**My Consumer Responsibilities- Sustainable Development and Ethical Shopping**

**Sustainable Development**

Sustainable Development is development that meets the ***needs of the present*** ***without compromising*** the ability of ***future generations*** to meet their own needs. In other words, it is for people to be able to use resources without resources running out.

To do this, we as consumers can reduce dependence on fossil fuels and synthetic chemicals, reduce destruction of natural elements, and enable people globally to live in a world that meets their needs.

*The UN Sustainable Development Chart*



**Ethical Shopping**



**When buying goods and services, we make a choice about what type of business we give our money to.**

If a person chooses to buy goods from an **ethical business**- one that behaves in a way that is fair to the environment, their customers, and their workers, then they are supporting this type of business with their purchase.

If a person chooses to buy goods froman **unethical business**- one that behaves in a way that they exploit their workers or pollutes the environment, then they are supporting that type of business when they purchase

**Ethical Businesses- The Triple Bottom Line**

Ethical business operates a triple bottom line- where they aim to make a ***Profit****,* be fair to ***People***, and protect the ***Planet***



The Effects of our Shopping Choices

1. **The Environment**

Online Shopping

Have you ever considered how far something bought online has to travel before it gets to your house? Think of the different types of transports and the pollution it creates

Pollution

The pollution of land, air, and sea from dumping and waste is a huge issue

Climate Change

Rising levels of carbon dioxide gas from pollution is causing the Earth’s climate to change- through consumers use of burning oil, gas etc…

1. **Labour Exploitation**

Child Labour, poor working conditions, unfair wages. There are many companies who we buy from who adapt these strategies when making their products and services- does Fair Trade matter to you?

Fairtrade ensures that producers in less developed countries get a fair price for their produce. Common Fairtrade goods include chocolate and coffee.

1. **Animal Testing and habitat loss**

Many cosmetic and cleaning products are tested on animals before consumers use them. Many natural habitats for animals are destroyed like forests to provide consumer goods and services

1. **Food Choices**

Food that is not healthy is being purchased that contain lots of sugars, additives, and fats. This is creating huge health problems down the line.

1. **Globalisation**

A lot of large, multinational companies are locating in Ireland and forcing smaller, indigenous companies and family owned businesses to close down. These companies have no loyalty to Ireland and could move tomorrow. Which business do you shop in?

**Product Labels to look out for in ethical shopping**



**How** **can I be responsible?**

* Be aware of your purchasing- When buying goods and services, understand the journey of these products/services. You can then choose an alternative product
* Read the labels- Labels provide key sources of information such as ingredients, company name, environmental impact etc…
* Know your values- This is a personal question- what is important to you
* Don’t make unnecessary purchases
* Advise others close to you on what you have learned

**How can a business be responsible?**

We can only act ethically, if business’s themselves behaved in an ethical way. A business that is conscious of their behaviour and impact on producing goods and services is behaving with ***Corporate Social Responsibility.***

They can achieve this by:

* Not misleading consumers about products and services
* Keep the environment in mind, recycle, do not dump illegally, replant trees etc…
* Engaging in fair labour practices and treating employees with respect
* Paying a fair price to suppliers
* Not testing products on animals

*Class task: Using the link below, research any business select 10 points of information on their Corporate Social Responsibility*

[*https://www.behindthebrands.org/brands/*](https://www.behindthebrands.org/brands/)