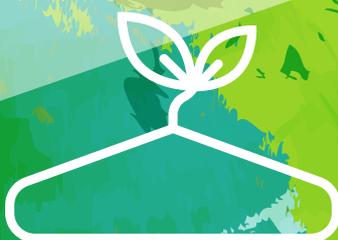




Youth Work Ireland

# SUSTAINABLE FASHION



RESOURCE TO SUPPORT YOUTH-LED  
ACTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION

# YOUTH CLIMATE JUSTICE FUND



**This resource has been developed as part of the  
Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's  
Youth Climate Justice Fund 2021**

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## INTRODUCTION

Young people are leading out in the movement for climate action and climate justice and as they learn more, they want to find solutions; they want to know how they can change their behaviours and consumptions to better the world.



In 2020 Youth Work Ireland developed the Our Fair Planet; Youth Actions for Climate Justice Programme which was funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's **Youth Climate Justice Fund**. The programme sought to educate and empower young people around issues of climate justice, human rights and sustainable development. It also tasked young people and youth groups to take positive actions in their communities to highlight the issue of climate justice.

We know that fashion is among the most polluting industries in the world and the current fashion industry model is based around a linear model of consumption with clothes being produced, used and then disposed of after use. This is particularly true of fast fashion items with over half of 3 of 5 fast fashion items ending up in landfill sites. From our evaluation of the Our Fair Planet programme fast fashion and sustainable fashion were key areas that young people wanted to both know more and take actions on. This is echoed in recent research by our friends in SpunOut.ie and Eco UNESCOs which found that 53% of young people now buy second hand or upcycled clothes (*Youth Climate Voices: Youth Climate Justice Survey 2020*).

This resource aims at building the capacity of youth workers and volunteers to support young people in their knowledge of the impact of fast fashion and the importance of sustainable fashion. It also provides young people with practical skills and tools they can use to upcycle, recycle and make sustainable choices around fashion consumption.

This resource has been kindly funded by the Dept of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

## YOUTH WORK IRELAND

Youth Work Ireland is a Federation of 20 Member Youth Services located around Ireland who deliver direct youth work programmes and services to young people. We actively engage with over 76,000 young people every week. Over the years we have developed highly innovative services, supports and programmes for young people between the ages of 10-25 years, including mental health supports, resilience building, anxiety programmes, drug and alcohol supports, LGBT+ youth work, club development, employability programmes, counselling services, rural out reach and fun safe spaces for young people to gather. We are a rights-based and youth-led organisation and the principles of inclusion, participation and empowerment are core to the work we do.

## THE REDISCOVERY CENTRE

Thanks to Sarah and Arran in the Rediscovery Centre who worked on this resource. The Rediscovery Centre is the National Centre for the Circular Economy in Ireland which bring together the skills and expertise of artists, scientists, designers and craftspeople united in a common purpose of sustainability. They support four reuse social enterprises: Rediscover Furniture, Rediscover Fashion, Rediscover Paint and Rediscover Cycling and also provide public training courses, demonstrations and educational activities highlight the benefits of effective resource management and encourage everyone to REDISCOVER the value of waste. Find out more at [www.rediscoverycentre.ie](http://www.rediscoverycentre.ie)



## PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE

This resource aims at equipping youth workers, youth leaders and volunteers with the capacity, materials and techniques to deliver workshop activities with young people on the topic of fast fashion and sustainable fashion.

The resource outlines the various concepts in regard to sustainable fashion and uses engaging methods to provide young people with practical skills in upcycling and recycling clothes, as well as increasing their awareness around issues related to sustainable fashion.

The resource contains background information on the fashion industry, sustainable fashion and lifecycle analysis which the youth worker may find helpful.

The activities can be dipped into or delivered in whichever way suits the youth worker and their groups. The activity section contains activities aimed at increasing young people's awareness of the lifecycle of clothes and the impact of fast fashion while also providing them with the practical skills and techniques to upcycle, recycle and care for items of clothes.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Young people will gain a better understanding of the effects and impact of the fast fashion industry.
- Young people will have a better awareness of the inequalities and injustices that exist in the global fashion industry.
- Young people will be provided with the knowledge to make alternative choices in terms of clothing.
- Young people will be equipped with the training and skills to act on this new knowledge and upcycle and recycle items of clothing
- Youth workers will be equipped to explore sustainable fashion concepts and effects with their groups using a variety of methodologies from group discussions to practical projects.
- Youth workers will have the skills and capacity to embed sustainable techniques to recycle and make clothes in their youth groups.

# **SECTION ONE: UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLES AND IMPACTS OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION**

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**THIS SECTION WILL BUILD THE CAPACITY OF YOUTH WORKERS TO DELIVER A WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE FASHION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.**

**IT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES AND IMPACTS OF THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY AND THE MOVEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION.**



## THE FASHION INDUSTRY

The fashion industry consists of four sectors: the production of raw materials (including fibres, textiles, leather and zips); the production of fashion goods by designers and manufacturers, retail sales; and various forms of advertising and promotion. These are separate but interdependent sectors, all of which aim at satisfying consumer demand for clothing and enable participants in the industry to operate at a profit.

Textiles are fundamental to our society, providing us with clothing, shoes, carpets, curtains, furniture for homes, offices and public buildings. The textiles industry employs millions of people worldwide, making it among the largest industries in the world.



## IMPACTS OF FASHION INDUSTRY

The current model of the fashion industry, textiles and consumption cause significant environmental, climate and social impacts by overuse of resources, water, land, chemicals, emission of greenhouse gases and pollutants. Here are some facts about the fashion industry and its environmental, social, and economic impacts.

### Economic Impacts

- Today's global fashion Industry is worth €2.5 trillion each year.
- The clothing industry now produces 400% more clothes than 20 years ago.
- China produces nearly 54% of the world's textiles.

### Social impacts

When we pick put on our favourite t-shirt, we don't often consider everything that came before. Where did that t-shirt come from? Who made it? Unfortunately, many of the textile and garment workers that make these clothing items are treated poorly:

- Most workers don't receive what we call a "living wage"! A living wage is defined as "the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet their basic needs." This is unfair; any thing below a living wage is not enough to support the worker and his or her family.
- 93% of brands surveyed by the Fashion Checker aren't paying garment workers a living wage (Fashion Checker, 2020).
- Child Labour is common in the Fashion Industry. 51 countries use child labour in at least one part of their garment or jewellery supply chains.
- Garment factories often have little ventilation, and workers toil for long hours in conditions that are dangerous or unsafe. They are often exposed to harsh chemicals and lack proper Personal Protective Equipment. The European Parliament uses the term "slave labour" to describe the conditions of garment workers in Asia.
- The majority of these workers are women, leaving one gender disproportionately affected. Of the 40 million garment workers employed by the industry, women represent roughly 85%. Because employers did not want to pay maternity benefits during the harsh economic environment of the COVID-19 pandemic, a huge problem was the layoff of pregnant workers.
- Other social impacts include pollution affecting communities, health impacts for workers

## Environmental Impacts

The environmental impact of the Fashion Industry is perhaps the greatest, in breadth and depth.

- 63% of textile fibres are derived from petrochemicals.
- The UN estimates that a single pair of jeans requires 1kg of cotton. Producing a kg of cotton requires 10,000 litres of water, on average.
- **Polluted Waterways:** The Fashion Industry greatly impacts our water. Textile treatment and dyeing processes pollute rivers and waterways when untreated wastewaters from textile factories are dumped into them. 20% of industrial water pollution comes from textile treatment and dyes.
- **Climate Change:** The fashion industry accounts for 10% of human greenhouse gas emissions (production, manufacturing, transportation) and almost 20% of wastewater.
- Textile production contributes more to climate change than international aviation and shipping industries combined.
- **Waste:** Many garments end up in the landfill. In the EU, the average person consumes 26kg of textiles per person per year, 11kgs of which is discarded within one year. This adds up to a whopping 13 million tons of textile waste each year, globally. Furthermore, textiles can take 200+ years to decompose in landfills.
- **Fast Fashion:** These waste problems are exacerbated by fast fashion, which involves replicating catwalk trends and high-fashion designs and mass-producing them at low cost. The pieces produced by fast-fashion manufacturers are often low quality, resulting in low lifespan.
- **Plastic Pollution:** Every time a synthetic garment is washed, microfibers are released into our water. These are dangerous to the environment; this is because they accumulate in soil and water and eventually end up in the food chain, where they can harm us! It is expected that the washing of microfibers results in between 15 and 31% of the plastics entering our oceans each year; that's a percentage out of 9.5 million tons!

