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**Creating YOUR Climate Action Plan (CAP)**

**Workshop Facilitation Guide**

**DESCRIPTION**

This workshop is the defining activity of a Youth Climate Summit. Giving young people the tools and the space to develop their own action plan to address climate change is one of the most powerful antidotes to feeling overwhelmed. Not to mention, youth hold tremendous power in advocating for climate change solutions. This workshop facilitation guide provides the tools to offer a Climate Action Planning workshop at a Youth Climate Summit, classroom, or other educational space. It is STRONGLY encouraged that all students who attend a Youth Climate Summit participate in a CAP workshop. Participants will learn from an example of a successful climate action plan, work in teams to develop their own plan, and pitch their plan to the entire group.

Climate Action Planning supports key action competencies and many educational standards. Click here for a detailed breakdown of how Climate Action Planning supports Next Generation Science Standards.

All materials for the Climate Action Planning workshop are located in [this Google Folder](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WHy3HxFy6dUvzAWRN_1imIqrrUA0l_iO).

**PREPARATION**

**TIME:** Suggested 90 minutes.

**AGE LEVEL:** Middle school through college students. Best suited for high school students.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

* [Climate Action Plan Presentation](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kg2yJM5aac-pZC6M8VT89iKmrAI44sxFUb8FeoZqaYU/edit?usp=sharing)

**\*This is a model template. Before you edit it please click “File” then “Make a Copy” to create your own copy. Slides 1,3,19 and 20 have notes from us and can be changed to better reflect your summit.\***

* Printed climate action plans
* Pens/pencils
* Large flip chart paper
* Markers
* Space for groups to come together for a presentation, then break out into small work groups

**OTHER PREPARATION:**

* Identify a strong team of youth leaders that are interested in leading the CAP presentation. Determine a schedule for coaching the students as they prepare.
* Identify any successful climate action or sustainability projects that have been completed in regional schools. It is always best for students to learn from locally relevant examples. Compile some photos of these projects to add to the CAP presentation, and decide if you’d like student representatives from these projects to share their success as part of the presentation.
* Review the presentation, download a copy, and make any edits necessary to make the presentation locally-relevant.

**YOUTH-GENERATED TIPS & TRICKS**

* This workshop is best received when it is presented by YOUTH! Find students who are interested in presenting and who have had success with climate action projects in their schools and communities. Designating at least 2 students to lead the presentation and facilitate the share-out works best.
* The presentation should be adapted and changed to reflect local climate action project successes if possible.
* During a Youth Climate Summit, climate action planning is best when offered after students have had a chance to learn from most of the speakers and workshops.
* Consider how to incorporate references to climate action planning throughout the summit so it doesn’t come as a surprise at the end.
* Be clear with what role adult mentors should play during the process. Refer to our Adult Adviser How-To Guide for more details.
* Don’t skimp on time for climate action planning. Make sure students have enough time to brainstorm, work through details, and come up with a plan to present.
* Encourage student teams to focus on ONE climate action plan idea instead of several.

**WORKSHOP OUTLINE**

**CAP Presentation - 15 min.**

The goal of this presentation is to walk through the steps to designing a climate action plan using an example of a locally-relevant, student-led project. This presentation is most effective when presented by a team of youth. Please feel free to download a copy of the [CAP Presentation](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1tIIS4a78e5eUOXfcQ6tUgQ8xsVPY0FHKdjQ4SkMjEoA) in the Google Folder and edit the presentation to meet your needs.

See below for slide notes to accompany the presentation. These are also located in the Google Slides presentation.

**Youth Team Workshop Time - 50 min.**

After the presentation and a brief Q&A, student teams break out in small groups to design their climate action plan. At this point, the entire group will transition from the presentation area to break out spaces throughout your event venue. During this time, it’s helpful to provide teams with markers and flip chart paper for brainstorming, as well as printed or digital copies of the climate action plan. Student leaders can serve as mentors to teams throughout the planning process and give time reminders to keep teams on track.

The role of adult mentors is critical during this phase of climate action planning. Please refer to our Adult Adviser How-To Guide for youth-generated tips on how adults can best support the climate action planning process.

**Share Out & Next Steps - 15 min.**

Once the planning session is complete, the entire group will gather back in the large presentation space. Invite one representative from each team to present a 30 second pitch of their project idea in front of the entire group. A timer or buzzer can be used to keep pitches to time if needed.

