

CREATORS SUMMIT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The Truth Behind Climate Grief

Climate Action Must Include Mental Health

3.3 million

Premature deaths each year are caused by outdoor air pollution

75%

Of Gen Zers in the US say the environment affects their mental health

3 years

After a deadly wildfire, people exposed directly/indirectly still showed negative changes to brain function

10

Of the warmest years in record occurred in the past 15 years

KEY TAKEAWAYS

CLIMATE CHANGE EXACERBATES MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

- Mental health consequences of climate change range from low level stress to clinical disorders, such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and suicidality.
- Having climate emotions is a valid and normal response to the climate crisis.
- Higher temperatures increase the rates of suicide. A study in Nature predicts that due to the effects of global warming, the United States and Mexico could experience anywhere between 9,000 to 40,000 additional suicides by the year 2050.
- Adverse Childhood Events, or ACEs, are traumatic events that can lead to social, emotional, and cognitive impairment on developing brains. Hurricanes, wildfires, and floods can be ACEs, especially when a child directly witnesses the loss of their home or the event results in the loss of a family member or friend.
- Children who were exposed to Hurricane Sandy in the womb had a 3x times higher risk of attention-deficit/disruptive behavioral disorders, 5x higher risk of anxiety disorders, and 16x higher risk of depressive disorders compared to children in the same region born before or after Sandy.

Content Resources:

- Burke, M. et al | [Higher temperatures increase suicide rates in the United States and Mexico](#) | Nature Climate Change, 2018
- Nomura, Y., et al | [Prenatal exposure to a natural disaster and early development of psychiatric disorders during the preschool years: stress in pregnancy study](#) | The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 2022
- [Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health: A Scientific Assessment](#)
- [WHO Mental Health ATLAS](#) | Data on mental health care and support

Audience Call to Action:

- Share [Climate Mental Health Network](#) resources
- Share [Harvard Chan C-Change](#) fact sheet
- Watch [Extrapolations](#)
- Share [Gen Z Climate Mental Health](#) film clip | Climate Mental Health Network
- Become a member of [Climate Psychiatry Alliance](#)

Hashtags:

- #EcoAnxiety #ClimateMentalHealth #HSPHCreatorsSummit



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UNDER-RESOURCED, FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES ARE MOST AT RISK FOR THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS OF CLIMATE ON MENTAL HEALTH

- Communities that rely on the natural environment for sustenance & livelihood, as well as populations living in areas most susceptible to specific climate change events, are at increased risk for negative mental health outcomes as a result of climate change.
- Under-resourced communities have the least access to mental health resources to help them, especially after a disaster.
- Children who grow up with the lowest levels of green space have up to 55% higher risk of developing a psychiatric disorder than kids with access to the highest levels of green space.

Content Resources:

- Engemann, K., et al | [Residential green space in childhood is associated with lower risk of psychiatric disorders from adolescence into adulthood](#) | PNAS, 2018
- [Climate and Health Assessment](#) | U.S. Global Change Research Program
- [Project EMPOWER](#) | Harvard Chan initiative to expand training for providers.

Audience Call to Action:

- Follow [Queer Brown Vegan](#)
- Sign up for [Global Mental Health newsletter](#) | Latest in efforts to transform mental health care

Hashtags:

- #ClimateAction #MentalHealthSupport #HSPHCreatorsSummit

THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS OF HIGH TEMPERATURES AND EXTREME WEATHER MUST BE INCORPORATED INTO PLANS FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO HIGH TEMPERATURES

- Climate change, climate anxiety, and inadequate government response are all chronic stressors that can threaten the mental health and well-being of young people around the world.
- Research suggests that an effective advocacy message should convey 1. The significant consequences of climate change 2. Actionable solutions 3. A clear call to action 4. Intergenerational collaboration.
- Increasing individual and community resilience, promoting connectedness to culture and community, helping people develop a sense of agency to take action, fostering courage, and increasing green space (+ access to it) can help alleviate the mental health consequences of climate change.

Content Resources:

- Hickman, C., et al | [Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey](#) | The Lancet, 2021

Audience Call to Action:

- Listen to [Brown Girl Green](#) podcast
- Share [Young People Climate Emotion](#) resources | Climate Mental Health Network
- Share [WHO policy recommendations](#)

Hashtags:

- #CommunityResilience #ClimateSolutions #HSPHCreatorsSummit

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Support Group Guide](#) | National Alliance on Mental Illness
- [Best practices and recommendations for talking about suicide](#) | Reporting on Suicide
- [Find support for yourself or those who may be at risk for suicide](#) | AFSP Suicide Prevention
- [Find resources to improve your mental wellness](#) | Project Healthy Minds for Harvard Chan School's Creators Summit on Mental Health



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