## SUSTAINABILITY

In a commission written for the UN, Gro Harlem Brundtland defined sustainability as *“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (Brundtland Report, 1987). As a global society, we must strive to live within our means now so that future generations can function and thrive with the resources left for them. Given this, sustainability does not solely refer to the environment and environmental resources but also relates to economic and social sustainability. Environmental, economic, and social sustainability are the three pillars of sustainable development. These pillars of development are the pathways to creating a fully sustainable society.

**Environmental sustainability** refers to humans using the earth's natural resources at a rate that allows those resources to replenish themselves. This is not the case currently. The world exists in a state of ecological overshoot, wherein humanity's demands on nature exceed its ability to supply resources and further regenerate its supply of those resources as we use them. This unsustainable development and way of living harms the planet both now and, in the future, as it profoundly affects how future generations will struggle to meet their own needs.



Furthermore, we consider **economic sustainability** to concern all nations having access to the resources necessary to maintain their independence and meet their people's needs. **Social sustainability** focuses on all people across the globe having access to basic necessities to allow themselves and their communities to thrive and be safe. Given the ideas of economic and social sustainability, we must also consider how this unsustainable way of living is to the greater detriment of poor and disadvantaged communities. These groups already suffer the most in relation to these issues and will be disproportionately affected by them in the future if we carry on as we are at present. It is necessary to act now and create a more sustainable present to ensure a more stable and fair future for coming generations.

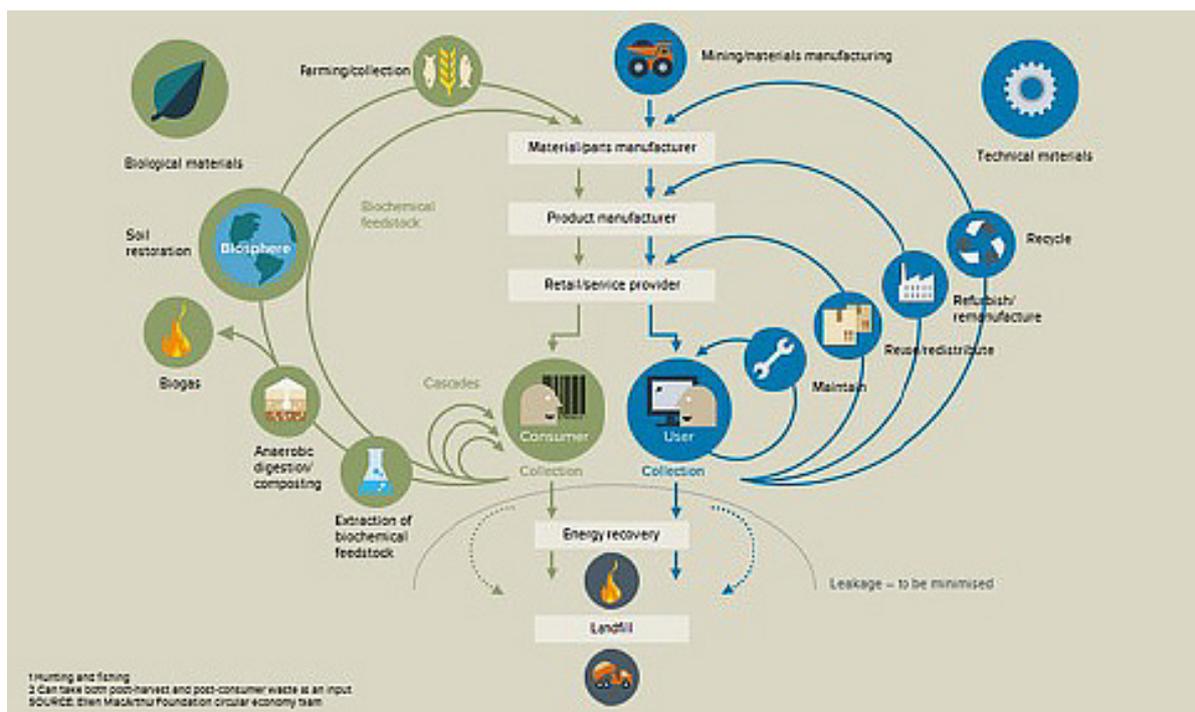
## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, has at its heart the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. Agreed upon in Sept 2015 by the UN as part of a new sustainable development agenda; each goal has targets to be achieved by 2030. Some are very ambitious; they build upon the MDGs and they call on EVERYBODY to do their part by taking action.

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

## THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our current economic system is not circular, it is linear. In a linear economy, we take resources from nature to make a product, use the product, and then when it breaks, we throw it away. However, an economy that is based on taking, making, and disposing of products causes significant environmental problems. The way we live in Ireland and in most European countries is unsustainable, depleting the world's limited resources and creating ever more waste. If every human used as many resources as Europeans, we would need 2.6 Earths to support our population. Realising the limits of our planet's resources, a new way of thinking has emerged: the circular economy. The circular economy aims to create positive value for society, economy and the environment.





The circular economy is inspired by nature, where the value of all resources is maximised. Take, for example, fallen leaves from trees providing nutrients for new plants to grow. In a circular economy, the value of materials and resources is retained for as long as possible and the creation of waste is minimised or prevented entirely. The aim of the circular economy is to decouple economic growth from resource use. A circular economy keeps products in use for as long as possible and avoids waste generation. This can be achieved through sustainable design principles, reuse, repair, remanufacturing, recycling and new business models, such as sharing, renting or offering products as a service. Rental and product-service businesses (e.g. GoCar, DublinBikes, UrbanVolt), for instance, enable products to be used sustainably while being maintained by the company that owns them. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a global influencer and thought leader for the circular economy, the three principles of a circular economy are as follows:

- **Designing out waste and pollution**
- **Keeping products and materials in use**
- **Regenerating natural systems**



A circular economy aims to redefine growth, focusing on positive society-wide benefits. It entails gradually decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources and designing waste out of the system. Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural, and social capital.

## Benefits of a Circular Economy

The circular economy model can create benefits to the environment, society and the economy.

### Environment & Planet:

- **Fight climate change:** At every stage of our products' life, we use energy and resources, creating greenhouse gases that cause climate change. When products end up in landfill or in an incinerator, they also release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. With a circular economy, we can cut these emissions and act against climate change. For some industries, like steel or concrete, a circular system could reduce their emissions by up to 50%.
- **Save resources:** By keeping our products and materials in use, we minimise the use of new, scarce resources. Reusing, repairing and recycling our products means we do not need to create products from new resources.
- **Reduce waste:** Waste can cause serious harm to the environment and humans if not managed responsibly. In a circular economy, we aim for a world without waste by ensuring that materials are kept in circulation.

### Society:

- **Create jobs:** The European Environmental Bureau suggests that expanding the reuse, repair and recycling sectors alone can create over 200,000 new jobs in the EU. These jobs are created locally and can provide employment for disadvantaged communities. Already now, re-use and recycling social enterprises often provide important training and support.
- **Save money:** Through maintaining and repairing goods, households save money. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation estimates overall money savings of several thousand euros per household in a circular economy every year.

### Economy:

- **Make business resilient:** Businesses are less dependent on imports because scarce resources are reused and recycled rather than wasted. They are also not as heavily impacted by price fluctuations, supply issues or resource scarcity.

- **Rethink business models:** The circular economy promotes new business models that keep our products and materials in use. Examples include renting and sharing or paying per laundry wash rather than buying a washing machine.
- **Promote innovation:** Turning our economy circular requires innovation and great ideas. Funding calls in Ireland and the EU support new ideas for a circular economy. One example are the EPA's Green Enterprise funding calls.

