



HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

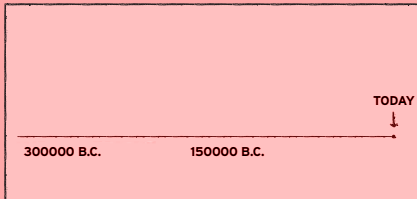


Talking to our kids about climate change isn't always easy, but it's so important. There's a good chance they're already noticing it, have questions, and need reassurance that it's going to be okay. They need your support in any actions they may want to take.

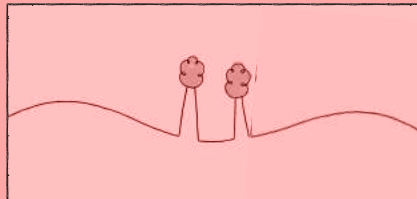


THE BASICS

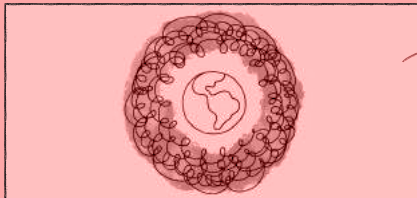
Here's an easy explanation of how the world is heating up, so everyone can understand what's going on – and why we need to talk about it.



Humans have been on Earth for about 300,000 years.



But we've only started polluting like this in the last 60.



Our carbon pollution stays in the air for thousands of years, creating a thickening blanket that traps heat in the atmosphere.



That heat **causes** more dangerous heat waves, bigger fires, worse droughts, more frequent floods, and the loss of thousands of species.



But there's good news: to stop the pollution blanket, we just have to stop polluting.

[LEARN MORE](#)

TIPS FOR EVERY AGE

It's no secret that our kids' ages impact how they process information and help determine what they may already know.

This guide is designed to help you talk to kids of all different ages differently, so you can have the most meaningful conversations and make the greatest impact.

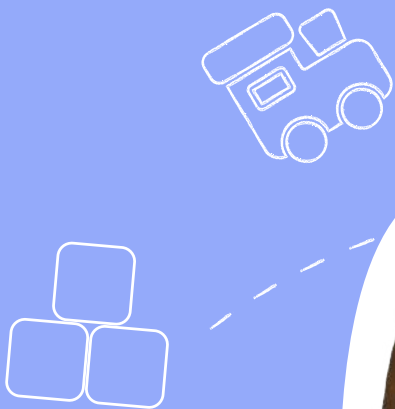


“SO OFTEN, WE THINK CLIMATE CHANGE ONLY MATTERS TO POLAR BEARS. BUT THE TRUTH IS, AFTER THEM, WE’RE NEXT.”

— DR. KATHERINE HAYHOE,
SCIENCE MOM

PRESCHOOLERS

1. Start by talking about how precious our planet is and how much we get from nature. Try **having this conversation outside**, where you can both see the incredible plants and animals that live there.
2. Tell them that a lot of the things we use, like our cars, put bad stuff in the air, called pollution, and that **pollution makes the world hotter**.
3. Mention our **responsibility to our planet**, and tell them that your family is working on making it as healthy, safe and clean as you can.
4. Ask them **how they're feeling**. Remind them that this isn't a one-time conversation, and that they can talk to you about our planet any time.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOLERS

1. Ask your kids if they have heard of climate change and **find out what they know**. Calmly help them fill in the blanks about heat-trapping pollution, so they understand why it's happening.
2. Try to talk about the science outside, where you're both more connected to nature and where it might be easier to **put things into context**.
3. If your kids seem anxious, tell them it's okay to feel that way. It's normal, and **lots of kids are feeling scared**. But the best way to not feel scared is to do something to help.
4. Talk about **what your family is doing** to help make carbon pollution extinct.

(For ideas, see our "Take Action" page).

"THIS SUMMER, I HAD TO WAKE THE KIDS UP AT 5AM SO THEY COULD PLAY OUTSIDE BEFORE IT GOT TOO HOT,"

**— DR. JOELLEN RUSSEL,
SCIENCE MOM**



MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

1. **Brush up on your knowledge** about climate change beforehand. Your middle schooler likely knows more than you expect, and may have questions that go beyond the basics.
2. Begin by asking how they feel about it all. If they don't want to talk about their feelings, talk about the facts – **putting climate change into context** by talking about the recent storms, droughts, and fires.
3. **Sit down together and do some research.** Make sure your middle schooler knows you don't have all the answers, but that many answers are available online and in books.
4. Ask if there's anything your middle schooler wants to do to help reduce the effects of carbon pollution, and chat about the things other kids are doing. **This is a problem we made, which means we can fix it.**



HIGH SCHOOLERS

1. Chances are, your teen knows more than most adults. Ask what they know and how they're feeling about it. Let them guide the conversation, and **don't be afraid to let them educate you.**
2. **Direct them toward trusted, adult resources.** You don't have to have all the answers, but you can help them find them online, in books, or even in a future college course.
3. Let them express their concern in their own way. If having a casual conversation isn't your teen's thing, that doesn't mean they're not interested. **Some people express themselves in other ways**, like through academic projects or art.
4. **Help them cope with their anxieties by taking action.** Call your representatives, look into switching your home to renewable energy, or join a local organization working on a community level. There are even entire careers dedicated to it.

“MY MOM EXPOSED ME TO NATURE AT A YOUNG AGE, AND I HAVE BEEN OUTSIDE EVER SINCE....I WANT TO PASS ON A HEALTHY PLANET ON TO MY CHILDREN AND MY GRANDCHILDREN.”

— DR. CLAUDIA BENITEZ-NELSON, SCIENCE MOM



WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

The most important thing you can do is keep talking about it – with your kids, and with your community. The more we talk about it, the more likely others are to understand the urgency and the more important it will be for our leaders to take action.



KEEP TALKING

To tackle a problem as big as climate change, we have to talk about it—a lot. With our friends, and with our families. Together, we can make their future better.



SHARE

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and share the nonpartisan information we post. The more we spread the word, the more likely others are to understand the urgency and take action.



JOIN

Sign up for more simple ways to do your part at [sciencemoms.com](#) and preserve the world for our kids. We'll share facts, tips, and resources with you without filling your inbox.



WRITE

Climate science is not political, but our future does depend on our leaders taking action. Ask your reps to follow the science and take meaningful action to reign in carbon pollution.

DON'T FORGET TO SHARE THIS TOOLKIT WITH OTHER MOMS, TOO!