After students share their projects, conclude with what follow-up support and resources are available through your summit or event. Follow-up support could include a variety of strategies depending on the capacity and resources of the summit organizers.

Lower Capacity/Investment

* Periodic check-ins on email or phone on project progress
* A social media network for students to interact with each other (this will be most utilized if it’s run by youth)
* Video calls for project updates and troubleshooting open to all teams that came to the summit
* Connecting students to the Youth Climate Program network through social media or the email newsflash to stay updated on climate action opportunities.

Higher Capacity/Investment

* Contact information for a support person who is available for troubleshooting and accountability
* A mini-grants program to fund student projects

For whichever option you choose, be specific with what support is available to students after the summit and who they should contact with questions.

**Wrap-up: 10 min.**

It’s important to leave students feeling hopeful and energized to work on their climate action plans. Consult with your youth leaders to see what ideas they have for wrapping up the workshop on a fun and positive note. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Skit: Have youth leaders come up with a creative, funny skit

Video:

Song:

Postcard: Have teams write a postcard to themselves with their climate action plan commitment. Mail it to teams about 6 weeks after the summit. (Make sure to be explicit on how to address a postcard - some students may have never written one)

**SLIDE NOTES**

[Intro and Past Successes](#3p7cyoabgaja) (Minutes 0-10)

[How To CAP](#tsr3di3j6fam) (Minutes 10-25)

[Making your CAP!](#1ovu0x2ih5t2) (Minutes 25-60)

[Group share out](#w5dwvdo873tc) (Minutes 60-70)

[Resources/Next Steps](#j757dfmxgp3e) (Minutes 70-75)

*Intro and Past Succe**sses (0-10 minutes)*

**Slide 1: Introduction**

1. Hello - Hello everyone and welcome to the Climate Action Plan workshop! We hope you’ve all been having a great time and learning a lot at the workshops and you’re ready to put your knowledge and excitement to work!
2. Introductions - My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ pronouns. I have been involved with the Youth Climate Summit since or by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I will be facilitating this workshop today along with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (hand it off, have everyone say names, pronouns and involvement).
3. We’re here today to walk you through the process of designing your own climate action plan for your school or community. This is one of the most important workshops of the summit because it focuses on how you are going to take action to address climate change. We all came here today to learn how to take action! Can I get a show of hands of who has made a CAP before? How about those of you who are doing this for the first time?
4. Before we get started, let’s go through the agenda quickly.

**Slide 2: Agenda**

1. We’re just finishing up the introduction, then we will have students share their past CAP successes, then we’ll run through making your CAP, then you’ll get to brainstorm with your team and come back here for the share out and we’ll discuss some useful resources and next steps for your plans.

**Slide 3: What Do Successful CAPs Look Like?**

*For this portion, you should identify beforehand if you have had any past successes from people who are in attendance and ask them to come up and share their stories (30 seconds -1 minute each). You can add pictures/videos the slide deck to show your local successes.*

1. Sharing - Alright so we’re going to have students come up and share their success stories now.
2. Hand it off

*If this is a new summit you can use the example below.*

1. Carbon Neutral Prom Example - One group in past years wanted to increase awareness of climate change and decisions that increase CO2 emissions in their school. They decided the best forum to accomplish this in a fun way was at their prom. Here are some photos from that project.

*Ho**w To CAP (10-25)*

**Slide 4: Brainstorm**

1. Within the next hour or so, you and your school team are going to be creating a Climate Action Plan for your school. This project will be all yours - you will brainstorm, design , and make your project happen from the ground up. We’re going to walk through the process together before you break up into school teams to create your plan.
2. You’re going to start your planning by thinking about your school, where it faces environmental problems, what resources are available to assist with your projects and what your team is passionate about. Some students find it helpful to make a map or a list of problems, resources and potential solutions.
3. Use your map or list to match up the problems with solutions and passions that address the problem. This can help you narrow down your project options and select a project idea that you have a good chance of completing successfully.

**Slide 5: Topic Areas**

1. Go over topic areas - Schools can help fight climate change in many ways. Local issues including energy use, transportation, food systems, community outreach, waste management, and policy all play a role in school function and that means you can influence these issues. What topic areas match up with the problems, solutions and passions you identified during the brainstorm session?

