Toolkit for Youth Climate Leaders

A youth-made guide to forming and managing a youth-led climate group

Created by Mass Audubon's Statewide Youth Climate Leaders

Contents

Introduction to the Youth Climate Leadership Program

Mass Audubon's Youth Climate Leadership Program (YCLP) is youth-led, multi-level immersion in youth empowerment and leadership, culminating in actionable projects that combat climate change with a local focus. The YCLP is aimed at creating spaces for learning, conversation, networking, and youth-led climate solutions.

The year-long program kicks off with Youth Climate Summits in the fall, where participants collectively and collaboratively tackle the question, "How can we act on climate in our communities?", supported by Mass Audubon staff, local experts, and mentors to guide innovative climate action. Through the winter, YCLP participants continue to work with mentors to develop and implement ambitious, innovative Climate Action Projects of their own imagining. Come spring, the program culminates in a Youth Climate Showcase where participants share the results of their hard work, evaluate any data collected, and discuss with their peers how to improve their project for sustainable and growing climate action beyond the end of the program.

The Statewide Youth Climate Leaders

A subset of YCLP participants called the Statewide Youth Climate Leaders work together to explore how various Youth Climate Summit planning teams can better connect and collaborate across Massachusetts. The toolkit you are now reading is the result of our efforts to organize our research and experience into a format that encourages and supports more youth to take action.

Introduction to the Toolkit

Our Main Goals

- To provide teams that are just starting out with the guidance needed to make an impact
- To provide groups that have already been established some inspiration as they move forward into even more impactful projects
- To encourage diversity of perspective, skills, and representation in climate groups
- To build a working Mass Audubon YCLP group in each region of Massachusetts

Why Should You Start a Climate Group?

Climate change impacts everyone (even in Massachusetts!) and our generation is in the position to enact the most change. It is nearly impossible to ignore the current uprising of youth voices like Greta Thunberg, Darnella Frazier, Emma Gonzalez, Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, and hundreds more drawing attention to the issues we are facing. Therefore, we have a responsibility to use our own voices to help to set climate change off its current trajectory in any way we can; by educating ourselves and others, by making changes in our everyday lives, or by taking direct action.

> *"When leaders start acting like children, children will start acting like leaders."*
> *—Unknown*

> *"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."* *—The Lorax*

> *"We don't have time to sit on our hands as our planet burns. For young people, climate change is bigger than election or re-election. It's life or death."* *—Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez*

Step One: Form Your Group

Find Members to Join Your Group

Your leadership group should have approximately 3–10 students to ensure that you don't have any trouble organizing events of scale.

Try to recruit people who are really interested in and passionate about these issues and have diverse perspectives and skill sets to offer (see Why Diversity Matters, below). Reach out to friends, students, and neighbors in your community. Make sure they are ready to commit time and energy into achieving your group's goals.

Find an Advisor and a Wildlife Sanctuary

This is also a good time to start to find an advisor to help guide you and your team. You can contact Mass Audubon's Climate Change Program to be connected with a host Mass Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary. Find a YCLP staff mentor in your region and/or choose an advisor from your own community network.

The amount of help from adults each team receives is completely situational and depends on what the students feel suits the group best. Adult advisors can use their experience to offer resources and contacts, give another perspective on projects/ideas, or help organize the group into action. In general, advisors should be there to offer assistance, but students should take the lead.

See Appendix A: Organizing & Finding Others to Join Your Group for an organizing document to help you think about and implement this step.

Why Diversity Matters

In any and every context, we believe that diversity in a group is essential.

By diversity, we mean:

- Recruiting a wide spectrum of **perspectives** on the issues we are facing, including not only the impact of climate change but also the influence of racism, sexism, ableism, and classism.
- Recruiting a wide variety of **skill sets**, including computer skills for new ways of communication and promotion, art skills to help get the word out about your projects in a creative way, leadership and team-building skills, as well as public speaking and executive functioning skills.
- And finally, recruiting diversity of **representation** to include people of different races, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

We want to make sure that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (or DEIJ) is an important topic in every climate group. In Appendix B: Fostering Diversity and Increasing Accessibility Within Your Group, we've compiled a series of guiding principles and resources to learn more.

