

# how is the environment and climate change affecting young people's health?

This pack is to help young people think through and discuss issues around climate change and how it impacts their health. The activities have been developed so young people can do them by themselves, with their friends or with support from a teacher, youth worker or other adult.

## Includes:

- ⇒ Information about our youth-led inquiry
- ⇒ Activities
- ⇒ Worksheets
- ⇒ Guide to submitting your response
- ⇒ Information about follow up support

## Questions or support:

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# We want to hear from young people aged 10 - 25 about their experiences and views on how climate change is impacting their health



The AYPH [Youth Advisory Panel](#) is leading an inquiry into how climate change affects young people's health in the UK. The views and experiences you share with us will set the agenda for our campaign work and will be shared with policymakers and those working to improve young people's health. We want to understand how the environment and climate change is impacting on young people's health now.

To find out more about climate change, you can watch this [BBC bitesize video](#) or read how the [United Nations](#) explains it



We want to know from young people:

**From your background and experience, how does climate change affect your health?**

You can send your answers to this question in writing, video, audio, poetry, art, etc. Whatever way you feel most able to express yourself. This discussion guide has some questions and activities that you can do if you want to think things through as a group of friends or in your school before you send in your response.

## What do we mean by background/experience?

Sometimes where we live, or the community we live in, can make a big difference to how we experience climate change and the impact it will have on our health. As a young person you might feel the impacts of climate change differently if you live in:

- ⇒ an urban area or the countryside
- ⇒ a house with a garden or a tower block far from the nearest park
- ⇒ an area that gets flooded or has lots of air pollution
- ⇒ a community where you feel supported and accepted or one where you experience isolation or discrimination

There may be other things about where you live, your identity or family situation that means you have specific concerns or experiences about climate change and health. There are many more aspects of health too. We're interested in hearing about your specific experience of health and climate change.

## What do we mean by health?

Our health is how we feel in our body and mind. They are connected and sometimes when we are physically unwell, this impacts our mental health. Similarly when we are feeling down this can affect our bodies (headaches, tummy issues etc.) Some of the ways that climate change may impact our health:

- ⇒ how you manage a long term condition or disability may change
- ⇒ weather events may change how easily you can access services
- ⇒ temperature increase or pollution may have a direct impact on how your body feels
- ⇒ climate change may impact the type of food we can get
- ⇒ fear or worry about the future may affect how you feel right now
- ⇒ your concerns or experiences may even affect your relationships with other people

Find out more



## Activity 1: Our health and what makes it better or worse

step 1

### What does good health mean to you?

On Worksheet A is an outline of a person. Add to this person by drawing or writing inside the body all the things that we feel in our body and mind when we are healthy and well. Some questions to help you think about this might be:

- ⇒ What are your energy levels like when you feel healthy?
- ⇒ What are your thoughts and feelings like when you have good wellbeing?
- ⇒ How does your body feel when you are healthy?

Don't forget to give your healthy young person a name and age

step 2

### What keeps us healthy?

Around the body of your healthy young person write or draw all the things that help keep our young person healthy. Think about

- ⇒ their home
- ⇒ their community
- ⇒ the environment they live in
- ⇒ what services or help or support your young person might need

Is there anything else you can think of?

