your opinion and voice on the plastic problem. Hosting a screening of the Story of Plastic, and even of other informative videos, is a really smart way to continue spreading awareness of the vast consequences of plastic pollution and consumption even during lockdown orders. I had never heard of this before, and I plan on hosting a screening myself for this film so that I can get more of my friends and peers interested in such an important problem.

Greenpeace's Toolkit says that three good ways to make a difference on plastic pollution in your community and in the world are to start reaching out via email, call, or even through petitions. I had seen people participate in actions like these, but signing a few petitions is the extent to which I have participated as well. This was due to the fact that I did not know what to really say and I felt out of place doing it. However, this toolkit showed some helpful outlines of what exactly to say when speaking to officials and even other students about making change in our community and country. This source also showed me how petitions can be essential in gathering together people to fight for the cause. Often, a lot of people want to fight plastic pollution and they don't know how, or people need to be informed of the issue, and creating petitions can do just this. In the example petition they provided they included ideas like banning and reducing single-use plastics. This can give incentive to officials to acknowledge and act on the problem.

The Post Landfill Action Network Toolkit showed me that you can collaborate with different departments on your school campus to make change and even ban certain kinds of plastics. For example, you can work with the food service provider to try and establish ways that plastic can be decreased in the cafeteria and in the food packaging. This source also says that you can look to many different people on your campus for ways to improve. It seems now that there are a lot of areas to improve in on campus involving plastics from food packaging to microplastics and students in clubs or school teachers and organizations can help you make a difference, too. I learned that it is important to do an assessment of what plastics are on your campus (or other location), if they are recyclable, and the cost of them in order to formulate an effective plan of action. It can be most beneficial to target a specific type of plastic in a specific area of your campus. Educating others on the issue and learning more yourself will benefit the long lasting effect of any plastic free plans that you create.

Zero Waste Home proves that you can truly find replacements or alternatives to everything that is a necessity and even things that aren't. It is amazing that there is essentially an option for products in every aspect of life in a low to zero waste form. From looking at this website, I noticed that when you live a zero waste lifestyle, a lot of the things you use have multiple purposes in your life. For example, baking

soda was used as a cleaner and as a body exfoliator. Many of the ingredients mentioned were mentioned multiple times. And something as simple as a cloth rag had many purposes. This not only tells me that you are creating a lot less waste, but that you could potentially save money in this lifestyle because you aren't buying loads of products the way you would in a mainstream wasteful lifestyle.

The life cycle of plastic is linear. Our means of production is a linear chain when the most sustainable option is a circular economy. There is transportation, water, and energy use within all of the steps of making plastic. This source solidified the fact that most plastic is not getting recycled and that so many resources and energy are getting put into this long chain only for a single-use product to be made. It seems like a very large waste of money and products for such terrible outcomes on the planet, and even on human health. I also learned that there are global solutions and then there are individual solutions. While individual solutions can be essential in gaining advocacy and preventing pollution, the blame should not be solely placed on the consumer. Under the linear system and economy, companies are creating extreme amounts of waste and regulations and laws aren't being made at a good enough rate to combat the entire issue. It is important to use both global and individual solutions to make a better future for plastic pollution.

My Plan For Solving the Plastic Crisis in the Cleaning Product Industry:

Step 1.

Research the problem at hand thoroughly. Understand the impacts of your problems, the causes, and any initial solutions. This step is important because you have to make sure you have a good understanding of the problem so you can better reach out, educate, and make change. I had to research the causes, effects, and existing solutions of battling the plastic industry, more specifically plastic packaged cleaning products, in order to establish a basis for my plan.

Step 2.

Changing my own personal actions before informing others to do so. If I can learn what it is I want others to learn and do, I will be able to advocate for it better. This includes stopping purchasing cleaning products like Clorox or products made simply to make you buy more, and start making and buying cleaning products in reusable bottles that can be used for more surfaces.

Step 3.

Find people who are interested in ending plastic pollution and creating homemade cleaning products that are not made in plastic. This group could range from environmentalists, to health advocates, to people interested in cleaner/more natural products for cleaning. From here, I could make my own advocacy group that could create petitions including reducing plastic packaging in the detergent industry, or in the bathroom cleaning products, for example. Also, finding organizations that I could collaborate and volunteer with to spread awareness on not only plastic pollution in general, but plastic waste in the cleaning market.

Step 4:

Create information meetings, events, and groups involving spreading awareness on plastic pollution coming from cleaning products. In these events, I would present information and gather ideas for more solutions and for what to address local politicians or corporations with. This is an important step because it starts the larger spread of knowledge and incentive for change. Especially considering the coronavirus, cleaning product sales and single use plastic are increasing dramatically and by hosting constant meetings and groups advocating for a change there will be improvement. In these events and in my previously mentioned organizations and groups, we would create ideas about what to replace plastic with in these bigger corporations and how to approach them to ask them to make changes in their products.

Step 5:

I would call corporations of the cleaning industry to propose our idea that plastic should be phased out of as many products or product parts as possible. This idea could include making more bulk options, refillable products (such as in the organization *loop*), and switching to glass or other fibers. I can use the call outlines provided by the Greenpeace toolkit on how to address officials. In this step, it may become challenging to get corporations to listen to our pleas, this is where petitions or persistence will help. We also need to make efforts on smaller companies, because while larger companies that regulate cleaning products have more consumers of their products, more companies removing plastic from their products creates a larger demand for eco-friendly packaging. This has been seen before with other environmental incentives. If we propose our ideas to as many cleaning companies as possible, more change will be made and other companies will feel the influence.

Step 6.

Raising funds. In this step, my group that is advocating for plastic free cleaning products would raise funds through pages like GoFundMe or even partnerships with zero waste companies. We could raise money by selling zero to low waste cleaning products and by creating fundraiser events.

Step 7.

Engage in environmental justice. Beyond looking into the basic environmental issues of creating too many plastic products, it would be important to look into what groups are being most affected by the surge of plastic and especially of plastic used for cleaning products. By partnering up with other groups advocating for equality we would get a wider audience for the environmental aspect, create a stronger need for change among others, and help advocate for problems outside of our own to create a better world in general.

Step 8:

At this point I would continue with my groups and organizations and host events such as zoom meetings that screen informational videos, participate in meaningful conversation involving solutions, and begin to organize a class which is my ultimate goal. Throughout all of these steps, I am working to gain more of a following on this issue of plastic pollution specifically involving cleaning products.

Step 9: Host and plan weekly to monthly classes teaching others how to make zero waste cleaning products with things they already own or could easily purchase. Different types of cleaners for different appliances would be at different classes so that people can come for whatever they want. With proper

fund raising, these classes would not be too expensive and would be accessible so that they can teach a variety of people a lifelong skill. The more people that we can get to come and learn the more people will stop having to buy plastic packaged products. This will lead to a website as well.

Step 10:

Continue other steps. Continue reaching out to corporations so that people don't have to make their own products if they do not want to or if they do not have time. Work with organizations and groups to create better solutions to problems and partner with zero waste stores to promote their cleaning products and style of selling. Reaching out to schools and clubs who want to participate. Essentially spreading the word more and constantly moving towards a future in which there are no plastic packaged cleaning products because people are making them themselves or purchasing them through bulk and zero waste/reusable containers.



Vs