Step Two: Organize Your Group

Create an Agenda
Make sure to create an agenda for each meeting ahead of time to keep your group organized and on topic.

Determine Your Group's Name
- Determining your group's name is a crucial step in defining who you are as a collective
- Make sure that it is descriptive yet memorable
- Research existing groups with similar goals in your area to avoid repetition and confusion
- You can begin by brainstorming words associated with your group and arranging them (think: "climate", "youth", "activists", and "leaders", as well as place names for your region)
- Make it fun! Naming your group can be challenging, but it should be a fun and creative first step for your group
- Try to get everyone to participate in brainstorming
- Some examples of existing Mass Audubon climate groups:
    a. Cape Cod Youth Climate Leaders (CCYCL)
    b. Habitat Environmental Action Team (HEAT)
    c. Western MA Youth Climate Summit Planning Team (WMYCS)

Decide How Work Will Be Divided Among Team Members
- Consult with the group. Having a group where everyone feels their input is valued is important in cultivating an inclusive environment. Ask your group how they think they should be organized.
- Roles often cover things like organization of your group, facilitating group participation, taking and distributing notes, and crafting consistent communications
- You can always create, combine, shift, and dissolve roles, but it helps to start out with clear expectations of who is responsible for what
- You can decide to have traditional roles like President, Vice President, and Secretary or come up with something more creative.
- Some things to consider:
    a. **The power dynamic:** make sure your established roles still amplify each group member's voice equally
    b. **The number of people:** The more people in your group, the more helpful it is to have clearly defined leaders and established titles
    c. **The skills and interests of your members:** While everyone will be building new skills and experience over time, it helps to encourage people to contribute in ways that leverage their unique talents, skills, and passions.

Identify the Issues in Your Community That You Want to Address

- Brainstorm with your group about local climate issues that you've noticed, learned about, or want to know more about. Do some research online and talk to local groups with similar missions. Use these issues to identify the areas you want to work in (political, educational, specific environmental project, etc.)
    - Use the Appendix F: Community Mapping Tool to help you identify some important issues in your community that you and your team can help address
- Feel free to use inspiration from other groups, especially in your initial planning.
    a. Sierra Club
    b. Sunrise Movement
    c. Extinction Rebellion
    d. Hitchcock Center for the Environment
    e. Mass Audubon Climate Change Program
- Leading Prompts for a Brainstorm:
    a. Think big first, then narrow it down: If cost/time were not an issue, what would be your wildest and craziest ideas for projects?
    b. What past climate events have you attended/heard about?
    c. Who is the main audience for our project and what are their needs?
    d. Who is in our current network? How could they help us achieve a project?

Determine Your Long-term and Short-term Goals

- A long-term goal is a broad and big goal that you want to achieve. Your short-term goals will help you achieve this goal.
    - For example, if you were to host a Youth Climate Summit, having attendees plan and execute individual action plans would be a long-term goal.
- A short-term goal is a smaller goal whose timeline and action steps are more specific. These goals should align with and support a long-term goal.

- o For example, if you were hosting a Youth Climate Summit, solidifying a list of guest speakers might be a short-term goal.
- **Note:** Defining your short term and long-term goals will depend on your timeline. Existing MA Audubon groups currently operate on a traditional schedule for public schools. So long-term goals happen over the course of the school year, while short-term goals happen in about 3-month time spans.
    - o Consider any members of your group that will be graduating or moving on, how often you meet, and how much time each member can dedicate each week in defining your goals.
    - o Also, these goals can always be revisited and changed, so they don't have to be perfect!