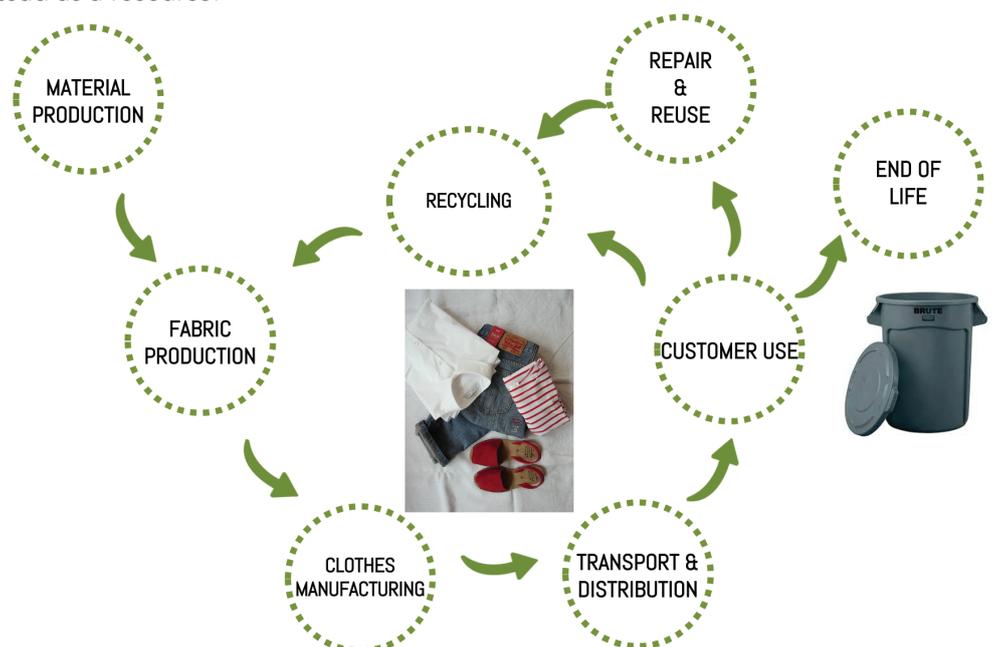
## LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS (LCA)

We all contribute to the global worth of the Fashion Industry by purchasing clothes. It is useful to analyse the "Lifecycle of Clothes". Life cycle analysis (LCA) is a technique to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life, which is from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, and use. Think of a pair of jeans, or your favourite t-shirt. First, a raw material like Cotton or Polyester must be produced. Second, a fabric must be produced using that material. Third, a garment must be produced using that fabric. Fourth, that garment must make its way to a store by some form of transportation. When you enter that store and purchase that clothing item, the cycle enters its fifth stage: consumer use.

From there, the rest of that garment's life is up to you! You, as an individual, make the decision to (a) recycle, (b) reuse, or (c) throw away that item. Throughout this "Lifecycle of Clothes," each input determines the output at each step, and further, contributes to our evaluation of the 3 Pillars of Sustainability for the Fashion Industry. There are two types of LCAs: Cradle to Grave; And Cradle to Cradle.

- **The Cradle to Grave lifecycle** is used for the majority of products designed and made according to the linear economy model of production take-make-use- dispose, where disposal is the end of the product life. This is a linear lifecycle.
- **In the Cradle-to-Cradle lifecycle**, the end of life of a product has alternative options to disposal in landfill so that the materials used are either repurposed, reused in the production stage or recycled, closing the production loop. This is a circular lifecycle.

In this approach, products are designed to be beneficially for their users and the environment in line with the circular economy model, where waste is minimised and seen instead as a resource.





## SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Sustainable Fashion is defined as “clothing, shoes, and accessories that are manufactured, marketed, and used in the most sustainable manner possible, taking into account both environmental and socio-economic aspects.” When we think about the “Lifecycle of Clothes,” we need to think about how we can integrate the Circular Economy into the Fashion Industry and decide on the best inputs that will produce the best possible environmental and social-economic outputs. This means not just re-using our clothes but thinking about how we can incorporate sustainability into the clothing’s design.

That said, some companies try to take advantage of this definition using something called “Greenwashing”. Essentially, Greenwashing involves marketing in the most sustainable manner possible, without manufacturing in the most sustainable manner possible. Companies will essentially lie using marketing and trick a consumer into thinking their product is sustainable when it is really not. An example is H&M’s “Conscious” line. While the company heavily markets these “conscious” goods, the vast majority of H&M’s clothing is not produced in a sustainable manner.

As consumers, we are able to decide where to source our clothing from; perhaps more importantly, we have a responsibility to source our clothing sustainably, and we can identify such clothing using the Principles of Sustainable Fashion.

Examples of Sustainable Fashion

- **Clothes rental services:** Covet, Rag Revolution, and Borrower Boutique, that can help us out! These places rent clothing, which means that they give the piece to you to use for a certain amount of time. This way, even as trends change, you can enjoy a piece of clothing for a little while without the pressure of having to keep or use a piece forever!
- Another cool innovation is something called single-thread knitwear. This method has already been tested by Italian brand Benetton, which has sold sweaters using this technology. Single-thread knitwear uses a single thread to sew a garment, which can then be unravelled and formed into a completely different shape, making a new garment. In this way, one single thread can be used to create many different things!
- Re:newcell achieves true textile to textile circularity by chemical recycling of cotton and viscose textile waste into new cellulosic fibre of the same quality as virgin fibre.
- RiFò, MUD Jeans, REDU, Elvis & Kresse and VEJA reuse and upcycle textile or leather waste from the fashion industry into new fashion products. MUD Jeans use between 23% and 40% recycled post-consumer denim from used jeans in their new jeans, and RiFò use 100% post-consumer recycled cashmere (a high value material) for their new cashmere knitwear and 100% post-consumer recycled denim made into yarn for their denim knitwear.

