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Young people's climate concerns revealed in school survey

More than 8 in 10 school students are concerned about climate change, according to a new survey conducted by InterClimate Network (ICN), an educational charity.

(9 November 2021) The large-scale survey of almost 4,000 school students from across the United Kingdom looked at young people's views, behaviours and motivations around the climate crisis.

The survey is published as governments at the United Nations climate conference (COP26) in Glasgow negotiate how best to limit dangerous global warming and achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The ICN survey shows that half of young people aged 11 to 18 are already choosing to act on climate change. A quarter (27%) of respondents said that climate change is already impacting their life, while three quarters (76%) believe it will affect them in the future.

Schools provide students with the most inspiration on climate action, with teachers cited as role models. In addition, 1 out of 4 young people say that have been influenced by well-known figures such as Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough.

"The vast majority of young people believe climate change is happening now, that it is a global climate crisis, and they acknowledge a human component in climate change," said Cecily Etherington, lead author of the survey.

"Our team has worked with students and their teachers to produce meaningful data and a resource that helps them focus their climate actions across school. This report is a fitting tribute to young people's drive to make a positive difference - and a call to adults to step up their support," said Michila Critchley, Programme Manager at InterClimate Network.

Most young people acting on on climate change are doing so at home with the support of their families. Action in the home however doesn't always translate to action elsewhere, with only a third saying they are acting on climate change in school.

The student-led Climate Action Survey was completed by some 3,800 young people from six secondary schools between 2020 and 2021. The survey's high return rate provides a depth of understanding of young people's climate perspectives. In addition, it offers insights into how young people can make a difference in schools.

The survey was constructed around five key themes on youth action, climate awareness, trusted sources, power to effect change, and climate action in school. Answers were provided between December 2020 and October 2021.

The survey is part of an innovative Climate Action Survey toolkit created for use in secondary schools in the UK. The survey report and toolkit are available from [ICN's website](#).

Inspiring the next generation of climate leaders

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