

# **A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change**

A consulting report submitted to the  
Public Education and Outreach Issues Table  
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2. **Executive Summary**

2.1. **Terms of Reference**

IISD has been contracted by the Government of Canada to develop a youth strategy for public outreach on climate change, as part of the development of the Options Paper of the Public Education and Outreach (PEO) Issue Table.

The PEO Issue Table has requested two components to this strategy:

- Raising awareness among youth about climate change, its causes and potential impacts, and what individuals can do to reduce emissions.
- Motivating youth to take actions in their own lives to reduce emissions and to encourage others in their lives (peers, families, communities) to reduce emissions.

Our methodology for developing the strategy had five parts:

- a review of the Youth Round Table recommendations and the Climate Change Strategy Workshop with Métis Nation-Northwest Territories' Environmental Youth Corps
- a review of Canadian demographics and social trends research
- consultations with youth in ten focus groups across the country

<b>Location</b>	<b>Target audience</b>
Winnipeg (3)	high school; employed/unemployed youth; aboriginal (with rural representation)
Saskatoon (1)	university/college (with rural representation)
Vancouver (1)	Employed/unemployed youth
Halifax (2)	high school (inner city, disadvantaged youth); university/college (with rural representation)
Montreal (2) (both French-Canadian sessions)	university/college; employed/unemployed youth (participants who came to the workforce session were outside the desired age range)
Toronto (1)	combined (all age groups)

- consultations with youth via the Climate Change Youth Café on the Internet
- interviews with youth organizations and groups communicating on youth issues

In keeping with the PEO interest in strong youth involvement in the development of the strategy, two of IISD's youth interns (one bilingual), and IISD's youth program officer (ages ranging from under 24 to 27) participated directly in the research and preparation of the strategy.

## 2.2. Communications, social marketing and engagement strategies

**Based on our research, we believe that personal behaviour change alone on the issue of climate change is insufficient to lead to significant greenhouse gas reductions.**

Therefore communications and social marketing strategies, which tend to be designed for people at risk (smoking, drinking and driving, get fit programs) are not sufficient for our purposes. We have therefore looked carefully at a model of engagement: how do we turn knowledge into action, can small, individual actions be aggregated for greater benefit, and how do we ensure that the actions will have longer term benefits for the community, the country and the planet?

## 2.3. Target Audience

For the purposes of the strategy, we have defined the target group as young Canadians between the ages of 13 and 29. **In Canada, there are 6.5 million youth between the ages of 15 and 29, or 22% of the total population of 30 million.** Regional, social and cultural diversity within this group is extensive. With respect to social and environmental attitudes, values and practices, it is worth noting that:

- One third of young Canadians have respect for the environment and human rights, with strong global perspectives. But youth leaders noted that while environmental values were strong, commitment to participate was “soft”.
- 33% of young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 are more likely to be volunteers than Canadians in other age groups (although they spend less time volunteering)
- Over 57% of youth between the ages of 20 and 24 are still living in the parental home.
- Youth tend more than adults to walk, use bicycles, carpool with adults and friends and take public transit, either because they are not yet drivers or they can’t afford their own cars.
- On media use: Canadian teenagers watch 17.3 hours of television a week; and television viewing seems to increase with age; Reported statistics of Internet use (daily or weekly) vary between 25 and 30%.

## 2.4. Research Findings

From our focus groups, we learned that youth saw climate change as a global problem, but they found it difficult to make it “personal”. As one participant said, “we don’t know what to do about it.” We discovered that jobs and health were key triggers for them.

We also found that those audiences most receptive to a climate change strategy would be youth actively involved in high school studies and extra-curricular work (13-17); aboriginal youth; and the leaders or “early adopters” of environmental messages -- youth already involved in environmental and social movements. Social networks are strong among youth: with the successful engagement of one or more target groups, messages and commitments to action may well be carried to others.

Our focus groups participants all indicated that they did listen and respond to TV ad campaigns. They liked the anti-racism and drunk driving campaigns, and took notice of messages that were shocking, with hard facts and graphic images. However, the knowledge – behaviour gap has to be overcome. Almost all of our focus groups identified this gap, pointing out that young people know about recycling, but they don't do it.

**Another reason for the gap could be that youth respond negatively to the knowledge-behaviour gap in their elders and authority figures: why should they change, if no one else is? Youth have not seen many solutions to global problems. As a result, youth neither trust institutional mechanisms for problem solving, nor do they have successful models upon which to base their own actions.** A climate change strategy must focus on older Canadians and Canadian institutions as well as youth.

