

PUTNEY
PRE-COLLEGE

In collaboration with:



HARVARD T.H. CHAN
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

C-CHANGE

CENTER FOR CLIMATE, HEALTH,
AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Climate Is Health

*Educational Resources on Climate,
Health, and COVID-19*

Session 1


Session 1

Basics of Climate and Health and How They Are Connected

Getting Started (10-15 min)

Welcome to Session 1 of the “Climate Is Health” series. This week we are focused on how climate and health are connected. Our Guest Speaker is Gina McCarthy, an American environmental health and air quality expert. Gina served as the 13th Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is currently a Professor of Public Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Chair of the Board of Advisors for the Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment (Harvard C-CHANGE) as well as the President and CEO of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Key concepts this week include [climate change](#), [public health](#), and [food systems](#).

 **If you have time, take a moment to reflect before starting with the session and answer the following questions in a notebook:**

1. Why are you interested in learning more about climate? About health?
2. What current questions do you have about either of these topics?
3. Have you ever heard a teacher, doctor, or news source discuss the connections between climate and health before?
4. Without doing any research, how do **you** think climate and health are connected?

Guest Speaker (10 min)



Gina McCarthy,
Natural Resources Defense Council

[Watch Interview](#)

Explore in Depth (10-30 min)

[How Climate Change Affects Your Health](#)

The American Public Health Association (APHA) provides flow charts of the impacts on health from air quality, extreme weather, rising temperatures, and vector-borne diseases.

[2019 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change](#)

Annually this report gives a comprehensive analysis tracking the impact of climate change on human health across 41 indicators around the world. Read the key takeaways for the United States briefing.

[The Climate Crisis and Clinical Practice](#)

Patients are becoming the human faces of the climate crisis, as recognition of its health harm grows.

[The Rising Health Threats of a Hot Planet](#)

Explore the impact of a warming planet on health and health care.

[Gina McCarthy Is Fired Up About Climate Change and Public Health](#)

While others may not be talking about the ways climate and health are connected, Gina McCarthy is passionate about educating others on these issues.

[Kids and Climate](#)

Resources from Harvard C-CHANGE showing how climate solutions and transitioning to clean energy protects children from dangerous pollutants and helps them live healthier lives today and in the future.

Reflect and Discuss (10-30 min)

1. Can you think of an example in your own life of the way that your health is impacted by changes in climate? Discuss or reflect.
2. List five ways that the impacts of climate change are being felt now. How could each of those things impact human health?
3. Focus on food, which is essential for good health. How does your food supply impact the climate and how is it impacted by climate?

Case Study (30-60 min)

Addressing Links Between Climate and Public Health in Alaska Native Villages


Explore what makes the above case study a successful example of a public health group establishing and sharing the links between climate and health.

- What inspires you about this story?
- What allowed them to be successful?
- What challenges were faced and overcome in this case study?
- What connections does this case study have to your own community?
- What questions do you have?
- Counterargument: Conditions are deteriorating so quickly in many parts of Alaska that we should be spending federal dollars to resettle affected communities, rather than focusing on adaptation.
 - Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Whether you personally agree or disagree, how would you refute it?

Take Action (30-60 min)

- ★ **Pick one food item that you particularly enjoy (e.g., a chocolate bar). Map out all of the steps that it takes for that product to get to you.** *From production to processing to transport, can you outline the entire journey?* From here, map out the various systems involved in that process. At each step, list one way that this process might be contributing to changes in climate and one way that this process might be impacting human health.
- ★ **Compare two versions of the same type of product that you enjoy (e.g., Hershey's chocolate vs. Endangered Species chocolate or bottled water vs. filtered tap water). Map out all of the steps that it takes for those products to get to you.** *How are the journeys different? How are they the same?*
- ★ **Think of one thing you can do related to your food consumption choices that will positively impact climate as well as your health. Write this down.** Commit to doing this for at least one week. Take a photo of yourself holding what you wrote down and send it to us at harvardclimatesummit@goputney.com or tag [#climateishealth](https://twitter.com/climateishealth).

Connect

 Don't forget to post your ideas and learning journeys on social media with the tag [#climateishealth](https://twitter.com/climateishealth), and email harvardclimatesummit@goputney.com with any questions you have. Teachers, you can also share resources and start discussions in our Google Classroom platform.

Not signed up for our Google Classroom platform? [Request access here.](#)

Related Standards and Competencies

If you are striving to align your educational content with national standards, the options outlined below highlight standards and competencies that could align with this session with teacher guidance and direction.


Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

- HS-ESS2-2 Earth's Systems: Analyze geoscience data to make the claim that one change to Earth's surface can create feedbacks that cause changes to other Earth systems.
- HS-ESS3-4 Earth and Human Activity: Evaluate or refine a technological solution that reduces impacts of human activities on natural systems.
- HS-ESS3-6 Earth and Human Activity: Use a computational representation to illustrate the relationships among Earth systems and how those relationships are being modified due to human activity.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competency

- **Self-Awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Up Next

 July 17 Next week we will be exploring **how climate is connected to COVID-19** with Dr. Aaron Bernstein. New content will be shared on **April 24**.