



Recycle That GUM

You're walking down the sidewalk. Suddenly, your shoe feels sticky. Ew! You stepped in gum! A lot of gum ends up on sidewalks, but a scientist named Anna Bullus found a way to **recycle** it instead!



Anna Bullus

My name _____



A Sticky Problem

As You Read

Think about how Anna's invention helps keep gum off sidewalks.

We're used to recycling glass, metal, paper, and plastic. Anna Bullus, a scientist in England, has figured out a way to recycle bubble gum!

Gross Old Gum

When Anna was in college, she noticed something really gross. People chewed their bubble gum and dropped it on the ground. It left icky, sticky spots all over the sidewalks that could get stuck on your shoe. It also wasn't very nice to look at.

Anna wanted to solve the problem of gum on the sidewalks. She thought: What if people could recycle their gum instead of just throwing it out? She decided to figure out how to do it!

Learning About Gum

First, she had to learn about gum. She found out that gum is made out of a kind of rubber that is **edible**, or safe for people to chew or eat.

People already use rubber to make things like boots, bouncy balls, and tires, and Anna thought she could use gum to make things too!



Recycling the Gum

Now it was time to recycle the gum. Anna took some old, yucky gum and heated it up. It got softer and stretchier. Anna mixed recycled plastic into it to make it stronger, and then she poured the mixture into a **mold**. That is a container you can pour soft things into to give them a new shape. Anna's mold was shaped like an empty ball. She poured the soft, warm gum into it, and when it cooled down, it hardened into a new ball. Anna called it a Gumdrops.

Her idea had worked! She had recycled the gum!

From Gum to Shoes

Anna started her own company to recycle gum. The company turns old gum into all kinds of things, like shoes and school supplies.

What about the Gumdrops? Anna still makes those! She hangs them up in schools, at airports, and on streets. People put their chewed-up gum in them instead of throwing it on the ground.

← This is a Gumdrops.

When the Gumdrops are full, Anna's company collects them and recycles all the gum inside.

The Gumdrops help keep the streets clean, just like Anna wanted. Anna saw a problem in her community, and she fixed it with science!

—by Blair Rainsford

They Came From Gum!

Here are some of the things Anna's company makes out of gum.



cups



rulers



pencils



boots