

# CLIMATE SCIENCE BELONGS IN THE CLASSROOM



The climate crisis makes headlines for the increasing number of challenges it presents for cities, governments, and all people living on our planet. But it doesn't show up often enough in lesson plans. Only 42 percent of educators admitted to teaching lessons on climate change in a [recent NPR poll](#), and without educational standards on the topic in many places, the content of these lessons can vary wildly.

*This is a huge problem.* One that has many parents asking: “How can I prepare my kids for the future in a warming world?”

*The answer is to advocate for comprehensive, standards-based climate science education in school curriculums everywhere.*

Kids need climate science. And parents need to know what they're up against in making sure they get it.

One of the biggest challenges to properly educating our youth is fighting the efforts of climate deniers to exclude climate science from textbooks and lesson plans. They want to keep kids in the dark about climate change or present it as something it's not: a theory rather than a fact.

Some of these people believe that man-made climate change isn't real. Others have an ulterior motive—often centered on support for the fossil fuel industry. And they will go to [great lengths](#) to spread their views and [keep young people](#) from knowing about a crisis that directly threatens their future.

## THE VALUE OF CLIMATE SCIENCE EDUCATION

You have to understand a problem to confront it.

The crisis we're currently facing is bad for our health and water security. It's bad for farmers and the nutritional quality of our food. It means more extreme weather, more lives lost to hurricanes, wildfires, floods, droughts, and heat waves. More vector and water-borne diseases.

This is the world our kids will inherit. As concerned citizens, parents, and teachers, it's our duty to prepare them for the real future they will encounter—and so they can continue and eventually lead the fight for solutions to support a better, more sustainable future for many generations to come.

Luckily, climate science education is something both parents and teachers want for their students. [In the same NPR poll](#), 84 percent of parents with children under the age of 18 said the issue should be taught in classrooms, and 86 percent of teachers said they believed climate change should be taught in their schools.

They know that a strong, scientifically sound education will help kids develop into mindful adults and bring them closer to their communities. It's not an easy lesson, to be sure. But it might be among the most important ones they ever receive.

To help you communicate the urgent need for standards-based climate science education, below are **three key talking points** to share with your friends and neighbors—as well as your local educators, school officials and boards, parent-teacher associations, and more.

### **1. DENYING KIDS THE TRUTH ABOUT A CRISIS THEY WILL EXPERIENCE IS WRONG.**

- Our kids are our future. It is morally and ethically right to give them the tools they need to fight for it.
- Hiding the truth by not being honest about the climate crisis can have a profound impact on children. It will make the crisis harder to process and reality more difficult to confront down the road.
- Teaching young people about the urgency and impacts of the climate crisis is crucial, but just as important is making sure that message isn't wrong or incomplete – and that means rigorous, standards-based education. We need to be shouting carefully evaluated facts from the rooftops.

### **2. KIDS CAN LEARN A LOT BY TAKING ON CLIMATE CHANGE.**

- Kids are smart—and with the proper climate education, they can change the climate conversation with their parents, siblings, and friends.
- Teaching kids about climate change will make them better prepared for and deepen their understanding of our physical and social world—*a world they will soon inherit*.
- Fact-based education empowers children to think independently.
- Taking on the greatest challenge of our time requires and instills important leadership skills.
- And leadership skills create change. Kids are already talking to other kids about climate change, inspiring [a global movement of school strikes](#) for climate action.

### **3. THE SOLUTIONS TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS WILL CREATE MANY GOOD JOBS.**

- The new clean, green economy represents the future of work, no matter how you slice it. From [New York](#) to [Hawaii](#), the number of green jobs and opportunities is already growing fast.
- Building solutions to the climate crisis will mean job creation for the foreseeable future. In fact, it could mean [24 million new jobs](#) by 2030 alone.
- According to [Demos](#), the clean energy, transportation, and efficiency service sectors, in particular, present valuable opportunities for local economic growth and future job growth.
- To take advantage of this ever-growing job market, young people need training in these climate-related fields—the foundations for which need to be laid early and developed throughout schooling.