**Slide 6: Project Goals**

1. Think big picture. Once your group has picked a topic you can address at your school, make some big picture goals. Who has heard of SMARTIE goals? Here’s what SMARTIE stands for:
2. Specific and Measurable- It is important that the goal is specific so that you can reflect and see how well you achieved it. If the goal is too vague, it’s harder to measure your success. An example of a specific goal for the Carbon Neutral Prom was making at least two signs for publicity. That’s a goal that is both specific and easily measured. Goals that are specific and measurable also make it easier to break up the project into individual assignments.

For example, students may have a general idea that they want to improve recycling in their school, but this is not specific. What needs to be improved? Education, physical bins or cooperation with administration? Where exactly does it need to be improved? Outside or in the classrooms, or in the cafeteria?

In addition to saying what they would like to improve, it is important that you specify *what* is going wrong and *where* it is going wrong.

1. Achievable and Realistic- While stopping all fossil fuel consumption in the United States is a super cool goal, it might not be the most achievable goal for your first CAP. Try to think about scale and what areas you as students can most influence. If you don’t have a goal that’s achievable, it’s really easy to lose momentum or feel demoralized.

For the Carbon Neutral Prom, our goal of fundraising money just to offset the CO2 produced at prom was extremely achievable. \*Note- We highly discourage plans that just involve throwing money at a problem. While the Carbon Neutral Prom did raise money to participate in an offset program, the larger aspect of the plan was raising awareness at prom and in the school for how certain actions increase our carbon footprint.

1. Time Bound- Having goals that are time bound is extremely important so that you can constantly evaluate if you’re on track to meet the goal. It also keeps the finish line in reach! Be sure to have aspects of your climate action plan that you can successfully complete in one school year. You may have high aspirations, and you are encouraged to make long term goals up to 5 years within the action plan worksheet, but the *initial* goal should be something with a timeline shorter than one school year.
2. Inclusive- It is essential that our goals work towards inclusivity. They should bring traditionally marginalized people—particularly those most impacted—into processes, activities, and decision/policy-making in a way that shares power as much as possible.
3. Equitable- Equity must be an integral aspect of the CAP process. Goals should include seeking to address systemic injustice, inequity, and/or oppression.

**Slide 7: SMARTIE**

Okay, does everyone remember what SMARTIE means and why it's a smart idea? Okay let's say it together 1-2-3 - (Everyone) Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound, Inclusive, Equitable

**Slide 8: Outside Help**

1. Looking for help - Usually your plan will not be possible without help outside the club. A lot of climate projects involve changing the way people do things as a whole/ how whole systems work. Just changing within the club will not have a big enough effect. Use this part of the planning process to think about people or organizations that should be involved to make your project a success.

In general, if you are doing an event in your school it’s good to let your administrators know, sometimes they can provide resources or contacts you didn’t originally think of.

For the Carbon Neutral Prom, the students needed other students on the Prom Planning Committee, experts, and faculty to participate.

Additionally, partnering with groups outside of your own is a good way to maintain accountability!

**Slide 9: Short-term and Long-term Steps**

1. Short term goals are usually used to adjust and suggest improvements while meeting benchmarks that your team can celebrate. Long term goals can help your project grow in the future, even if you are no longer in school. Sometimes long term goals can help you think aspirationally about what might change for future students as a result of your project. For the Carbon Neutral Prom, students had a goal of repeating the project every year.

**Slide 10: Resources**

1. Resources - Often students run into financial or time management barriers. Planning these costs and materials now will help you prepare and prevent any surprise costs from slowing you down in the future.
2. For the Carbon Neutral Prom, students needed a certain amount of money to buy the offsets, which they fundraised in partnership with a local solar company. They also needed poster materials and time to research the prom’s carbon footprint.

**Slide 11: Sample Cost Sheet**

Here is an example of a detailed plan of resources needed to build a solar phone charging station. Your plans don’t need to be so detailed on the first day, but this is a good example of how students have planned in the past.

**Slide 12: Solar Charging Station**

All that planning must have helped, because they were able to achieve their goals and build a solar charging station in their school. This project came from Plattsburgh High School, and the students developed their plan at a summit just like this.