Decide What Actions You Want to Take As a Group

- There are many different approaches your team can take in their first actions. Climate Summits, social media campaigns around climate education, and Climate Cafés are all interesting options to look into.
    - o See Appendix C: Educational Social Media Campaigns for more info on this type of action.
- Actions should be focused on accomplishing your long-term goals.
- Brainstorm all the action steps and short-term goals you'll need to accomplish to reach your long-term goal.
- Work with your advisor and mentors to help you find actions that are the right balance between ambitious and realistic for your group.

Step Three: Determine a Timeline for Your Goals

Why Create a Timeline?

Deadlines and timelines might elicit a response of dread from some, but they can help to decrease any feelings of disorganization and stress when working on a project. Most importantly, timelines help you reach your goals in a timely and efficient way. Through managing time, breaking goals into action steps, and delegating responsibilities, timelines work to organize projects and help teams to work together successfully.

How to Create a Timeline

1. Determine your primary goal and action steps. For example, if your goal is to host a climate summit, your action steps might include: securing speakers, booking a venue, planning activities/events of the day, and decisions about transportation and food.
2. Estimate how long these action steps will take. Some actions will require smaller sub-steps and more time or collaboration than others.
3. After considering the timeline for each action step, set your deadline. It's best to give your team more time than you think you will need for each step for unanticipated delays. Once these are factored in, your deadline is set. (Note: This deadline can be rough, e.g. "End of April")
4. Now that you have your action steps and timetables, set deadlines for individual action steps and divide up tasks among group members to ensure that they are completed.

Tips and Important Questions to Ask

- Make sure that you and your team set SMART goals (i.e., goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-based)
- As you and your team begin to work on your goals, end each meeting by recapping the actions each group member has committed to working on before your next meeting.
- Ask the group:
    a. How much time can everyone commit to achieving these goals?
    b. Have we left room in the timeline for error?
    c. Are the action items assigned to each member of the group realistic and achievable in the time between meetings?

Step Four: Host a Youth Climate Summit

If you decide your group's long-term goal is to host a Youth Climate Summit in your region, this guide will help you think through what the actual program might look like. Not ready to host a full-scale Summit yet? There are plenty of smaller actions your group can take as well. See Appendix D: Climate Cafés: for details on how Climate Cafés work and what you need in order to implement them.

Youth Climate Summits consist of two meetings across two days where students can hear from a variety of speakers and then craft their own Climate Action Project (CAP) plan to bring back to their communities.

It usually takes 3–4 months to plan a Youth Climate Summit, depending on how many members are in your group and how much time each of you can commit to contacting speakers, getting the word out and collecting school teams to attend your summit, and researching different options for Climate Action Projects.

Day One: Get Inspired

The first day is devoted primarily to hearing from speakers and experts in your community and getting inspired by your peers.

It is helpful to set a theme for your summit and choose specific speakers that reflect that theme. Examples include climate justice, climate education, art and music, the importance of sharing individual climate stories, or how the covid-19 pandemic has affected climate change. Make sure to utilize your group's connections and specific skill sets when researching and reaching out to possible speakers.

You and your team should have extensive conversations with each of your speakers about what this theme will be and how to keep your presentations engaging and interactive. One way to do this is to have youth speakers presenting. By having youth present about the impact their work has had on the community, students will be inspired as they move on to the second day and into their climate action plans.

Day Two: Climate Action Projects

The majority of the second day is devoted to helping each team devise their Climate Action Project (CAP) plan to bring back to their communities. The goal of the CAP plan is to give teams a starting point and a place to return to as they work to make their schools/communities more sustainable and environmentally friendly. To see what others have done, see Appendix E: Examples of Successful CAPs.

After the Summit

After your Youth Climate Summit, there are several different directions that you can go:

- You could host monthly office hours or webinars where teams can catch up with each other on their progress and talk about solutions to the challenges they've faced along the way.
- After six months, you could reconvene your full group to host a Solutions Showcase where each team gives a five-to-seven-minute presentation about challenges they faced along the way, and looking at the impact that their work has had on the community.
- Additionally, you could host an annual Summit with a new theme and new speakers next year.