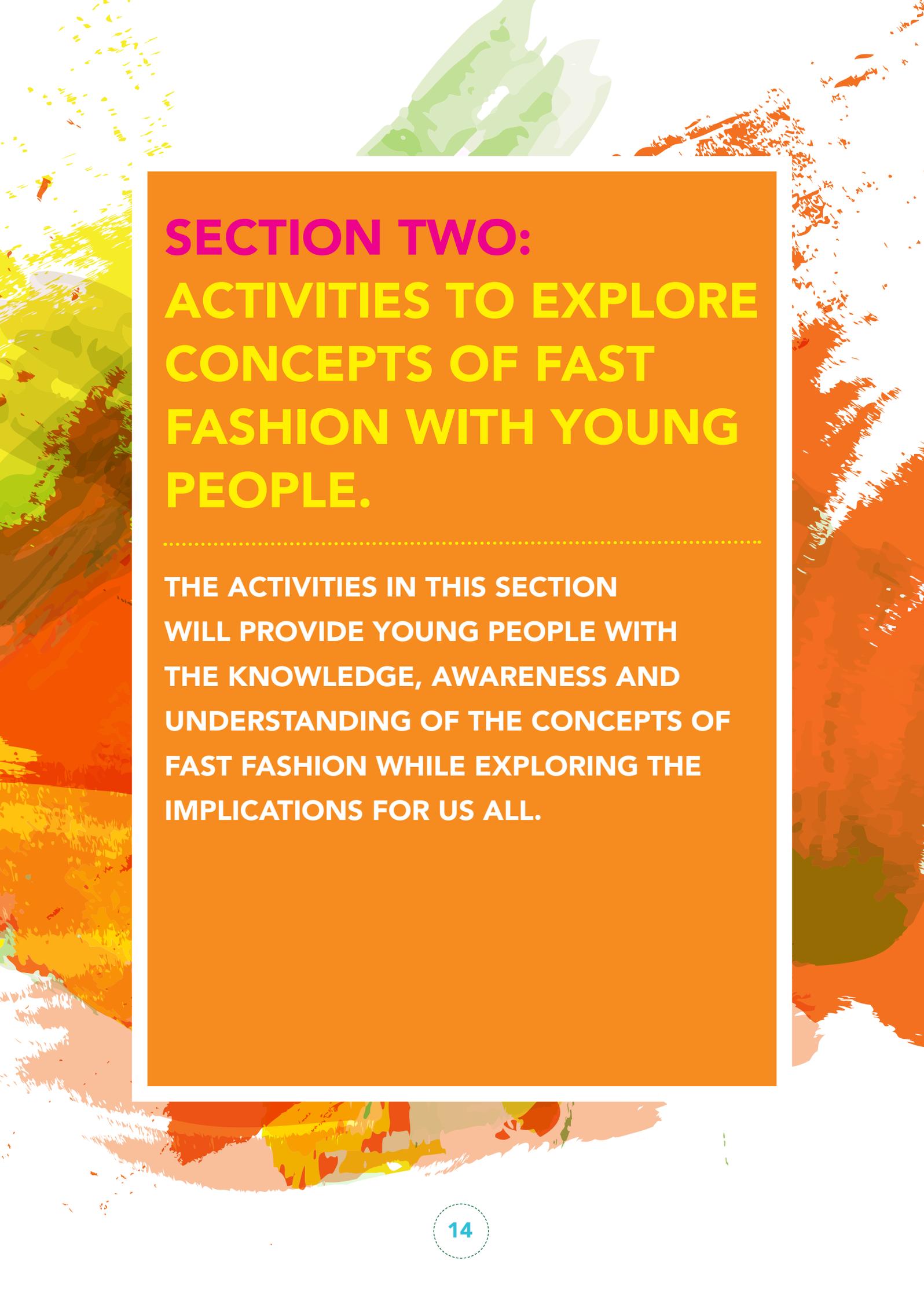


## PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION

The Principles of Sustainable Fashion provide a benchmark for companies and individuals to use to evaluate the sustainability of the clothing item they are making or purchasing. These include that the garment is (a) used more, (b) made to be made again, (c) is made using safe and recycled or renewable inputs, and (d) is marketed and presented with transparency and traceability. A consumer should readily be able to access information on the garment they are buying, and a company should be readily willing to share that information because they are complying with the Principles of Sustainable Fashion.

**Produced in a Safe and Fair Working Environment. The principles could be summarized as:**

- **Low-impact materials:** choose non-toxic, sustainably produced or recycled materials which require little energy to process.
- **Energy efficiency:** use manufacturing processes and make products which require less energy
- **Quality and durability:** longer-lasting and better-functioning products will have to be replaced less frequently, reducing the impacts of producing replacements
- **Design for reuse and recycling:** "Products, processes, and systems should be designed for performance in a commercial 'afterlife'".
- **Design impact measures** for total carbon footprint and life-cycle assessment for any resource used are increasingly required and available. Many are complex, but some give quick and accurate whole earth estimates of impacts.
- **Sustainable design standards** and project design guides are also increasingly available and are vigorously being developed by a wide array of private organizations and individuals. There is also a large body of new methods emerging from the rapid development of what has become known as 'sustainability science' promoted by a wide variety of educational and governmental institutions.
- **Biomimicry:** "redesigning industrial systems on biological lines [...] enabling the constant reuse of materials in continuous closed cycles".
- **Service substitution:** shifting the mode of consumption from personal ownership of products to provision of services which provide similar functions, e.g. clothes rental services.
- **Renewability:** materials should come from nearby (local or bioregional), sustainably managed renewable sources that can be composted when their usefulness has been exhausted.



## **SECTION TWO: ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE CONCEPTS OF FAST FASHION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.**

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**THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS SECTION  
WILL PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
THE KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS AND  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPTS OF  
FAST FASHION WHILE EXPLORING THE  
IMPLICATIONS FOR US ALL.**

# ACTIVITY ONE: Clothing Landfill

## AIM:

The aim of this activity is to get the young people to think about how long it takes for textiles / clothes to decompose in Landfill.

## MATERIALS:

- Pencils, outfit of clothing

## METHOD:

- This can be done individually or in groups.
- Each group or person should use an outfit of clothes (trousers, shirt, t-shirt etc).
- They should list out the different items of clothing of their outfit in the activity sheet.
- The young people can then check the label for each item of clothing to see what the clothing is made from and write this information on the activity sheet.
- Then using the information provided, they can calculate their duration their clothing will spend in landfill.

As a follow-on activity, the young people could examine where the clothes come from and examine what happens to our clothing once we dispose of it (e.g., in landfill, what happens if we recycle it or give it to charity).

Clothing	Length of time to decompose	Clothing	Length of time to decompose
Nylon	30 - 40 years	Polyester	450 years
Cotton	2 – 6 months	Leather (shoes)	40 years
Wool	1 – 5 years		

ITEM OF CLOTHING	WHAT MATERIALS IS IT MADE FROM	TIME IN LANDFILL (TOTAL LENGTH OF TIME TO DECOMPOSE)

# ACTIVITY TWO: Life Cycle Analysis

## AIM:

The aim of this activity is to develop the young people's awareness of the impacts of production and consumption of fashion, and to explore the advantages of sustainable design, reuse, and recycling. This encourages knowledge of eco-friendly habits, increases their understanding of where they themselves could improve on their eco-friendly behaviours

## MATERIALS:

- 1 set per team or individual of laminated Lifecycle Analysis Cards for a pair of jeans

## METHOD:

1. Give each group or person a set of laminated Lifecycle analysis cards for a pair of jeans
2. Ask them to sort the cards into the life cycle – cradle to grave of the garment
  - a. Write down some of impacts (environmental, social/cultural, economic) of production of product
3. Once completed, ask them how they could change the process to be more sustainable, i.e. cradle to cradle.
  - a. Write down the advantages/disadvantages of reuse and recycling
4. Ask each team to present their lifecycle analysis to the rest of the group

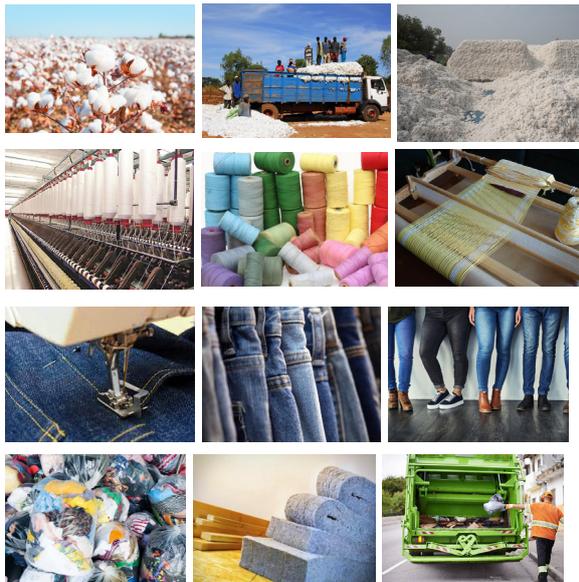
## ANSWERS: FOR YOUTH WORKERS

### ORDER

### TEXT CARD

### PICTURE (1,2,3 ...)

- |    |                               |
|----|-------------------------------|
| 1  | Cotton Growing                |
| 2  | Transport to Cotton Gin       |
| 3  | Cotton Gin                    |
| 4  | Lint Mixing and Yarn Spinning |
| 5  | Yarn Dyeing                   |
| 6  | Weaving                       |
| 7  | Cut and Sewing of Fabric      |
| 8  | Distribution                  |
| 9  | Consumer use                  |
| 10 | Reuse (C to C)                |
| 11 | Recycling (C to C)            |
| 12 | Landfill (C to G)             |



## LIFECYCLE OF A PAIR OF JEANS:

To be printed and cut out so teams can sort into the lifecycle from production to disposal

### Cotton Growing



The top five producers of cotton are China, India, United States, Pakistan and Brazil. Cotton has a growing season of 150-180 days and once planted needs to be weeded, irrigated (depending on location) and treated for pests. The crop must then be harvested before weather can damage or completely ruin its quality and reduce yield.

### Transport to Cotton Gin



Once harvested, the cotton must be transported to a cotton gin for processing. At the cotton gin the seed cotton is separated into the cotton seed and the lint. The majority of the cotton seed is manufactured into livestock feed and food products such as margarine and cooking oil. The lint is used for the production of cotton yarns and fabric.

## Cotton Gin



At the cotton gin the cotton first goes through dryers to reduce moisture content and then through cleaning equipment to remove foreign matter. These operations facilitate processing and improve fibre quality. The cotton is then goes to gin stands where a revolving circular saw pulls the lint through closely spaced ribs that prevent the seed from passing through. The lint is removed from the saw teeth by air blasts or rotating brushes, and then compressed into bales weighing approx. 500 pounds. The cotton is then ready to be transported to the textile mill.

