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Youths and Their Families Fight Climate Change Together

Learn about 10 local family-friendly climate action organizations.

BY GEMMA ALEXANDER
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Climate Action Ian Price and

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PHOTO: Youth participating in an Extinction Rebellion climate strike event

Youth around the world are organizing the September 2019 Global Climate Week of Action to coincide with the United Nations' climate conference. They want you to join them in a climate strike on September 20 and in making systemic changes to lessen our impact on the world's climate. If you or your child are looking for ways to be part of the solution, the Puget Sound region is home to several youth-led and family-friendly climate action organizations. Read on to learn

about these groups, their upcoming activities and ways your family can get involved.

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[Climate Action Families \(https://climateactionfamilies.org/\)](https://climateactionfamilies.org/)

Parents are encouraged but not required to participate in the Climate Action Families' age-based, youth-led programs. Climate Kids (ages 0-7) provides developmentally appropriate exposure to environmental topics. Plant for the Planet participants (ages 8-12) plant trees to help with carbon sequestration and slowing climate damage. Online registration is open for the [Plant for the Planet Climate Justice Ambassador training \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/gates-youth-climate-action-ian-zoe\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/gates-youth-climate-action-ian-zoe) in October. Climate Action Youth for tweens and teens is focused on direct action and youth empowerment. They are in the coalition planning for the September 2019 Global Climate Week of Action. The teen-led Zero Hour movement creates entry points, training and resources for new young activists and organizers who wish to take concrete action around climate change.

[Earth Guardians \(https://www.earthguardians.org/\)](https://www.earthguardians.org/)

Earth Guardians is the organizational plaintiff in the ongoing *Juliana v. United States* case, representing a group of teenagers who are suing the federal government for denying their right to a clean environment. Originally an accredited environmental high school, Earth Guardians has evolved into a global organization training youth to be effective leaders in climate and social justice movements. They operate through Earth Guardian Crews ranging from 10 to several hundred young people who participate in climate strikes, lawsuits, app-based challenges and other creative actions. Individuals can start by studying their [online engagement guide \(https://static1.squarespace.com/static/547e26e6e4b00d091d9dd4d3/t/5cd4c090b208fcd03e652f52/1557446810336/ENGAGE+2019.pdf\)](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/547e26e6e4b00d091d9dd4d3/t/5cd4c090b208fcd03e652f52/1557446810336/ENGAGE+2019.pdf) or jump right in to join a crew or start a new crew on the [Earth Guardian website \(https://www.earthguardians.org/beanearthguardian\)](https://www.earthguardians.org/beaneearthguardian).

[Extinction Rebellion \(https://www.seattlerebellion.earth/#/\)](https://www.seattlerebellion.earth/#/)

The U.K.-based Extinction Rebellion has [local groups in Seattle and Puyallup \(https://extinctionrebellion.us/\)](https://extinctionrebellion.us/) supporting their call for legally binding policy to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025. The group is focused on nonviolent civil disobedience. In the lead-up to planned direct actions for the Global Climate Week of Action, local members of Extinction Rebellion are attempting to give 100 informational presentations on the climate crisis. Keep up with meetings and events on the Seattle group's Facebook page and join the [chapter's closed FB group \(https://www.facebook.com/XRSeattle/\)](https://www.facebook.com/XRSeattle/).

[Fridays for Future \(https://twitter.com/Fri4FutureSea\)](https://twitter.com/Fri4FutureSea)

Inspired by Greta Thunberg (a Swedish student who is credited with raising global awareness of the risks posed by climate change), Thornton Creek Elementary School student Ian Price began striking in front of City Hall every Friday. He has since been joined by other youth and adults, too. Loosely organized as Fridays for Future, everyone is welcome to join the strikes on any Friday from 1-2 p.m., but expect a particularly large showing on Sep. 20. Keep track of their activities on Twitter all year, or just show up at City Hall on a Friday.