Step Five: Overcoming Challenges

Organizing your action is a challenge in itself. You and your team will likely face many difficulties along the way, including recruiting speakers, keeping your audience engaged, and keeping your group connected.

Challenges	Potential Solutions
Getting people interested and excited to participate	Select inspiring and engaging guests/speakers
Meeting attendance and participation/sustained commitment	Establish accountability within your team—Who is responsible for what? How can individuals ask for help if they find they can't meet their commitments?
Keeping your group connected	Try to stay organized and communicate often and clearly. Communication is a key factor in staying organized, as is giving team members specific responsibilities.
Lack of motivation or feeling discouraged	If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is to adapt to stressful situations. You don't always have to completely start over when unexpected challenges come up. Try to be flexible with your ideas and plans and get creative in the face of obstacles. Make the most of a difficult situation and work together to find solutions.
Feeling overwhelmed by your goals	Don't forget to take breaks for rest and inspiration. It's okay to take time to regroup your thoughts and collect inspiration to ensure you come back ready to continue working toward your team's goals.

Contact Us to Get Involved

The Statewide Youth Climate Leadership Program is committed to keeping all of our different YCLP groups and planning teams across Massachusetts connected, collaborating, and supporting each other in the process of planning these events.

Learn more and get involved with us by contacting youthclimateaction@massaudubon.org.

If you are not a youth, please visit massaudubon.org/climate to learn how you can take action, too!

Appendix A: Organizing & Finding Others to Join Your Group

1a. Adult Advisors: Who do you look up to? Who is active in/passionate about climate action? Who will be able to make valuable contributions to your group?
1b. Contacting Potential Advisors
Explain your group (goals, purpose, etc.):   Explain role of group advisor (expectations, duties, time commitment):   Explain why you chose them as a potential advisor:
2a. Potential Members: Who is active in/passionate about climate action? Who will commit time and energy into your group? Who will make valuable contributions to group goals?

2b. Contacting Potential Members: How can you contact a wide range of people who may be interested (schools, clubs, social media, etc.)?

2c. Advertising to Potential Members: How can you get people interested in your group?

Goals/possible projects:

What will members gain from being part of your group?

What is the time/energy commitment?

Appendix B: Fostering Diversity and Increasing Accessibility Within Your Group

We want to make sure that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) is an important topic in every climate group. Here are some tips and best practices to get you started:

1) Practice discussing topics that may feel "uncomfortable," such as racism.

   a. Initiate conversations with your group around the importance of diversity, equity, and social justice. Climate change disproportionately affects people of color. Therefore, the issue of climate change is inseparable from environmental justice and racism. Try to not only acknowledge this, but take it into account while brainstorming projects.

   b. Brainstorm ideas for being more inclusive to underrepresented leaders (i.e. people of color, people with disabilities, transgender, non-binary, and intersex people, etc.) and for recruiting diversity of perspective.

   c. Create a brave space where your team members are encouraged to lean in to uncomfortable topics, be vulnerable and use their unique voice in every aspect as your team works to reach your goals.

   d. Address these issues we are facing with compassion and in the hopes of learning how to grow your group and your own individual understanding of intersectionality in doing so.

2) Be mindful and sensitive to these issues in every aspect of your work.

   a. Keep the goal of diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority and draw attention to gaps in representation in every aspect of your work.

3) Disagree with ideas, not people.

   a. When discussing diversity and inclusion issues, people will have a variety of perspectives and opinions. In an effort to maintain team civility and healthy discussion, it is imperative that disagreements are solely focused on the ideas being discussed, not the people sharing such ideas.

   b. If you wish to disagree or challenge an idea presented (which you *should* do, as disagreement usually means critical thinking and progress) do not attack the person sharing the idea or attach emotion to your disagreement. Instead, consider what about the idea does not align with your thoughts and articulate this.

   c. Demonstrate gratitude for your team members' willingness to share and stay away from using accusatory phrases (often phrases that begin with "you").

   d. Assume goodwill or positive intent when others speak.