## Lint Mixing and Yarn Spinning



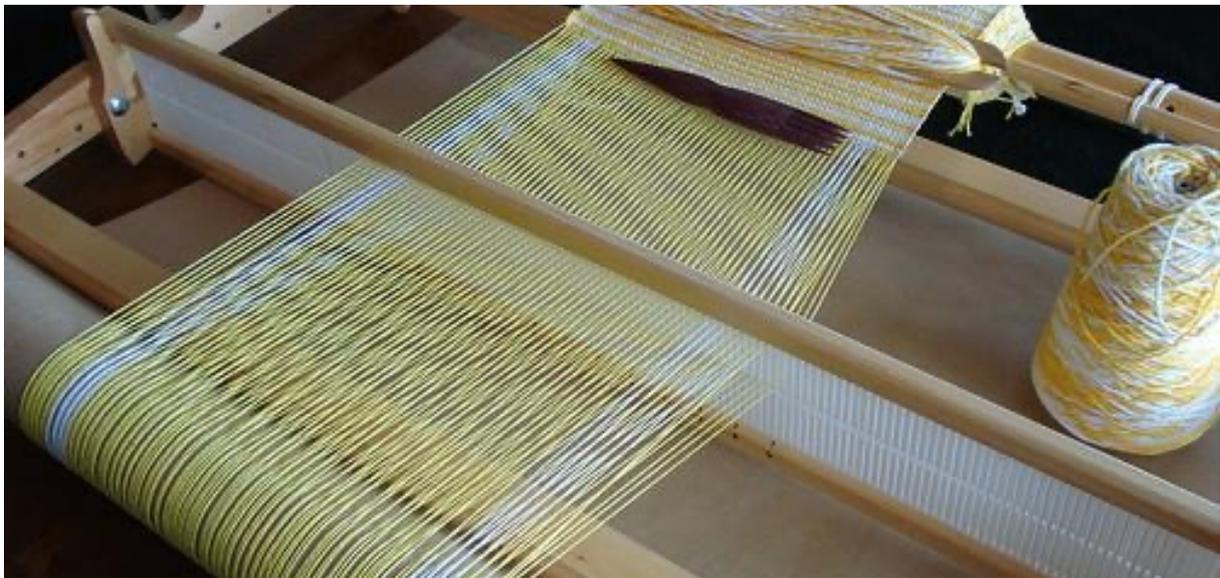
At the textile mill lint from several bales is blended together, then sent to cleaning and carding machines that separate and align the fibres into a thin web. The web of fibres is then drawn through a funnel-shaped device, providing a soft, rope-like strand called a sliver. As many as 8 strands of sliver are blended together in the drawing process. The fibres are then spun making them tighter and thinner until they reach the yarn thickness or "count" needed for weaving or knitting fabric. After spinning, the yarns are tightly wound around bobbins, ready for fabric forming. Cord is plied yarn twisted together.

## Yarn Dyeing



Yarn dyeing occurs before the cloth is woven or knitted, is used to produce gingham checks, plaids, woven stripes and other special effects. Blue dyed warp yarns, for example, are combined with white filling yarns in denim construction. One of the most commonly used yarn dyeing methods is package dyeing. In this system, yarn is wound on perforated cylinders or packages and placed on vertical spindles in a round dyeing machine. Dye solution is forced alternately from the outside of the packages inward and from the inside out under pressure.

## Weaving



Weaving is the oldest method of making yarn into fabric. While modern methods are more complex and much faster, the basic principle of interlacing yarns remains unchanged. On the loom, lengthwise yarns called the warp form the skeleton of the fabric. They usually require a higher degree of twist than the filling yarns that are interlaced width-wise. There are three basic weaves; plain, twill and satin. The twill weave, in which the yarns are interlaced to form diagonal ridges across the fabric, is used for sturdy fabrics like denim.

## Cut and Sewing of Fabric



Once the denim fabric has been manufactured, it is ready to be cut and sewn into a new pair of jeans. Each pair of jeans will contain the denim fabric, a metal zip, various threads and metal studs. Jeans can also undergo diverse treatments in order to make them look washed out and used. To that end, chemical substances such as chlorine are used.

## Distribution



Once completed, the jeans can be distributed to shops all around the county or exported to other countries for sale. The jeans can then be displayed in various shops waiting for someone to come in and buy them!

## Consumer Use



Once bought, the jeans will be worn, on average for 3-4 years, before they will have reached their end of use.

During their use the jeans will have to be maintained and washed. We assume that jeans are worn three times and then they are washed in a washing machine. They may also then be dried in a tumble dryer and ironed. This stage consumes much electricity as well as water and washing powder.

## Reuse



After 3-4 years the jeans are either passed on to someone else, sent for textile recycling or thrown into household waste and sent to landfill.

If they have been passed on to someone else, they may be worn for another 3 years before being recycled or thrown out.

## Recycling



If the jeans have been brought to a recycling facility, where they will be collected and transported to a materials recovery facility and separated and recycled. Did you know that jeans can be recycled into an environmentally friendly form of attic insulation?

## Landfill



If the jeans have been put in the household waste, then they will be collected and transported directly to a landfill and buried. Cotton is biodegradable as it is a natural product, and it may break down in a number of months. However, it would be a better use of resources to reuse or recycle the jeans rather than disposing of them.

# ACTIVITY THREE: Fashion Impacts Poster

## AIM:

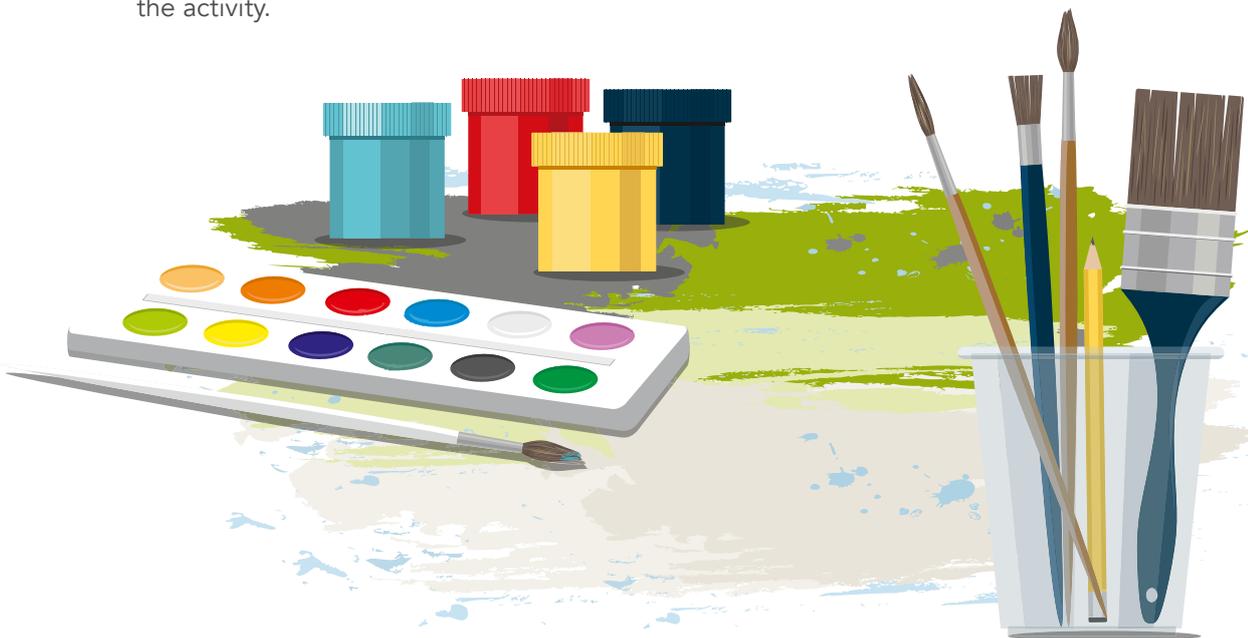
The aim of this activity is to work together to assess the impacts of the fashion industry, choosing from either social, environmental or economic impacts. Working in groups or individually, the young people will brainstorm, research and create an Info poster on the impacts of the Fashion Industry. Then later, they will add "Ideas on more Sustainable Fashion" to inspire others. This activity allows the young people to explore impacts and sustainability and inspire more sustainable choices.

## MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:

- A3 poster paper, colouring pencils/markers, pens,
- Phone or laptop for research

## METHOD:

1. Give each group or person a set of laminated Lifecycle analysis cards for a pair of jeans
2. This can be done individual or in groups.
3. Each group or person can choose from either social, environmental or economic impacts.
4. They should brainstorm and research the impacts of the fashion industry using their phone/ laptop. They should use the gathered information to create an Info poster to highlight and educate others in their community.
5. Then, they can add "Ideas on more Sustainable Fashion" to inspire others. This activity allows young people to explore impacts and sustainability and inspire more sustainable choices.
6. They can create a "poster" either physically, using paper and colouring pencils etc, or digitally, using technology such as Microsoft Powerpoint, Canva etc. or using other technology such as TikTok or Instagram.
7. Ask each person or group to present their poster to the rest of the group at the end of the activity.



## **SECTION THREE:**

# **PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION**

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**THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS SECTION WILL PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE PRACTICAL SKILLS THEY NEED TO RE-CYCLE, RE-USE AND MAKE ITEMS OF CLOTHING. YOUNG PEOPLE CAN USE SEWING MACHINES OR HAND SEWING FOR THESE ACTIVITIES.**

# ACTIVITY FOUR:

## Repairing a Hole in Clothing

### METHOD 1:

#### Preparing your patch

1. Measure the hole you are covering and make your patch a few centimetres bigger to ensure you are covering all of the hole.
2. Choose a fabric to make your patch from.
3. Decide what method you are going to use to finish the raw edges of your patch, here are some options: press (iron) your raw edges under, use a blanket stitch to finish the raw edges, go with a frayed look for your edges - this will work very well with a denim patch.
4. If you are repairing a hole in a pair of trousers you may need to open the inside seam of your trouser leg to be able to reach the area you are trying to repair, especially if you are using a sewing machine.
5. Another useful tip can be to put a piece of card inside your garment in between the two layers. This will help you avoid stitching the two layers together.
6. Place your patch on your garment, making sure you are covering the hole and pin in place. You can baste it into place as the pins can get in the way when you are trying to sew. Basting is the term used for a rough hand stitch using a running stitch to hold your fabric in place, a basting stitch is usually removed once you are finished.
7. Sew your patch into place using a sewing machine or by hand, remember these stitches will be visible so you may want to take your time and get them looking as neat as possible – or not! One of the great things about doing your own repairs is that you can make them look just how you like them.
8. Take your basting stitches out and marvel at your amazing mending skills!



## METHOD 2:

### Cover the hole with a patch on the Inside

1. Measure the hole you are repairing.
2. Cut a patch a few centimetres bigger to ensure you are covering all of the hole, you can make your patch whatever shape you like as long as it is covering the hole. Sometimes the fabric around the hole can be worn thin so it can be a good idea to reinforce this part of your garment with your patch as well.
3. If you want to make your repair as invisible as possible you will need to choose a fabric and thread that are as close as possible in colour to the garment you are fixing.
4. Position your patch on the inside of your garment and pin into place.
5. It can be a good idea to baste your patch into place as the pins can get in the way when you are trying to sew. Basting is the term used for a rough hand stitch using a running stitch to hold your fabric in place, a basting stitch is usually removed once you are finished.
6. If you are repairing a hole in a pair of trousers you may need to open the inside seam of your trouser leg to be able to reach the area you are trying to repair, especially if you are using a sewing machine.
7. Another useful tip can be to put a piece of card inside your garment in between the two layers this will help you avoid stitching the two layers together.
8. Using a straight stitch on your sewing machine or a small running stitch if you are hand stitching, stitch a series of lines across your patch from left to right, and then turning your garment stitch a series of lines from top to bottom creating a grid with your stitch lines. Stitching in this way will hold your patch in place and will reinforce the area around the hole.



## METHOD 3:

### Make a feature of the hole by using some Visible Mending techniques

Measure the hole This can be really fun and is a growing movement and trend. The idea is that you honour the wear and tear of your clothing by making a feature of any repairs you might need to do on them, you can use a variety of hand stitches and embroidery stitches, the Japanese Sashiko technique is used a lot as a visible mending technique. You can really let your imagination and creativity run wild with these kinds of repairs!



## METHOD 4:

### Repair a hole in knitted fabric – Invisible mend

Pull the fibres together to close up the hole. If it is a small hole you can repair it by pulling the fibres surrounding the hole together to close up the hole. This needs to be done gently to avoid any lumpy puckering to make the repair as invisible as possible.

Choosing a matching colour thread will help make the repair unnoticeable.

1. Turn your garment inside out
2. Choose your thread (I have used a contrasting thread to make my stitches visible)
3. It can help to put a book or piece of card under the hole you want to repair, this will help you see the hole and will also help you avoid stitching two layers of your garment together.
4. Make sure to include a small distance around our hole with our stitches, not just the hole itself, this will help ease the fibres together gently and avoid any lumpy puckering.
5. Secure your thread a small distance from the hole by doing 3 small stitches over each other in the same place. Make sure you are not stitching the whole way through to the other side of your garment.

6. Following the line of the knit of your garment, stitch a series of vertical lines up and down the area around the hole, again be careful that your stitches don't go the whole way through to the other side of your garment you can pull the thread softly to pull the fibres together.
7. Do the same stitching horizontally, gently pulling the fibres of your garment together to close up the hole, all the time being careful that your stitches don't go the whole way through to the other side of your garment.
8. Before finishing your stitching check the other side of your garment to see if there is anywhere that needs the fibres pulled together a bit more. If there is you can repeat the process gently pulling the fibres together.
9. When you are happy that the hole has been closed up, secure your stitches by doing 3 small stitches over each other in the same place.
10. Turn your garment around and try and find the hole you repaired if you can!



## METHOD 5: Repair a hole in knitted fabric – Darning

If the hole in your knitted garment is bigger you can fill it in using the following darning technique

1. You will need some thread, a darning needle and a darning egg or darning mushroom to put under the hole - you can also use an orange if you don't have either of these!
2. If you want to make your repair as unnoticeable as possible you should choose a thread which is similar in colour and weight (thickness) to your garment. Wool threads or embroidery threads can be a good option. If you want to do a visible repair you could go for a contrasting colour and experiment with a different thickness to your garment.
3. Place the darning egg under the hole and pull the rest of the garment gently under it making sure it is held nicely in place but is not too tightly stretched.
4. Thread your needle and starting roughly 1cm from the bottom of the hole and roughly 1cm

from the side of the hole, use a running stitch to stitch a vertical line following the line of the knit in your garment

5. When you have stitched this line to roughly the same distance from the top of the hole, turn and stitch a parallel line in the opposite direction.
6. Continue stitching these vertical lines up and down across the hole and until you have created a square shape with your stitch lines that is roughly 1cm bigger than the hole on all sides.
7. Repeat the process with horizontal stitch lines, weaving the thread through the vertical lines to cover the hole.
8. To finish, weave the thread through the jumper.



# ACTIVITY FIVE: Alterations and Taking up a hem

## AIM:

Alterations are a great way to extend the lifespan of your clothing, here is one example – taking up a hem

The same method will work for taking up the hem on any garment.

1. Try on your garment and pin where you would like it to be taken up to.
  2. Mark the new finishing line at the fold with a safety pin.
  3. Unpin your garment and measure the distance from the bottom of your garment up to your safety pin. In the example in the photo, this measurement is 21cm.
  4. Usually when you are taking up a hem you will want to replicate the hem that already exists on your garment, so you will want to create your new hem using the same method. To do this, look at the existing hem of your garment and measure how much seam allowance has been left to create the hem. In some garments the bottom hem is folded twice to hide the raw edge. In the example in the photo it is 3cm.
  5. We will need to minus the seam allowance measurement from the measurement from the bottom of your garment to the safety pin marker. In the example in the photo the measurement from the bottom of the garment to the safety pin marker is 21cm and the required seam allowance measurement for the hem is 3cm. This means in the example we will need to cut our garment at 18cm from the bottom to take it up the required amount.
  6. Measuring up from the bottom of your garment mark all the way round your garment at the required measurement and cut
  7. Press your seam allowance up at the required measurement and pin in place  
If you are creating a double folded hem only pin it in place after you have pressed both folds.
- NB.** You should never press your garment after you have pinned it as the pins will leave a permanent mark in your garment.
8. Stitch your hem into place replicating the style of stitching on the original hem.