Our focus groups commented again and again that young people need to be recognized, respected and rewarded for their contributions and accomplishments. Throughout the strategy, we have attempted to identify opportunities for recognition and reward.

## **2.5. An Engagement Strategy for Canadian Youth : Goals and Objectives**

Based on our findings, we are proposing a strategy that focuses on youth as leaders and as participants working for change within their communities and country. This is an engagement strategy rather than a marketing strategy. **The goal is to engage the energy, enthusiasm and values of youth to work with their families, school and work colleagues and friends to reduce the 25% of emissions from personal lifestyles and to work with communities, the private sector and government to make significant inroads on reducing the 75% of emissions coming from our businesses and industries.**

The broad objectives are to provide young people with credible messages and access to further information on climate change and what they can do about it, with opportunities to make a difference, and with recognition and rewards for their work towards emissions reduction.

## **2.6. Key Messages**

- “The Truth is Out There” – scientific evidence for climate change now exists; climate change is happening and it will have a significant impact on our lifestyle, and you can do something about it.
- Little actions can make a big difference, if practiced consistently over time.
- You can make a living changing the world. Young Canadians have knowledge and skills that can be put to use changing the world.
- Young Canadians are doing the right things: the rest of us should follow their example.
- Canada has to stand up straight on the global stage: we have the worst problem; we can make the biggest difference.

## 2.7. Specific objectives

- To create a concept of environmental citizenship among Canadian youth, through a blending of information and opportunities for action. This integrated sense of responsibility, knowledge and successful action is what will set Canadians apart in an era of globalization.
- To create and strengthen our young leaders, both to learn from them now and to prepare them to become tomorrow's decision makers.
- To reinforce and reward existing environmentally friendly lifestyles among youth, thereby delaying or reducing the adoption of greenhouse gas emitting practices **among all Canadians.**
- To strengthen and build upon existing institutions and services for young Canadians, both to recognize and reward work already being done, to support new work within those institutions, to avoid duplication, and to avoid drawing funding away from current activities.
- To advance private sector support for youth work on climate change.
- To gain global recognition and support for Canada's youth strategy.

## 2.8. Structure of the strategy

- We recommend an approach which will focus on three interrelated streams of activity:
  1. information and awareness campaigns,
  2. capacity building for youth, and
  3. community actions.
- We recommend a flexible, multiple project approach rather than investing in a single national campaign.
- We propose three target audiences, based on the broadest possible categorization – how they are occupied:
  - a) secondary school (our 13-17/18 age group)
  - b) college/university (our 17/18 –24 age group)
  - c) employed and unemployed youth (our 17/18 to 29 age group)Within these audience segments, multicultural perspectives, and in particular the perspectives of aboriginal youth must be incorporated; and specific regional issues must be responded to.

- Responsibility for the elaboration and implementation of the strategy can be assigned or contracted out at the stream level, at specific audience segments within that stream, or at the project category level within the stream.
- Intergenerational: A climate change campaign should reach out to everyone.
- Multisectoral: Business and industry need to be part of the solution.
- Inclusive: Youth need to be involved in all processes and stages of expanding and implementing the strategy.

## 2.9. Strategy Streams

We have built the youth strategy with information and awareness as the starting point. As young Canadians acquire a better understanding of the critical issues, opportunities should be immediately at hand for them to acquire leadership and employment skills, in order to work more effectively on the problem. **If information is the “head”, then this capacity building is the “heart”: over and over, we read and heard from youth that they want to work; they want to be engaged. This is a key “trigger” for the success of the strategy: by creating the right programs and partnerships, we have an opportunity to engage young Canadians to work in the public and private sectors to help us achieve our international commitments.** Finally, we have a stream for community actions, to keep climate change as personal and close to home as possible.

Within each stream, we have provided a selection of campaign ideas and on-the-ground projects. We have chosen these on the basis of their consistency with the objectives of the strategy, their practicality (or their innovation!), and their potential for intersecting with and enriching other strategies being developed by the PEO Issues Table.

## 2.10. Time Frame for strategy roll out

This is a 5-year strategy. By the end of five years, a significant proportion of the target audience will be over 30 and a new generation of teens will have entered this target audience. Changes in values and attitudes will be inevitable (not to mention changes in technologies and communications media). Therefore we recommend a complete evaluation of the strategy at the end of five years, followed by the design of new approaches to engage youth, building on the best practices from the original strategy and looking for innovation in the new generation.

