

talking to children

about climate change



10-12 **years old**

the climate is changing, and we can too

By this age, children are generally ready for conversations specifically about climate change. Begin with honest, simple facts: human actions over a long period of time have changed the climate around the world, and it will continue to change in the future.

Focus on empowering your child with actions they can take. How can you adapt to live with a changing climate? Talk about specific human actions that can impact the climate, like energy use and transportation, and choices you can make in your own lives so that the climate doesn't change even more.

guiding questions:

What would it be like if it rained all the time?
What would happen to your neighborhood and everything that lives there? What are some good ways to deal with all the problems that arise from too much rain? What if it never rained at all?
What are some things we use electricity for? Can you think of ways to do those things with less electricity?

activities at home:

Talk about things that your family does every day that might have an impact on climate change. Decide on a few things that you can do differently together that will help reduce climate change in the future. How do you make a plan that's good for the environment that you can stick with over a long time?

examples:

Climate change can make summertime even hotter, so we want to use our air conditioners a lot. Unfortunately producing electricity has a big impact on climate change and air conditioners use more electricity than almost anything else in our houses, so turning on the AC can make the problem even worse. Luckily, there are other ways to cool down: building well-insulated houses, using fans, or only air conditioning a few rooms instead of a whole house are all good ideas.

Our House exhibit connection:

Visit 'The Rising Tide' and 'Cruel Summer' to learn about some ways that people are building houses around the country that can handle the changes we are already experiencing in our climate.

