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MEDIA RELEASE

HUNT ON FOR 100 MILLION POPPERS, \$10 MILLION

The hunt is on for 100 million poppers and \$10 million in cash across Queensland schools.

In a new campaign launched today, Queensland kids and schools are being encouraged to find million of drink poppers that are ending up in landfill instead of Queensland's popular Containers for Change facilities.

Environment Meaghan Scanlon MP said while more than 5 billion containers had been exchanged through the scheme since it began, there were still plenty of containers yet to be traded for cash.

The new campaign aims to educate schools and sporting and community groups to recycle their empty drink poppers with the 'Popper Patrol' - colourful characters representing different types of poppers that can be recycled through the scheme.

"Every year 100 million poppers end up in landfill across the state – that's \$10 million that could be claimed through Containers for Change," Minister Scanlon said.

"Kids in Queensland have already been leading the recycling effort in a huge way, setting household habits of recycling eligible containers and cashing in for extra pocket money for themselves or even to donate to charities."

It comes after the Palaszczuk Government late last year also launched its \$1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund aimed at preventing waste from ending up in landfill, and instead be used by the booming resource recovery industry for new products.

Member for Greenslopes Joe Kelly welcomed the announcement and said schools like Greenslopes State Primary School had been fundraising through the scheme since 2019.

"There's been great return rates for bottles and cans, but this campaign is here to educate the public that juice and flavoured milk poppers are also recyclable and can earn a 10 cent refund through the Containers for Change scheme," Mr Kelly said.

"Greenslopes has been leading this way on this. And for schools and students those refunds can really add up to purchase even more things like sports equipment and classroom supplies.

"Saving drink poppers from going in to landfill is just one small action that can make a enormous positive impact on the environment and I'm issuing a challenge to the kids of Queensland to help us track them down."

Greenslopes State School Principal Trevor Carr says the students have embraced the Containers for Change scheme as part of their sustainability and environment focus.

"Even with the disruptions last year we collected more than 46,000 containers here at the school, and that money has gone straight back into the P&C for things like equipment and sustainable garden beds," Mr Carr said.



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“Our students here learn about caring for the environment as part of the curriculum and they are already recycling and even saving food waste to feed the school chickens.

“We hope to collect even more containers this year, and by getting the kids involved and excited about recycling with the Popper Patrol is a great way to hit that target.”

Ken Noye, CEO of COEX the non-for-profit that runs the Containers for Change scheme, says schools are a key place to shape good recycling habits in young Queenslanders.

“A classic lunchbox staple, millions of juice and milk flavoured poppers are consumed across Queensland every year, with more than 36 million poppers being recycled in 2021,” Mr Noye said.

“However there’s still an opportunity to save around 100 million more poppers every year from going into landfill.

“The Popper Patrol is a great reminder not just for children, but for everyone, that there are more than 24,000 different drink containers that are eligible to be recycled through the scheme, including glass, plastic, aluminium and of course poppers.

“If we save those poppers and other liquid paperboard containers, that’s \$10 million worth of funds to make a difference for individuals, schools, charities, and community groups.”

The Popper Patrol campaign will be shared with activities and education across a number of Queensland schools, for more information visit containersforchange.com.au/popperpatrol.

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*Cleaning up our state since November 2018, **Containers for Change** aims to increase recycling rates and reduce litter by allowing Queenslanders to exchange eligible drink containers to either earn a 10 cent refund for each container returned, or donate the proceeds of those refunds to their nominated community group.*

COEX is the non-profit organisation that implements the Containers for Change scheme.