4) Work to increase accessibility and inclusion in your actions for everyone.

   a. People with disabilities make up over 20% of the population. When planning actions, advertising to a broader audience, and even recruiting new leaders to join your planning

team, keep this in mind and work to remove barriers to accessibility. You can do this by including ADA-compliant fonts in your writings, hiring American Sign Language interpreters, enabling live captions in video meetings, and using alternative text for images on the web whenever possible.

b. Use the Step Up/Step Down rule in your planning meetings. When a wide range of introverts and extroverts all have essential skills to bring to the table, ensure that everyone's voice is being heard. Know when to step up or to step back, so that everyone has a chance to participate in the conversation!

c. It is important that everyone in the group is able to participate, especially with a variety of diverse backgrounds. Consider the mode of communication between group members and where meetings take place for example. Does everyone have access to the network of communication? Some members may not have easy access to electronic devices for virtual meetings. On the other hand, virtual meetings can connect people that live far from each other, which offers different perspectives.

5) Proactively reach out to underrepresented members in your community.

a. Look for the gaps: Who usually dominates the group or conversation? Who doesn't have a seat at the table but should?

b. Understand that underrepresented members may feel at a disadvantage, despite the intentions of your group. The strategies listed above in part 4 may be useful to reduce hesitancy to share ideas or domination of a discussion.

c. Those in the majority should initiate conversations about power dynamics that have been ingrained in history, drawing attention to how unconscious bias can unintentionally make others feel unwelcome or excluded.

Learn More

USAID offers a ton of resources on climate through its ClimateLinks portal, including a guide to Inclusive Climate Action, including why it is important, where it is being done, and how it can be achieved.

Appendix C: Educational Social Media Campaigns

Social media campaigns are intended to bring attention to an issue, advertise an event, or encourage action from people. Planning a social media plan can take anywhere from 2 to 4 months to plan, depending on how often you meet.

- First, you will need to establish a clear purpose and message you want your social media campaign to communicate. A purpose describes what you aim to do, while a message is how you communicate the purpose. For example:
  - Purpose: To educate followers on town meetings as they relate to climate change.
  - Message: Youth have the power to enact change by attending their local town meetings and sharing how they feel about local issues.
- Next, you will need to establish how you will present your information, as well as what information you are presenting.
  - Do some research and make sure your information is accurate and up-to-date.
  - Make a timeline for your posts after deciding how many and which kinds of posts you will be making (ex. 4 Instagram stories, 5 Instagram posts, 2 Facebook posts over 1 month)
  - Note: It might be helpful to write longer blog posts or editorials that explain why and what you are doing. You can reference this piece in posts, alluding to its upcoming publication or referring followers to read more about what you're advocating for.
- Decide what accounts you will be using
  - Reaching out to established organizations and doing a "takeover" will increase the size of your audience.
    - Ex. The Cape Cod Youth Climate Leadership group utilized MA Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Instagram for their takeover.
  - If you are establishing your own account, try to get others to repost your materials and use your personal social media accounts to promote your campaign (this might require extra brainstorming and research on how to expand your followership).

Appendix D: Climate Cafés

The goal of climate cafes is to create an inclusive conversation and to build a judgement-free community for people to share experiences and ideas.

Rationale for Climate Cafés

Social science research has shown that one of the most important actions individuals can take to help fight climate change is to talk about it with friends, family, and others in their immediate community. The most effective way to talk about climate change is by talking about locally-relevant impacts (or impacts relevant to the interest of the audience). In fact, while residents in Massachusetts are improving their understanding that climate change is real and human-caused, they are also generally still unaware of how climate change is already affecting Massachusetts and will have even greater effects on the lives of their children.

Most Americans want to understand more about climate change or want to discuss what it means to them. Most Americans also believe that relatively few people want to talk about it. This creates a conversation gap, with people afraid to bring up the topic for any number of reasons, and people feeling they have no agency to act on solutions or expertise to speak to the climate change issues they care about.

