

KIDS'

CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT



**DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY**

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YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY
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TERRITORIAL



from: <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/mikmaq/>

This Toolkit was created by and for people living in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional, unceded, and present-day territory of the Mi'kmaq. This territory is covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship, which were not about a transfer of land, but instead were about how settlers and Indigenous people would live together in this place. In all that we do in our lives and in this place, it is important to remember that we are all treaty people.

Especially for this toolkit, it is important to note that around the world, Indigenous people are disproportionately impacted by climate change, and so it is extra important for us to seek out and listen to the voices of Indigenous leaders of all ages, especially local Indigenous leaders, when we want to know the best way to work to care for creation.

INTRODUCTION

Hello! Thanks for digging in to our Kids' Climate Action Toolkit!

In communities throughout the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island it has become increasingly clear that climate change is not part of some hypothetical future, but that it is here in the present.

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) raised relief funds for this diocese in response to Hurricane Fiona, just one of a number of natural disasters that we have experienced in recent years. Some of these funds were given to the Community Roots Day Camp Program, to create a resource to support children's climate action (that's this toolkit!), and to work to build resiliency amongst communities in our diocese.



PWRDF



We are grateful to PWRDF for their support of our program, and for all of the work that they do in Canada and around the world.

This toolkit was created to support leaders in parishes who want to incorporate climate action into their ministries, and so it contains some background information as well as some recommendations of things to try out. Right from the get-go, I want to be abundantly clear that there are three other really important sources of direction, information, and inspiration for leaders that won't be covered in detail in this guide.

- 1. Indigenous leaders.**
- 2. The children in your ministry.**
- 3. Local environmental organizations.**

It's so important for the children in your ministry to have the opportunity to shape this work. All too often, kids get roped into doing this kind of work and programming as sort-of pawns, with the idea that if grown-ups see kids caring for creation, it will inspire them to do something too. Kids shouldn't do anything just for the sake of inspiring grown-ups, but instead should be invited to think about why they care about the world around them, and what they would like to do to help make a difference.

The contents of this toolkit will hopefully help the kids in your ministry get thinking about creation, and then you can go from there in supporting them to figure out what kind of action they might like to take (don't

worry, we've also included some resources to support those conversations!)

In just about every community there are local environmental organizations doing the work of caring for creation, even if that isn't the language that they use. Climate action can be overwhelming and anxiety-inducing for everyone, especially children, and one balm for that is seeing others working together to make a difference. Local organizations know what's happening right where you are, and they often could use a hand, or can help you and the children in your ministry decide the best ways to take action alongside what is already happening.



As we said in the territorial acknowledgement, Indigenous leaders have much to offer when we think about our environment. They and their ancestors have been caretakers of the land since time immemorial. So, be intentional about connecting with Indigenous communities nearby and learn from them about how to care for this land. When you do this, remember that it's important to pay Indigenous people for the ways that they support your ministry. We've included some recommended resources for leaders to take a look at to help support you

in doing this in ways that are respectful and that contribute to the ongoing work of reconciliation.

This toolkit will give you some ideas and suggestions for how to get started, but more than that, our hope is that it will help you build an understanding of how to approach this work, and give you some tools and resources to engage kids with climate action in a way that is specific to your community.

We hope that this toolkit will support and encourage you as leaders, as you work to support and encourage the kids in your community as they find ways to care for creation and take action for the climate.



With prayers for
your ministry and
for all of creation,

The Community
Roots Day Camp
Program 2024
Staff Team



LEARNING ABOUT CREATION

Supporting kids in learning about climate and climate change is a delicate thing. On the one hand, knowing more about the environment that you live in is important and beneficial, but on the other, with lots of overwhelming and scary information out there about how the climate is changing, it can really easily lead to or reinforce feelings of climate anxiety and hopelessness in kids.

One strategy to support kids in this, is to focus on ways that they can take action, and we will get to more of that later in this resource, and another is to help kids see how they are connected to the world around them, so we will start there.

Supporting kids in learning more about the specifics of their environment, and helping them to

establish a personal connection with it, is a powerful kind of learning that can encourage and strengthen kids in taking action to care for creation.