step 3

### What can make our health worse?

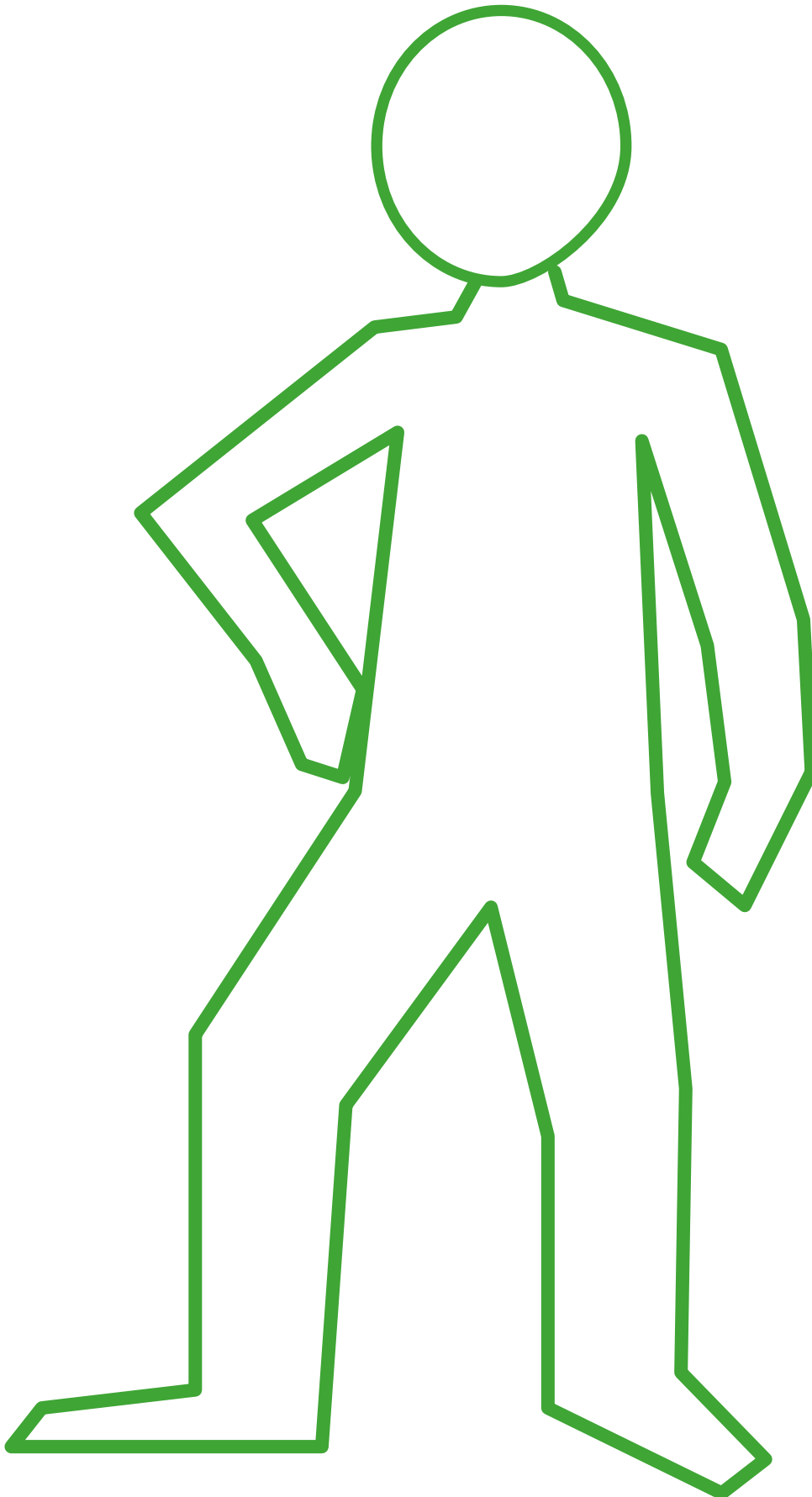
Now think about environmental pollution and climate change. How might this change some of the things your young person needs to stay healthy? Use a green (or other coloured pen) to circle all of the things that would change.

Using Worksheet B make notes about what has changed and how you think that might impact on the young person's health. Which young people would be impacted most by these changes?