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[Parents for Future, Seattle Chapter \(https://www.facebook.com/groups/Parents4FutureSeattle/\)](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Parents4FutureSeattle/)

[Parents for Future \(https://twitter.com/p4f_seattle?lang=en\)](https://twitter.com/p4f_seattle?lang=en) is an informal group of family-focused adults that shares environmental news and information on individual and collective climate actions. Join the group on Facebook to find out about climate-related marches, strikes and meetings. Then show up in person when your schedule and inclination permit.



Members of the Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council put finishing touches on a mural, "Water Is Life," created in response to the Standing Rock movement and in support of the environment, water and cultural connections inherent in our relationship with natural world.

[Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council \(http://www.urbannativeeducation.org/#clearsky\)](http://www.urbannativeeducation.org/#clearsky)

A program of the nonprofit Urban Native Education Alliance, Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council is an inclusive, Native-focused, student-centered, volunteer-based group working around social and environmental leadership. They offer mentorship and empowerment workshops as well as life skills and leadership training. The organization is currently looking for an appropriate space in North Seattle to house their programs.

[Seattle Green Families \(https://www.facebook.com/seattlegreenfamilies/\)](https://www.facebook.com/seattlegreenfamilies/)

Formed by four stay-at-home moms, Seattle Green Families focuses on the little steps that families can take to be greener. Recognizing that even ingrained habits can be challenging to maintain once life is complicated by children, they de-emphasize actions that can seem overwhelming with kids in tow. Instead, members share their successes and strategies with nature walks, city council meetings, or park cleanup events on the group's Facebook page.

[Sunrise Movement \(https://www.sunrisemovement.org/\)](https://www.sunrisemovement.org/)

Focused on strength in numbers, the Sunrise Movement supports the Green New Deal and campaigned for the Democratic Party to schedule a climate debate among presidential candidates. Through a combination of leadership trainings, online campaigns and local actions organized by decentralized "hubs," Sunrise engages youths (and elder allies) in whatever manner best fits their schedule and temperament. Youth can join existing hubs in Seattle, Tacoma and the Eastside or form their own on the [Sunrise website \(https://www.sunrisemovement.org/hubs\)](https://www.sunrisemovement.org/hubs).

[Washington Green Schools \(https://www.wagreenschools.org/\)](https://www.wagreenschools.org/)

Washington Green Schools is a nonprofit organization that works through school communities to engage kids in sustainability. Green Schools operates a sustainability certification program, offers teacher training in climate science and provides environmental science curricula to classrooms. Parents can partner with their child's school to pursue certification and use the [organization's online guide \(https://publichealthonline.gwu.edu/how-to-reduce-climate-change/#top\)](https://publichealthonline.gwu.edu/how-to-reduce-climate-change/#top) to learn about the most effective ways they can help the planet at home.

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Youths participating in a Washington Youth Climate Strike event.

[Washington Youth Climate Strike \(https://linktr.ee/climatestrikewa\)](https://linktr.ee/climatestrikewa)

Youth Climate Strike organizes nationwide climate strikes. The Washington chapter participated in the strikes on March 15 and May 3 in 2019, and over the summer partnered with the youth-focused, adult-led group [Our Climate \(https://www.ourclimate.us/\)](https://www.ourclimate.us/) to host a climate workshop in Seattle. Like other groups, their current focus is preparing for the Global Week of Action. Anyone under 25 (including elementary and middle school students) is welcome to join and adult allies are appreciated. The best place to keep up with Washington chapter activities is [via Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/climatestrikewa/\)](https://www.instagram.com/climatestrikewa/), but youths who aren't on social media are welcome to [email the org \(mailto:wash@youthclimatestrikeus.org\)](mailto:wash@youthclimatestrikeus.org) for information.

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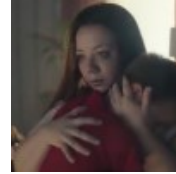
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Seattle-based freelance writer Gemma Alexander focuses on the intersection of parenting and the arts. When she's not writing for "ParentMap," she blogs at gemmadeealexander.com (<https://gemmadeealexander.com/>) and tweets at [@gemmadeetweet](#).

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