## 2.11. Evaluation

**It is absolutely essential to establish good baseline data at the beginning of this strategy: otherwise, evaluation of increased levels of awareness and action at the end of the strategy will be subjective at best.**

We have made an effort to make the specific objectives of this strategy as tangible and measurable as possible. For each objective, we have tried to identify several indicators that the

objective has been attained. But without good baseline data on car ownership, alternative transportation, accommodation/living styles (and therefore household energy use), and more details on environmental views and values, we are reluctant at this stage to set percentage targets for most of the objectives.

### 3. Terms of Reference

IISD has been contracted by the Government of Canada to develop a youth strategy for public outreach on climate change, as part of the development of the Options Paper of the Public Education and Outreach (PEO) Issue Table.

The PEO Issue Table has requested two components to this strategy:

- Raising awareness among youth about climate change, its causes and potential impacts, and what individuals can do to reduce emissions.
- Motivating youth to take actions in their own lives to reduce emissions and to encourage others in their lives (peers, families, communities) to reduce emissions.

In bidding on this project, IISD noted that climate change is one of the most critical environmental crises facing our world – and if it is not addressed, its cumulative impacts will be inherited by the youth of today, affecting their ability to make a living and to thrive in the natural environment surrounding them. A climate change strategy must therefore be developed which engages young Canadians in understanding the issues and provides them with the knowledge, the stimulus, and, most important, the opportunity to work towards emissions reductions.

Our objectives in undertaking the assignment were:

- to develop a broadly-based strategy that would inform and engage young Canadians, from 13 to 29 years of age, to understand climate change and work towards emissions reductions;
- to work directly with young people in developing this strategy;
- to ensure that the messages for youth would be straightforward and realistic; and
- to include in the strategy the measures for its impact and success.

Our methodology for developing the strategy had five parts:

- a review of the Youth Round Table recommendations and the Climate Change Strategy Workshop with Métis Nation-Northwest Territories' Environmental Youth Corps
- a review of Canadian demographics and social trends research
- consultations with youth in ten focus groups across the country

Location	Target audience
Winnipeg (3)	high school; employed/ unemployed youth (including unemployed youth) force; aboriginal (with rural representation)
Saskatoon (1)	university/college (with rural representation)
Vancouver (1)	employed/ unemployed youth
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- consultations with youth via the Climate Change Youth Café on the Internet
- interviews with youth organizations and groups communicating on youth issues

In keeping with the PEO interest in strong youth involvement in the development of the strategy, two of IISD’s youth interns (one bilingual), and IISD’s youth program officer (ages ranging from under 24 to 27) were trained to lead and facilitate the focus group sessions. They also conducted the interviews with youth organizations, and prepared the recommendations and strategy options based on their findings. These findings are consistent with the views and recommendations of the Youth Round Table.

Selected statistics on young Canadians are provided in Appendix I. Details on the methodology, including the literature review, Round Table, workshop and focus group findings, people interviewed, and notes on the Climate Change Café, are provided in Appendices II- VII. Additional project ideas not included in the Strategy are attached in Appendix VIII. Appendix IX includes some recommendations related to education strategy and actions.

#### **4. A Note on communications, social marketing and engagement strategies**

The goal of communications and social marketing strategies is to bring about change from adverse ideas and behaviour or adoption of new ideas and behaviour.<sup>1</sup> It is generally accepted that these strategies are most effective when media and information campaigns are combined with personal interventions with the target group.

Based on our research, we believe that personal behaviour change alone on the issue of climate change is insufficient to lead to significant greenhouse gas reductions. Therefore communications and social marketing strategies, which tend to be designed for people at risk (smoking, drinking and driving, get fit programs) are not sufficient for our purposes. We have therefore looked carefully at a model of engagement: how do we turn knowledge into action, can small, individual actions be aggregated for greater benefit, and how do we ensure that the actions will have longer term benefits for the community, the country and the planet?

A number of elements are required for a strategy to be successful with the target group:

- Preexisting attitudes and values in the group as a whole that can be triggered and reinforced
- Multiple messages and actions that are tailored for different segments of the target group
- Absence of conflicting messages in the media used for the campaign
- Mechanisms that enable the group to translate motivation into action

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<sup>1</sup> Kotler, p25

- Positive results and rewards for changing or adopting the new ideas and behaviours and engaging in action

In conducting our focus group sessions, we used a modified “appreciative inquiry” approach, in order to look for these critical elements of success. We began by assessing the participants’ understanding of the issue, we then looked for the positive and personal “triggers” that would lead them to act, and we asked for their ideas on what would encourage their friends and colleagues to act as well.

## 5. Canadian Youth : A Profile

For the purposes of the strategy, we have defined the target group as young Canadians between the ages of 13 and 29.<sup>2</sup> **In Canada, there are 6.5 million youth between the ages of 15 and 29, or 22% of the total population of 30 million.**<sup>3</sup>

According to the statistics and social trends research, there is significant diversity in the status, social conditions and personal situations of young Canadians. Additional demographic information is provided in Appendix I.