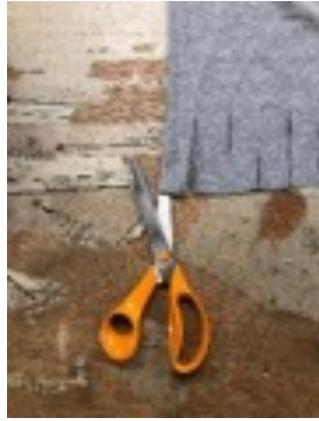


# ACTIVITY SIX: T-shirt Upcycles

## MATERIALS:

You will need a T-shirt and a pair of scissors to complete this easy upcycling project.

1. We are going to cut off the sleeves and alter the neckline to create the straps and opening of the bag. To do this, turn your T-shirt inside out and with the front of the T-shirt facing you, fold it in half lengthways so that you can see the front neckline. Line up the shoulder seams and the sides seams and lay it flat on the table.
2. Cut off your sleeves just inside the seam line on the body of the T-shirt, following the shape of the seam line.  
**NB** It is easier to cut fabric and get the shape you want if you keep it laying flat on the table.
3. Cut off the neck of your T-shirt bringing your cutting line down to roughly the same line as the bottom of where you cut off your sleeve to create your strap and the opening of your Tote Bag. It is a good idea to keep your straps roughly 6cm wide or more for strength.
4. Open your T-shirt out and lay it flat on the table - It should look a bit like a vest now!
5. Cut off the bottom hem - you can keep this for another project.
6. Cut the bottom of your T-shirt into vertical strips roughly 3cm wide and 10cm long. You can use the width of two fingers and the length from the top of your middle finger to just below your knuckle to get your measurement if you don't have a ruler as the measurement doesn't need to be exact.
7. At both sides we will need to cut the strips in half to create two layers, if your T-shirt has a side seam cut this off along the stitch line. This will avoid creating a hole at the side.
8. Leave your T-shirt lying flat until you have completed all the following steps.
9. Going from left to right, tie the bottom layer of one strip to the top layer of the next strip with a single knot pulled tight.
10. As you tie your knots, keep the ends of your strips organised with the top strip on the T-shirt and the bottom strip off the T-shirt, this will help with your next line of knots. Because we are tying in a diagonal, the top layer of the first strip will not be included in this line of knots. The bottom layer of the last strip will not be included either.
11. Using the same method, tie a second row of knots going from left to right and tying the bottom of the first one to the top of the next one. This will close over the holes between the first row of knots. It is easy to get lost in the knots so try and keep them organised as you go.
12. Again the first top strip and the last bottom strip will not be included in the line of knots. You can tie these to the other strips that were not included in the first line of knots to close over the holes at each side.
13. Turn your bag the right way round. The knots will be hidden on the inside. You can choose to make a feature of the knots and of the tassels by tying the knots on the right side of your T-shirt. You can experiment by cutting the tassels thinner and longer and stretching them out after you have tied the knots.
14. If you have two T-shirts you can cut the same shaped straps and use a stencilling technique to create a design on the outside T shirt - be careful not to cut any big hole on your T-shirt as they will stretch out and will lose their shape.



# ACTIVITY SEVEN: T-shirt Stencilling

This is a really nice way to upcycle and customise an old T shirt, you can wear different colours underneath it to create different looks. T-shirt fabric is easy to work with as it doesn't fray however be careful to keep the holes you are cutting small as they will stretch out of shape if they are too big. You will need to keep this in mind when you are creating your stencil design

## MATERIALS:

You will need a T-shirt and a pair of scissors to complete this easy upcycling project.

1. Turn your T-shirt inside out
2. Draw your stencilling design onto your T-shirt using tailor's chalk or a colouring pencil.
3. Cut out your stencil making sure none of the holes are too big. To start your cutting line for each hole you will need to fold the T-shirt to make a snip. This can take some time so make sure you have brought your patience with you!
4. Turn your T-shirt the right way round and try it on with a different colour T-shirt behind it to get the full effect.
5. It can be fun to create some fringing at the bottom by cutting the bottom hem off and cutting the bottom into thin strips, if you stretch the strips out they will curl in giving a nice fringing effect.



# ACTIVITY EIGHT: T-shirt Yarn

Creating a ball of T-shirt yarn from your old T-shirts is a great way to reuse your old T-shirts. Once you have created the yarn you can use it in a multitude of ways for macrame, knitting, weaving, and crochet projects.

## MATERIALS:

You will need a T-shirt and a pair of scissors to complete this easy upcycling project.

1. Lay your T-shirt sideways on the table and fold your T-shirt so that the side seams are roughly 5cm apart.
2. Cut the whole way across the T-shirt just under the sleeve seam.
3. Cut the bottom hem off.
4. Cut the T-shirt into strips roughly 2cm in width stopping just after the first fold. You can make the strips wider depending on your project.
5. Open the T-shirt out making sure the uncut spine is laying flat on the table.
6. Cut the spine in a series of diagonal lines going from the bottom of one strip to the top of the opposite strip.
7. Stretch your strip of T-shirt by pulling it with two hands, this will make it curl into a yarn like cylindrical shape.
8. Roll up your ball of T-shirt yarn.



You can also make T-shirt Yarn by joining shorter strips together

1. Cut a vertical slit at both ends of the strips.
2. Pass one end of one strip through the slit of the other.
3. Pass the end of the first strip through the slit at the other end of the same strip and pull tight.
4. Continue to create a long strip of T-shirt yarn

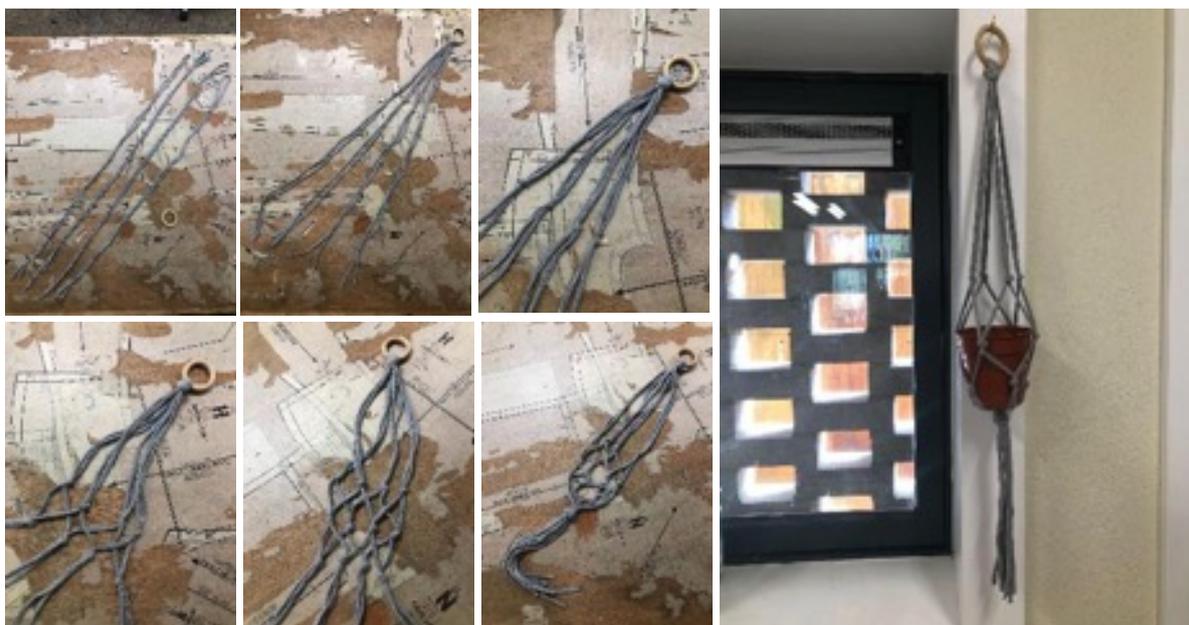


# ACTIVITY NINE: Macrame Plant Holder

## MATERIALS:

You will need T-shirt yarn and a curtain ring

1. Cut your T-shirt Yarn into 4 x 2-metre-long strands.
2. Thread your T-shirt yarn strands through your curtain ring so that your curtain ring is at the middle point of your yarn strands, and you have eight equal sized strands hanging down. You can tie the bottom hem of your T-shirt into a small circle if you don't have a curtain ring, just make sure it is tied nice and tight.
3. Tie the 8 strands in a knot around the curtain ring
4. Laying the strands flat on the table, separate them into 4 pairs.
5. Measure down to where you want the top of your plant pot to be and tie a knot in each of the pairs of yarn at this point.
6. Create another layer of knots by tying the right yarn of one pair to the left yarn of the next pair.
7. Repeat this step creating another layer of knots by tying the right yarn of one pair to the left yarn of the next pair.
8. Finish off by tying the 8 strands together in one knot
9. Insert your pot plant and choose a place to hang it.