You can also use Charlie's story to help think more about these issues

## Worksheet A: Healthy young person - what helps

Create your healthy young person here. Write or draw inside the person all the things that they feel when they are feeling healthy. Then add around the body words or pictures that show the things in our homes, neighbourhoods, communities and societies that help us to stay healthy



## Worksheet B: how climate change might impact young people's health

Things that keep us healthy	How climate change could change them	Possible impact on our health

### Charlie's story

I'm 11 and live on the farm where my parents work. My nearest neighbours are cows. I either have a really long walk to see my friends or my parents have to drive me. I feel guilty about relying on a car to get around. My parents think I worry too much. They don't really believe in climate change. When I said I wanted to go vegetarian my dad got really angry and said I'd have to buy my own food. But I've also heard them talking about how much harder it is to grow crops and that they are earning less money now. I don't know who to believe or what to do.

How is climate change impacting Charlie's health? Which other young people will be impacted more by climate change and might find it difficult to stay healthy?



## Activity 2: Imagining a healthy future

We are already starting to notice the changes that come with climate change, and it is easy to feel overwhelmed by this. But humans are amazingly adaptable and resilient. Lots of people from scientists and campaigners through to local decision makers and community groups are working hard to slow the impact of climate change and to help our communities adapt.

We want you to imagine that it is 30 years from now. Our climate is different but we have made changes to reduce the impact of climate change and our communities have adapted. Young people are able to experience good health and are resilient to these changes. Use the space below to draw a picture (or you can write or use poetry) to show what you think your community would look like? What things are in place or happening that help young people stay healthy and happy?

your name

age

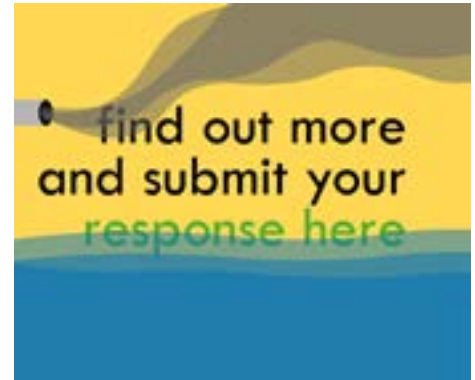
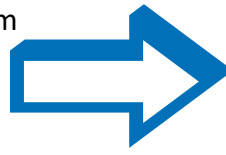
what happens now?



# Make sure you send us your views by September 30th 2022!

⇒ You can take photos or scan these worksheets and submit them by attaching them to our online form

⇒ You can type your views, opinions or experiences directly into the form or attach other art work that addresses the question: *From your background and experience, how does climate change affect your health?*



We will gather all the views of young people and work out the top themes. We might want to quote you or use your art work in our reports and on the website. You can let us know if you want this to be anonymous or not when you send through your feedback.

In autumn 2022, we will hold our youth led inquiry event. Young people from across the UK will come together to look at the feedback you have sent us and make some recommendations about what they think needs to change to support young people's health in the face of climate change.

If you want and find out about opportunities to attend the youth led inquiry event, contribute to shaping the final recommendations or if you want to see the final report please make sure you add your contact details on the form when you submit your views.

## More information and useful resources

### Want to get more involved in youth led work around health and climate?

Make sure you sign up for more info from us at [AYPH](#) when you submit your views

This [briefing paper](#) is packed with good ideas and links if you want to get more involved in campaign and action for young people's health in the face of climate change

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (a membership organisations for doctors who work with children and young people) have made climate change a priority. You can [find out more](#) about what they are doing and get involved

### Other youth and climate action groups

[UK Youth Climate coalition](#)

[Teach the future](#)

[UK Student Climate network](#)

[Fridays for future groups](#)

It is natural and normal to feel a bit worried about climate change. If you feel that this is really affecting you please reach out for help. There are some great organisations that can help and listen during difficult times. So if you are feeling really worried by the news or discussions around climate change please check out some of these links

⇒ [The resilience project](#)

⇒ [The Mix](#)

⇒ [Give us a shout](#)

⇒ [Childline](#)

If you are feeling in crisis and like you need urgent help to keep safe please contact:

⇒ [Hopeline](#)

⇒ [Samaritans](#)