The Climate Cafés model, which has been used many times around the globe, provides a way for people to discuss climate change in a judgment-free, informal environment with other people in their community. By doing so, they gain valuable practice in conversing about the topic, and are more likely to talk about it in their own individual social circles.

How it Works

- There is relatively little preparation required and these discussions can be easy ways to encourage idea-sharing and community engagement around climate change.
- Climate cafes usually take 2-3 months to plan and are 90 minutes in duration.
- Here is the general format of a cafe:
  - Introductions: Welcome people, icebreakers
  - Guest Speaker/Main Activity (optional): Guest speaker will give a brief presentation or people will participate in a climate/environment-related activity (planting seeds, learning about current climate change news)
  - Discussion: This is the most important part! Provide questions or prompts that people can discuss in small groups (4-6 people). A group note-taker is recommended.
  - Action Steps: Ask groups to brainstorm concrete action steps they plan to take.
  - Conclusion: Groups can share what they talked about and what action steps they will take. Ideas for a follow-up cafe can be discussed; it should be centered around the group's interests.
- Advertisement for your climate café is essential to creating a thought-provoking discussion. Contact a large and diverse group of people. Use a guest speaker, activity, or theme to draw in people.

- When looking for a guest speaker, contact multiple people as back-ups. These speakers could be leaders in climate action, professors, or government officials. Be sure to meet with your speaker before the cafe and make sure your expectations for them are clear.

What's Needed
- *A host with space.* A local establishment or community partner with space and time to share it.
    - Pizza houses, pubs, or coffee shops can be great options, especially those with a commitment to sustainability.
    - Plan to have enough space or tables for groups of 4. Many Mass Audubon sanctuaries have abundant space, but it's generally better to hold these events off-site and closer to community centers when possible.
    - Groups can get too large and difficult to keep cohesive. It can also overwhelm the host. Plan accordingly. A group size of 20-30 is optimal.
- *A time.* Plan for an hour, with about 10 minutes of introduction and a few minutes of wrap-up.
    - Early in the morning and right after work seem to be good times to draw crowds intended on having thoughtful conversations. September through April events tend to draw the most people.
- *Food and goodies.* Arrange to have food, drinks, or snacks for participants.
    - This can often be arranged through the host venue for a discounted rate.
    - Consider arranging discounted bulk-rates, drink tickets, or other snacks with the venue. It's acceptable to ask for small donations from participants to help cover the cost of food and drinks.
- *An organizer.* Mass Audubon staff should fill this role.
    - The organizer will introduce the venue, the discussion, and the expert, and the event. They will make closing comments that simply thank attendees, presenters and the host for participating. Keep scripted remarks to a bare minimum.
- *Facilitators.* Optimally, these are attendees from other groups with expertise in climate change or related fields.
    - Some examples include university faculty, students, teachers, or non-profit staff. They will keep table conversations on track.
- *Advertising.* This depends on the audience and registration procedure.
    - If a public audience is intended, a notice of first come, first-admitted is recommended.
- *Equipment.* A microphone and speaker box can be useful for presenters but is usually not required.
    - Keep equipment needs to a bare minimum to keep the event informal.

Modifications for Virtual/Online Climate Cafés:
- *Online Platform*: There are many options available, for example Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet. Here are some considerations you should make when choosing one:
    - Does it have the ability to make breakout rooms? These facilitate discussion and ideally the platform has the option
    - Is it accessible to your organization/group? Some may require a paid version for certain features
    - Is it commonly used and understood by people? Not a requirement but definitely easier