Here are a few activities to encourage kids to get specific in learning about where they are. Help them ask questions like:

- What is the climate like there in general?
- How long is the growing season?
- What does that mean for the things that live there – both plants and animals?
- What plants and animals live here?
- How is your life shaped by your environment?

We've curated some activities to help kids dig into those questions and more!

MAKE A DIORAMA

A diorama is a miniature version of a place or a scene. One way to get to know your own location a little better is to make a diorama of what it is like where you live. Scan here for an example of how to build one!



FIND OUT WHAT YOU COULD GROW

The length of your local growing season determines what is able to grow there. Pick a few different flowers, fruits, or vegetable that you like, and find out how long the growing season is, and then find out how long your local growing season is. Could you grow the things that you like?

BE A NATURE EXPLORER

Get outside and do some exploring. Take a notebook and take notes or draw pictures of the plants and animals that you find. Make note about the weather. Get out on another day in the same place and note what is the same and what is different. Optional equipment could include binoculars, magnifying glasses, camera, etc.



HOW DOES YOUR ENVIRONMENT SHAPE YOUR LIFE?

Think about the things that you do in the different seasons of the year, or things that you do out in nature. How might those things be different if you lived in a different part of the world? You can do some research on the internet or at the library to find out more about other places in the world.



LEARN ABOUT POLLINATORS

Pollinators are living things that move pollen from one plant to another, helping plants grow and produce fruit and seeds. There are all sorts of pollinators throughout the world, and many of them are endangered or are negatively impacted by humans around them, so find out what kinds of pollinators there are where you live, and then find out if there is anything you can do to support them.

PRAYERS BIBLE STUDY + WORSHIP

MAKE IT MEANINGFUL

It's so important to connect all of this work to the stories and practices of our faith. Praying for creation, looking for connections to climate action in scripture, and making sure that the work of caring for creation is reflected in worship can help make this work more meaningful, and more fully integrate what young people are up to into the life of your parish.

Here are some prayers that you can use in whatever way makes sense for your situation (scan the QR code here for a list of our sources), as well as some recommended scripture readings that you could use for bible study or reflection and discussion, and recommendations for how to include climate action in worship.

PRAYER 1

Unchanging God,

You know us and you love us, and you know this world and love this world. Help us to see and care for people who are impacted by climate change, and to see the ways that we can take action to help protect the world you love.

Amen



PRAYER 2

Gracious God,

You are a God of Creation. Create in us faithful stewards of your world, showing us opportunities to make a difference, that we may live with respect in your Creation.

Help us go gently in this fragile world.
Amen.

Adapted from the
United Church of Canada

PRAYER 3

[Loving Creator],

We ask you to stir our hearts into action. As global temperatures increase, inspire us with the ways we can make a difference in our homes, church congregations, communities, and the world around us. We pray, Holy Spirit, that you will prompt us where we can do more to love our neighbour.

Amen

from Compassion UK

BIBLE STUDY

Calling it bible study isn't always the best way to get excited about something, so you might want to use a different name when you talk to your kids, but taking a closer look at the bible to see what hope and inspiration we can find there for climate action can help all of us tie things together. Take a look through these suggestions, or look for another, and find a passage that feels right for your group. Read through it a few times, being sure to talk through any unfamiliar words, and then chat about it together!

Here are some suggested readings:

- Genesis 1
- Genesis 2:4-8
- Psalm 104 (or parts of it!)
- Matthew 6:25-27
- Job 12:7-10
- Job 14:7-9
- Isaiah 41:18-20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Not all of these will work for every group, and you may need to tweak some of the language, but here are some questions to get you started:

- What words or phrases stand out to you?
- What pictures did you have in your head when you heard that?
- How did you feel when you heard that?
- What do that reading remind you of?
- What does that reading make you wonder about?
- What does that reading say to you about God?
- What does that reading say to you about the world around us?
- What does that reading say to you about how God wants us to live in the world?

WORSHIP

For many parishes and churches, Sunday morning is the primary time that the community gathers, and there are many, many ways that you can have the climate action work that kids are doing be reflected in your times of worship. You can also plan additional worship times other than Sunday morning focused specifically on this.

