

## THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT: WHAT YOUR KIDS NEED TO KNOW AND HOW TO SUPPORT THEM.

Here's our top tips for how to start an open discussion with kids about our current climate – and how to take action to show our collective voice. Begin by asking kids a question such as, "have you heard about the Paris Climate Agreement and what do you think about it?" to gain an understanding of their current knowledge and thoughts. Then...

1. DEFINE AND RESEARCH KEY WORDS TOGETHER, SUCH AS:
  - ➔ **CLIMATE:** the average weather in an area over many years.
  - ➔ **FOSSIL FUELS:** energy resources that have limited supply and cannot be replaced if they are used up.
  - ➔ **EMISSIONS:** when gases are released into the atmosphere. Burning oil, gas and coal to produce electricity causes greenhouse gas emissions.
  
2. RESEARCH AND PROVIDE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF CLIMATE CHANGE.
 

Over the past 50 years, the average global temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history, and the trend is getting faster: all but one of the 16 hottest years in NASA's 134-year climate record have occurred since 2000. In the U.S., the burning of fossil fuels to make electricity is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. produces about two billion tons of CO2 every year.
  
3. DISCUSS THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT.
 

In hopes of decreasing the effect of climate change, 195 countries came together and promised to reduce their carbon emissions over time by signing the Paris Climate Agreement. Each country set specific goals for reducing CO2 emissions and made a plan to achieve those goals. For more info visit links below.
  
4. EXPLAIN AMERICA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE AGREEMENT - AND HOW STATES HAVE BECOME INVOLVED.
 

On June 1st, 2017 President Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Agreement. Since then, 13 states (and counting!) have added their names to the Paris Agreement, and local leaders across the country have pledged to honor the commitments that the US made in 2015 to reduce its carbon emissions and to increase sustainability. Even though the U.S has announced it is withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, 37 states have set targets for increasing renewable energy and efficiency! The clean energy industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the U.S., providing 3 million jobs to Americans and 70% of Americans believe in the goals of the Paris Agreement, which includes majorities of Americans in every state.
  
5. HOW CAN WE TAKE ACTION AT HOME AND SCHOOL?
 

We can all reduce our carbon footprint by reducing the amount of energy we use. Simple steps like turning off the lights, unplugging appliances when they are not in use, and turning down the thermostat in the winter and turning it up in the summer a few degrees make big difference! Brainstorm other ways we can make a difference. For ideas about how to reduce your energy use, take a look at Grades of Green's [Energy Earth Tips](#) and check out our [Electricity Challenge](#). Grades of Green's [Students in Action Activity](#) offers suggestions on how to get involved in local or national politics.

**Register your school (for free) at [gradesofgreen.org](https://gradesofgreen.org) to join the movement. Email [info@gradesofgreen.org](mailto:info@gradesofgreen.org) if you have questions.**

For more information on the facts above visit:

<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/201513> | <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/climate-change-evidence/>  
<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/basics/today/greenhouse-gases.html>