**Slide 13: Monitor Success**

Many successful teams start off their CAP implementation by answering the question “What would ‘success’ look like for this project?” Take some time in your planning process to ask yourself this question. As you proceed through the implementation of your CAP, your definition of success may change, and that is fine, but remember to ask yourself “what would ‘success’ look like?” at the beginning of each month or so, as a way of evaluating what is working and what isn’t.

Once again, SMART Goals are incredibly important, and if you’ve done a good job making your goals specific and measurable, the monitoring of your success is easy. For example, If you said you wanted to improve recycling in classrooms by presenting to all students during homeroom, and you said you would check the recycling bins once a week to count the number of items being recycled, and you said you would present to 5 classrooms a month for every month of the fall semester, measuring success becomes much easier!

With any project, there is always something you can measure, from watt usage in an outlet, to responses to a survey, to number of vegetables grown in your garden, to number of attendees at an event. Measurable items are easier to understand than just saying something was ‘good’ or ‘bad’.

Once you have a set of specific and measurable goals, assign them to individual people, and when the time comes to monitor success (monthly, weekly, biweekly, it is up to you, but choose a consistent interval) check in on one another to see how you are doing. It should not be one person’s job to check in with everyone else, teamwork makes the dream work! Whenever you start a meeting, it is always helpful to have each member share their progress, or take the time to ask for help.

**Slide 14: Communication**

Communication will make your project more fun! Just because you are the ones that came up with your project doesn't mean you have to be the only ones executing it. Try to involve more people by showing them how easily your project can fit into and impact their life. Many successful teams will have new members fill out a [Skills Assessment worksheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wOaOlknVVvq2UF0VbFhZXcaeNwndAN7os1m9IYoBUUM/edit?usp=sharing) to identify everyone’s strengths and better understand who should be responsible for individual goals.

Also, try to set a communication goal for each group of people that you marked on the “Who will help you make this happen?” checklist from Slide 7. How often should they be updated? What do they need to know? What should you ask them?

**Slide 15: Reference CAP**

Once again, the point of filling out a Climate Action Plan now is so that you have to think, decide, and deliberate as little as possible in the future! If you have a month by month goals list already created now, all you have to do in five months is walk into your meeting, pull out the Climate Action Plan, and read it! A quick review of your CAP should be a part of every meeting. We suggest making a scan of the completed CAP and sharing it on Google Drive with everyone involved.

**Slide 16: Document Everything**

If you’re doing a super cool project, other people are going to want to learn from your process or maybe replicate it at their own schools, so make sure you document your process. The students who created the Carbon Neutral Prom eventually wrote up a short guide for other students to use if they wanted to replicate the project. Documenting everything also fits into the Measurable aspect of SMART goals!

**Slide 17: Questions?**

Ask students if they have any questions.

**Slide 18: Make the CAP**

*Making* *your CAP! (Minutes 25-60)*

Alright everyone, I’m sure you’re itching to get started, go grab your group, grab your CAPs which should be in your folders and get going! We’ll meet back here in about half an hour to share our plans!

*Group s**hare out (60-70)*

Let’s have one representative from each group come up and give a 30 second update on their school’s Climate Action Plan!

*Resources* *and Next Steps (70-75)*

Thanks so much everyone! I’m super excited to hear all of these awesome ideas and can’t wait to see them all come to life! I just want to remind you of some resources you have available to help you with your CAP along the way.

**Slide 19: Part of a network.**

At the completion of this summit, you will become a part of a network of thousands of students working on their own Climate Action Plans across the country, and even across the world. Youth Climate Summits happen every year in many different locations, which means that other students care about this issue, and are working alongside you to implement climate solutions. So reach out to this network as a resource! That could mean talking to other students at this summit, the organizers of this summit, or the professional staff at the Wild Center Youth Climate Program.

Remember that there are tons of resources in your own community too! It might help to make a resource map of your school or town so you can reach out and find partners to help you with this project. Also the staff at The Wild Center is always excited to hear about what you’re doing with your Climate Action Plans so reach out to them with your success stories. [youthclimate@wildcenter.org](mailto:youthclimate@wildcenter.org)

**Slide 20:**

\*\*If your summit has a grants program to help fund projects mention this here\*\*

Thanks to everyone for all your awesome ideas!

Possible chant “Climate Action!” on 3.

The End

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