Here are some suggestions:

- Use the scripture recommended for bible study as the readings and offer time for discussion during worship.
- Have the kids write a litany to use as prayers of the people, focused on climate action and those impacted by climate change.
- Look through your hymn books and find songs that talk about the beauty of creation.
- Plan a vigil for people to come and pray for creation and for those who make decisions about policies that impact the environment.
- Take your worship out into creation. This may require some creativity and departure from tradition, but will be worth it!



“...NOW
I KNOW
THAT
PRAYER
CHANGES US,



AND WE
CHANGE
THINGS.”

MOTHER THERESA



CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

TO TAKE ACTION

As we already mentioned, kids can easily feel overwhelmed by climate change. In particular, kids can feel daunted by the idea that it's their responsibility to find solutions to climate change – either right now, or when they grow up.

There are ways that kids can be part of making meaningful change, and we can encourage that while also making it clear that they aren't alone in it. In communities all over, there are organizations already doing the work of creation care or climate action. Connecting with one or more of those organizations can be a way to encourage and support both the kids you are working with, and the work of the organization.

While there are things that each individual can do to make a difference, when it comes to creation care and climate action, we really are able to make the most difference when we work together with others.

If you are working with younger kids (maybe 7 or younger), you might opt to just make arrangements with an organization and then tell them about it. If they are a bit older, it's important to give them a say in the kind of action they'd like to take and the kind of organization they'd like to connect to.

Here's a list of some of the organizations throughout Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island that are doing work around creation care or climate action. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but will hopefully give you a place to start.

We've looked at their websites to make sure they look ok, but haven't done a deep-dive on each one, so before committing to a plan with one of these or any other organization, be sure to take the time to

ask good questions and make sure you are on the same page about what you are going to do together to make sure that you do this good an important work in a way that is safe for everyone involved, and don't send the kids you work with to any of these organizations alone. These organizations are divided into provinces, and then listed in alphabetical order of the community that they are based in.

The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Diocesan Environment Network

<https://nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/diocesan-environment-network>

Nova Scotia

Bridgewater - Helping Nature Heal

<https://helpingnatureheal.com>

Chester - Friends of Nature Conservation Society

<http://friends-of-nature.ca>

Dartmouth - Back to the Sea Society

<http://backtothesea.org>

Glace Bay - Cape Breton Environmental Association

<https://cbenviro.org>

Halifax - Ducks Unlimited Canada
<https://ducks.ca/places/nova-scotia/>

Halifax - Ecology Action Centre
<https://ecologyaction.ca>

Hampton - Arlington Forest Protection Society
www.arlingtonforestprotection.ca

Ship Harbour - The Deanery Project
<http://thedeaneryproject.com/>

Sydney - Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP) Cape Breton
<https://acapcb.ns.ca>

Truro - The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
<http://cmmns.com/>

Yarmouth - Coastal Restoration Society
<https://www.coastrestore.com/>



Prince Edward Island

Note: Most of the organizations we found to include weren't linked to just one community on the island, so those will follow the one that did seem to be more tied to one place.

Montague - Southeast Environmental Association

<https://www.seapei.ca/>

Environmental Coalition of PEI

<https://ecopei.ca/#:~:text=The%20Environmental%20Coalition%20of%20Prince,action%20group%20formed%20in%201989.>

Prince Edward Island Watershed Alliance

<https://peiwatershedalliance.org/>

Island Nature Trust

<https://islandnaturetrust.ca/>



SHARING WITH OTHERS

As we've said, the best way to make a meaningful difference is by working together.



So, an important piece of this work is to share the story of what you are doing with others to encourage them to get involved. Or, better yet, have the kids share their own stories.

Here's some ways that you and the kids you work with could do that:

- Make posters to put up around your community.
- Put together an information and ideas session to share what you've learned and talk about what your community could do together.
- Share on social media.
- Create a video and post it online.
- Create a newsletter.
- Ask to speak in your church.

**WRITE DOWN YOUR
THOUGHTS + IDEAS**

Thank you for making your way through this toolkit! We hope that it's been helpful and that this work with children in your community will be meaningful and encouraging for everyone involved!

**Thank
You!**



**WANT TO FIND
OUT MORE?**



Scan this QR code for a list of all the sources we used for this toolkit, as well as recommended resources

We'd love to hear how you put this resource to use - send your stories and pictures to

youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca !



Youth and Family Ministry
Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island