- o Can you pre-register for the program ahead of time? For Mass Audubon programs, we typically use OPR for registration and send a Microsoft Teams Link to the participants a day or two before the meeting. Mass Audubon also has access to a Zoom account but IT must authorize its use ahead of time.
- *Timing***:** Climate Cafes should not run too long, as people tend to grow tired and discussion stagnates. These suggested times include introduction and wrap-up time.
  - o 1 hour is good maximum for climate cafes that do not use breakout rooms
  - o 1.5 hours is a maximum for climate cafes that use breakout rooms
- *Guest Presenters***:** Inviting guest presenters is a good way to begin the discussion in a climate cafe, as the participants may not know each other and have a hard time getting conversation started. Consider looking for community representatives that are active in climate action, or other individuals that work in climate related fields.
  - o Make sure to meet with your presenter before the event and figure out what they need for the meeting - for instance, the ability to share screens and play music.
- *Breakout Groups:* These are a great tool to allow participants to share their story or point of view, which can be difficult with one giant group.
  - o Should be around 4-7 people to foster discussion
  - o Breakout discussions should usually last about 10-15 minutes, although when there is a lot to share, some groups have requested longer periods closer to 20 minutes. A general tip is to have 2-3 minutes per person in the group.
  - o Each group should have a prepared leader in it to ensure discussion continues and to handle any technical issues.
    - ▪ It is helpful for this leader to prepare talking points and extra questions in case they need to lead a quiet group/people in their room need more prompting.
- **Taking Notes:** Google Jamboard and other note taking apps like Microsoft Padlet are good resources for taking notes as a group. These are especially effective during breakout rooms and can be used to help summarize or debrief the conversation that was had in each room when the whole group is back together.
- *Additional Tips:*
  - o Advertise your climate cafe to as many people as possible, so there is a diverse group of people to add to discussions. Take advantage of how a virtual platform can bring together more people from different places.
  - o Similar to the preparations for an in-person cafe, pamphlets, posters, and emails with interesting graphics and well-presented information are good for getting the word out.

For More Information
- Climate Cafe - Climate & Mind
- Mass Audubon Climate Cafés How-To

Appendix E: Examples of Successful CAPs

- Plant trees around school grounds and in the community
- Communicate the urgency of climate change to every student/community member through posters, announcements, student newspaper articles, walk outs, strikes, etc
- Encourage the school to install solar panels and electric vehicle chargers
- Host events such as other Climate Summits to encourage more climate education and environmental justice projects
- Sell water bottles/reusable straws/reusable bags to other students to raise money for projects
- Replace the lights in the hallways and bathrooms with LEDs and install water saving devices on school sinks
- Make the school cafeteria more environmentally friendly by implementing a recycling/composting system, getting rid of plastics, growing lettuce for the salad bar, and starting a food sharing program with the community for uneaten food

Appendix F: Community Mapping Tool

Before you can plan a project, you need to listen and look, ask and explore: What's needed and what resources are available near you? Use this mapping tool to look closely at your community through the lens of one or more of the Climate Justice Tracks: **Trees and Plants, Food, Fossil Fuels, or Education**.

1. Observe and Map

You can walk, drive, bike, or bus to do this, either as a group or in pairs. Using Google Maps or a local paper map to help, note important landmarks and landforms in your area. Map whatever you feel is an important thing to notice about your community, in light of the issue (track) you are focusing on. See the chart on the next page for examples.

? **Can we pick a different focus for our map?**

Yes! You can pick a different focus such as water quality or immigrant services. Your Mass Audubon Advisor will be able to connect you with more resources if you choose one of the four tracks above, but if there is an issue that speaks to your group, go for it.

? **How big an area should we map?**

You decide! It might be your school and the surrounding few blocks, the downtown area of your city, or a development or apartment complex where lots of people live. It depends on your group's interests.

2. Mark Community Assets and Vulnerabilities

Assets are strengths that the community can build on, and use to address climate change and social justice. *Vulnerabilities* are areas where the community is at risk from the effects of climate change. Check out the chart on the next page for examples of the kinds of things to look for.

3. Reflect and Analyze

Based on your understanding of your community, work together to consider:

- What surprised you about doing the map?
- What did you notice about your community that makes you proud or happy?
- What issues came up that worry you?
- What questions came up that you'd like to answer?

