

## Green 13 (SDG #13 Climate Action) POP-UP Festival

This year the UNICEF World Children's Day team requested help from Six Seconds to create content to address a new emotional crisis children and youth are facing. In many countries, young people are expressing increased anxiety, grief, despair, anger and apathy related to perceptions of an escalating climate crisis.

How can children cope with climate grief? What strategies, engagement activities and wellbeing assets will build capacity for youth to handle these complex emotions?

At Six Seconds, we've been creating emotional intelligence resources for over 20 years. One success is the [POP-UP Festival](#) -- a free event for children to learn EQ, increase wellbeing and support the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2019, POP-UP reached 1.67 million people in 200+ countries. POP-UP Festival resources are in over 30 languages and delivered by over 15,000 volunteers working to build support networks for young people.

This year we're launching a special POP-UP collection of activities we're calling **Green13** to celebrate SDG#13 Climate Action and address children's emotional needs in the face of climate crisis.

We're poised to have a big impact with Green13 POP-UP because:

- There is growing awareness and concern around this problem and a paucity of resources for youth
- 2020 Marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 22
- COP 26 will be held in Edinburgh 2020; for the first time World Children's Day (WCD, Nov 20) coincides with COP, bringing Climate and WCD into focus

Green13 POP-UP is a collection of climate focused POP-UP activities grounded in research, brain-based learning and fun. The content will focus on five key factors kids need to cope with climate grief:

- ... open conversations about feelings related to climate crisis
- ... practice emotional intelligence skills to understand and navigate these feelings
- .... grow climate resilience assets to increase wellbeing
- .... take small activation steps to increase self-efficacy
- ... support young people to be able to share their perspectives to increase connection

The first set of Green13 POP-UP activities will be released for Earth Day 50. We'll continue through 2020, culminating in recognition of World Children's Day on November 20.

### Background: What is Climate Grief?

Most of us are familiar with the the stages of mourning following the loss of a loved one — denial, guilt, anger, depression and, ultimately, acceptance — but we don't really have a vocabulary for the loss of the environment. Only recently have climate activists and mental

health professionals started using a new term, "Climate Grief," to describe the complex feelings people are experiencing about the environment.

Renee Lertzman, a research psychologist and author specializing in environmental communications defines Climate Grief: "It's not like the kind of anger, sadness, and grief that we normally think about when someone passes away," Lertzman said. "This is a whole different category: There's an actual loss and sadness when you hear about a billion animals killed in a wildfire, plus an anticipatory loss. We're already grieving what we understand is going to be gone, based on science's predictions."

### Research: A Growing Issue

Research shows rates of strong emotions about climate is increasing: The [2019 edition of an annual survey by Yale University](#) found 46 percent of Americans said they feel "outraged," 45 percent said they feel "afraid," and 66 percent said they feel "worried" about climate change. This represents a **ten percent increase** since 2014. More than half also reported feeling "helpless."

[Recent study by the APA](#) (Feb 2020) indicates high level of climate distress. Concerns about climate change may be having an impact on mental health, with more than two-thirds-- **(68%) adults saying that they have at least a little "eco-anxiety,"** defined as, *anxiety or worry about climate change and its effects*. There seems to be a disproportionately high impact on the country's youngest adults; nearly half **(47%) of those age 18-34 say the stress they feel about climate change negatively affects their daily lives.**

The November [2019 Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation Climate Change Survey](#) found six in ten teenagers **(61%) say the issue of climate change is very or extremely important** to them personally. They then polled teens emotions about climate change:

- 57%** teen respondents feel **Afraid**
- 54%** feel **Motivated**
- 52%** feel **Angry**
- 43%** feel **Helpless**
- 42%** feel **Helpless**
- 29%** feel **Optimistic**
- 20%** feel **Uninterested**

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## You've been invited

- to support this initiative, see below on how to be a...
- ... participant and host POP-UP festival in your organization focusing on Green13
- ... advisory team member adding your expertise
- ... content contributor creating activities for the collection

... sponsor adding your organization's support to expand the reach

## Join the Project

- I. Participate!  
It's free to join the POP-UP Festival and access the e-kit materials. Sign up here [6sec.org/popup](http://6sec.org/popup)
- II. Advisory team member:  
If you have expertise in youth trauma, resilience, environmental action, education, climate grief we'd love to access your experience and research. We'd like to to have a consult with you to help us gather data and solutions for this problem.
- III. Content Creator:  
If you have expertise and would like to collaborate with us to great small biteable content for youth, let's go! We'll teach you the POP-UP pedagogy, and we'll work together to have your content fit the POP-UP guidelines for timing, materials, research and fun.
- IV. Sponsor:  
We'd love to have aligned organizations and allies expand the program by providing financial support. Media and other connections are also welcome.

To help with items II-IV, please email Patty Freedman <[patty@6seconds.org](mailto:patty@6seconds.org)>

## Green13 Advisors & Friends (invited & confirmed)

- Leslie Davenport a clinical psychologist, LMFT and author of *Emotional Resiliency in the Era of Climate Change*
- laUra Schmidt co-founded of [Good Grief network](#) creating 10-step program to help adults deal with chaotic climate
- Jennifer Atkinson, professor of environmental humanities at Uof W Bothell, teaching "climate grief" to college students to prevent burnout
- Rachel Porter, Program Manager for Trainings and Workshops at Our Climate Voices, storytelling project
- Greg Dalton, Executive Producer and Host Climate One at the Commonwealth Club
- Dr, Maria Ojala, professor of psychology at Örebro University in Sweden. Her research focuses on how young people think, feel, act, learn, and communicate about global environmental problems.

- Sanni Saarimäki, professor of psychology at Aalto University Finland. Her focus is on holistic approaches to supporting wellbeing, psychology of environmental and climate change related issues and "climate anxiety".
- Caroline Hickman is a psychotherapist who teaches at the University of Bath & is a member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA) for whom she is creating a series of podcasts on Climate Psychology, Eco-Anxiety & Grief

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Additional Resources & Media Stories on Youth & Climate Grief

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/a29960607/climate-change-for-kids/>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2020/02/03/eco-anxiety-is-overwhelming-kids-wheres-line-between-education-alarmism/?arc404=true>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/most-american-teens-are-frightened-by-climate-change-poll-finds-and-about-1-in-4-are-taking-action/2019/09/15/1936da1c-d639-11e9-9610-fb56c5522e1c\\_story.html?wpisrc=al\\_news\\_alert-hse--alert-national&wpmk=1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/most-american-teens-are-frightened-by-climate-change-poll-finds-and-about-1-in-4-are-taking-action/2019/09/15/1936da1c-d639-11e9-9610-fb56c5522e1c_story.html?wpisrc=al_news_alert-hse--alert-national&wpmk=1)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/climate-grief-growing-emotional-toll-climate-change-n946751>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/22/772266241/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-climate-change>