# ACTIVITY TEN: Jumper Upcycles Headband/Ear-warmer

This is a really easy upcycling project with great results!

## MATERIALS:

You will need is an old jumper, a scissors, a measuring tape or ruler, some tailors chalk or a colouring pencil to mark your cutting line on the jumper, some pins and a needle and thread.

1. Measure your head and use this measurement as the length measurement in the next step.
2. Using the line of the knit in your jumper as the straight edge, cut a rectangle from your jumper measuring 9 inches or 23cm wide and your head measurement long.
3. Fold the rectangle in half lengthways with the right sides facing, lining up the raw edge. Pin in place.
4. Sew a line of stitching leaving a 1cm seam allowance. You can sew this line by hand, using a running stitch or a back stitch, or with a sewing machine.
5. Turn the right way round and position the seam at one edge of the head band.
6. Bring the two ends together and stitch in place, front and back, using a ladder stitch to hold the two ends together without overlapping them. We are using this method to join the two ends as the jumpers can be quite thick and we want to avoid creating too much bulk. This stitching won't be seen so don't worry about doing it perfectly.
7. To create the gathered feature, make sure you have a threaded needle ready to sew and fold the headband in half towards the back at this join.
8. Fold each side of the headband towards the front to meet the first fold and stitch in place. Again these stitches will be hidden so don't worry too much about how they look as long as they hold the fold in place.
9. Cut a strip roughly 3cm wide from your jumper and use this to cover the fold
10. Hand stitch in place at the back.
11. Admire your handiwork!!



# ACTIVITY ELEVEN: Hooded Scarf

This is another really easy upcycling project with great results!

## MATERIALS:

You will need is an old jumper, a scissors, a measuring tape or ruler, some tailors chalk or a colouring pencil to mark your cutting line on the jumper, some pins and a needle and thread.

1. Turn your jumper inside out and measure down 30cm along the side seam from under the sleeve and mark this point. This will be the depth of your hood, including a 1.5cm seam allowance. You can adjust this length if you want but it is always better to cut bigger and be able to make it smaller than to cut smaller and not be able to use it at all.
2. Measure up from the bottom of your jumper to this point. Use this measurement to measure up from the bottom of your jumper and mark all the way round your jumper.
3. Cut your jumper along this marked line.
4. Bring the two side seams of your jumper together, line them up and pin them together.
5. With your sides seams lined up and pinned together, lay your jumper flat and making sure the raw edges are lined up, pin the top and bottom layers together.
6. Stitch top and bottom layers together with 1.5cm seam allowance. You can stitch this line on a sewing machine or by hand using a small running stitch or a back stitch if you would like it to be more secure.
7. Take out your pins and turn your jumper the right way round and insert one corner of the line you just stitched into the other to create your hood.
8. Try it on and be warm and cosy!!



# ACTIVITY TWELVE: Upcycling Jeans

Old jeans often get holes or are worn out beyond repair. Here are some great ways you can upcycling an old pair of jeans.

## MATERIALS:

You will need an old pair of jeans, a sewing machine, scissors, needle and thread.

1. Measure down from the waistband at the side seam the length that you want your skirt to be, adding 3cm for the hem.
2. Draw a line across both legs at this point at a right angle to the side seam.
3. Cut both jeans legs along this line, cutting front and back together.
4. Open the inside seam of each leg by cutting as close to the seam as possible.
5. Using the same method, cutting as close to the seam as possible, open the front and back crotch seams to where the curve stops - this is usually between 5cm and 7cm - so that the cut edges lay flat when they are overlapped.
6. Pin the overlapping raw edges in place.
7. Depending on the length of your skirt you may have a triangular gap at the front and at the back between the two legs of your jeans. You can use the bottom pieces of the jeans legs you cut off to fill this.



8. Open the outside seam of one of the bottom leg pieces, cutting as close to the outside seam as possible.
9. Open the leg piece out and position under your skirt front to fill in the gap, trimming it to roughly the right size.
10. Fold any raw edges underneath and pin in place.
11. Trim any extra fabric from the leg piece and if there is enough use this to fill in the gap at the back of the skirt using the same method.
12. If there is not enough fabric you can repeat the process using the other leg piece, folding any raw edges under and trimming any extra fabric.
13. Stitch the overlapping crotch seam and the leg pieces in place.
14. Turn your skirt inside out and trim any extra fabric from the inserts, keep your cut off pieces for future projects.
15. You may choose to leave a raw edge at the bottom of the skirt but if you would like to create a finished hem, press the bottom of the skirt up 1cm all the way round.
16. Repeat this process folding the bottom of your skirt up another 2cm all the way round, pinning in place as you go.
17. Stitch your hem in place from the right side of the skirt, this will help you make sure your stitch line is as straight as possible as it will be visible on your finished skirt.



# EVALUATION

## AIM:

The aim of this activity is for young people to reflect on what they have learnt throughout the Sustainable Fashion programme and to showcase this knowledge by creating their own Sustainable Fashion product which they can display in the youth centre.

This can be done by creating a “moodboard,” either on paper or digitally. Throughout the activity, young people should be thinking about the issue their product addresses and consider how their product is sustainable. This activity should solidify the knowledge and skills they have attained into action.

### Start by discussing with your group

- What have they learnt about Sustainable Fashion?
- Do they think they will do anything different after this workshop?
- How will you use the information and activities?

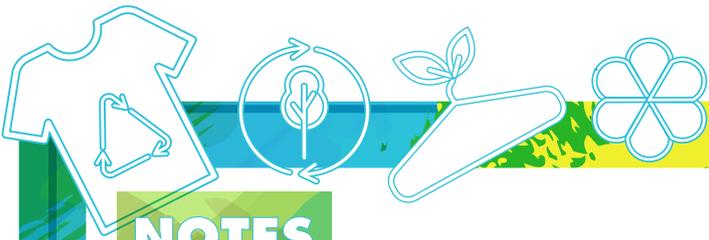
## MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:

- Phone or Computer for research, A3 sheets of Paper
- Coloured Pencils or Pens
- Optional: Magazines, Scissors OR Google Slides / Microsoft Powerpoint / Canva

## METHOD:

1. Young people can work individually or in groups.
2. They should investigate and design their own Sustainable Fashion product and showcase it by creating a “moodboard,” either on paper or digitally.
  - a. Throughout the activity, young people should be thinking about the issue their product addresses and consider how their product is sustainable.
  - b. This activity will bring together the information explored throughout the workshops knowledge and get young people thinking about STEM possibilities in the field of Sustainable Fashion.
3. The “moodboard” for their product can be done physically, using paper and coloured pencils or pens, or digitally, using Google Slides or Microsoft Powerpoint.
4. Ask young people to think about:
  - a. the issue that their product might solve
  - b. how their design is sustainable
5. Each person or group will get to present their idea to the rest of the group – physical moodboards can be posted around the youth centre if possible.





**NOTES**





# Youth Work Ireland



- Canal Communities Regional Youth Service
- Carlow Regional Youth Service
- CDYS Youth Work Ireland
- Clare Youth Service
- Donegal Youth Service
- FDYS Youth Work Ireland
- In Sync Youth and Family Service
- KDYS
- Limerick Youth Service
- Ossory Youth Service
- Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service
- Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan
- Youth Work Ireland Galway
- Youth Work Ireland Laois
- Youth Work Ireland Longford
- Youth Work Ireland Louth
- Youth Work Ireland Meath
- Youth Work Ireland Midlands
- Youth Work Ireland North Connaught
- Youth Work Ireland Tipperary



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