? **What should the map look like?**

It can look like a Google Map, it can look like a sketch, it can be detailed or rough. It doesn't matter. The important thing is to capture the information you think is important in a visual way.

Community map by Laura T., high school student at Mountain View HS, El Monte, CA
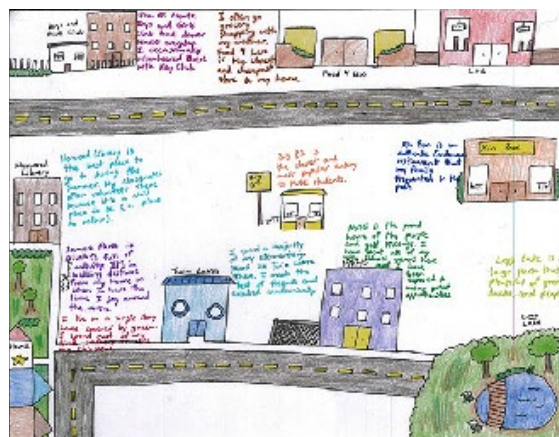
Community Mapping: What Should We Look For?

Use the following questions to help with mapping vulnerabilities and assets. These are not the only questions to ask! Mark down anything that seems relevant or important.

Track	Vulnerabilities (Risks) *Examples of things to look for*	Assets (Strengths) *Examples of things to look for*
Trees & Plants	❑ Areas of few or no trees, or only individual trees but no clusters of trees (more at-risk during storms) ❑ Large paved areas with no soil to absorb water, especially in flood-prone areas; or bare soil with no plants holding it down. ❑ Area with little biodiversity (not much variety) such as lawns with no weeds or bushes around them. ❑ Public spaces with little or no shade ❑ Town arborist (if there is one) doesn't have a climate readiness plan	❑ Mature trees in groups (to protect each other in high winds) ❑ Plenty of shade for people, houses, buildings ❑ Diversity of plants that can withstand droughts and storms. ❑ Town arborist is well-informed about climate change, has a plan and funding to create resilient landscapes ❑ Most soil areas are planted (roots to hold down soil when heavy storms occur and shade for soil in drought).
Fossil Fuels	❑ Hard to get around if you don't have a car; lack of affordable and convenient public transportation ❑ School buses are gas or diesel powered ❑ Town doesn't purchase much energy from renewable source, and/or does not have a plan to do so ❑ Power stations/ other air polluters in neighborhood	❑ Safe and accessible sidewalks and bike paths ❑ Convenient and affordable public transit ❑ Town purchases electricity from a renewable source ❑ Town vehicles are electric, or EV charging stations provided by town. ❑ Organized community groups or government committees working towards renewables and efficiency
Food Systems	❑ Little access to healthy, local and affordable food (e.g. only convenience stores or grocery stores that do not stock local options) ❑ School food includes mostly processed foods from far away, or industrial-produced meats. ❑ Food waste is not collected, composted, or redistributed ❑ Many families are food insecure or can only access unhealthy foods.	❑ Farmer's market or grocery store that sells local, affordable food ❑ Farmer's market/grocery stores accept EBT cards (food stamps) ❑ Town-wide compost pick-up ❑ School offers local, less-processed, plant-rich options ❑ Food gardens are plentiful and accessible even for people who don't own land.
Climate Education	❑ Climate change is not being taught in high schools, or is only being taught to some students ❑ Students feel hopeless or don't care much about climate change ❑ The town does not have a clear plan to deal with climate change ❑ Candidates for local offices are not mentioning climate change as a priority issue.	❑ Climate change is taught to all high school students ❑ Most students feel well-informed about climate change, and are engaged in helping to fight it ❑ The town has a well-funded plan to fight climate change and adapt to its effects ❑ Local candidates or elected officials have prioritized climate change legislation.

YOUTH CLIMATE LEADERS

Mass Audubon