People’s perceptions of young Canadians vary widely. Many youth leaders and workers we interviewed commented that youth are confronted with insecurity and instability in their lives. Many young people are primarily concerned with, even overwhelmed by, their education, health, employment and financial situations. Most youth today are preoccupied with day to day issues. But while they face many challenges and barriers ahead of them, youth “tend to be much more at ease than their elders with change and complexity.”<sup>4</sup> They have a strong sense of individualism, valuing personal freedom, rights and power -- although they do not necessarily desire to work for the public good.<sup>5</sup> But recent statistics show that Canadian youth between the ages of 15 and 24 are more likely in the late 1990s to be volunteers, with a participation rate of 33% -- higher than any other age group. And it is on the upswing, with an increase of 15% since 1987.<sup>6</sup> But the actual amount of time they spend volunteering is lower than other age groups, and that amount is dropping – 28% less time on average than 1987. Focus group participants and the youth organizations we interviewed all commented on the sense of isolation and lack of power that youth experience, and their need for respect from their peers, communities and elders. Youth leaders in particular seem to have a sense of frustration and

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<sup>2</sup> There is no one standard definition of youth. For example, Statistics Canada defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 to 19, followed by adults aged 20-24 and 25-29; the United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages 15 to 24. In our bid for the PEO RFP on the youth strategy, we suggested extending the age range to 29, partly to be consistent with the UN definition. Our information on the UN age range was incorrect at the time; however, we do still wish to be consistent with the federal Youth Employment Strategy which defines youth as persons between the ages of 17 to 29. The Canadian Youth Foundation concurs that the standard definition of youth must be expanded to include youth between the ages of 25-29 to reflect the changing reality of youth unemployment. Market researchers do not have a standard segmentation for youth audiences.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada 1996 census

<sup>4</sup> Adams, p102

<sup>5</sup> Bibby, 1992; Adams

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada, 1998, p30

despair, on two fronts: they can't get their own peers to keep working with them on environmental and social problems facing youth, and they feel that older Canadians, especially those in positions of power, are not listening to youth.

According to the report *Today's Leaders*, "youth have become socialized to a world of quick fix solutions to complex and deeply rooted economic, political and social challenges facing individuals and communities. For young people seeking direction in making life choices, current society offers few foundations on which to build their futures."<sup>7</sup> Bibby, in *Teen Trends*, is even more blunt: "When you think about it, today's teens have not seen many solutions in their lifetime."<sup>8</sup>

## 6. Research Findings: Critical Elements of Success for a Youth Strategy on Climate Change

### 6.1. Caveat: Will this strategy lead to measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions?

In researching and developing this strategy, we discovered several obstacles, which could prevent the successful attainment of information and behaviour change campaigns for this age group. Even if a percentage of Canadian youth did become more conscious of emissions-generating behaviour, we began to question whether campaigns targeted at this sector would result in any significant reductions to Canada's overall emissions. Individual lifestyle behaviours account for 25% of our greenhouse gas emissions<sup>9</sup>: for example, use of cars (45%) and energy consumption in homes (49%), not to mention airplane travel for pleasure and household wastes sent to landfills. Youth between the ages of 15 and 29 account for only 22% of the population; therefore one could say that their share of emissions is only about 5-6%. In fact, it is probably even lower than that, because:

- youth tend to live communally, either with family or friends, sharing heat and power in the home. Statistics Canada has noted recently that over 57% of youth between the ages of 20 and 24 are still living in the parental home.<sup>10</sup>
- youth tend more than adults to walk, use bicycles, carpool with adults and friends and take public transit, either because they are not yet drivers or they can't afford their own cars.

**If the driver behind the PEO Issue Table's need for a youth strategy is to reduce emissions within this group, one has to point out that the net reduction may be extremely limited.**

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<sup>7</sup> *Des Granges*, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Bibby, 1992, p283

<sup>9</sup> Environment Canada. <http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/co2/worksheet.html>

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.ca/daily/English/990311/d990311.htm>

Based on our review of social trends research in Canada, our focus groups and our interviews with youth organizations, we noted either the lack of critical elements for success or significant barriers to incorporating them into a strategy on climate change targeted **at all Canadian youth**. At the same time, through the focus groups and our interviews with youth organizations, we were encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of many of those consulted. Hundreds of ideas and recommendations were brought forward by young Canadians to make a climate change strategy work.

The following obstacles to and opportunities for a successful strategy, and recommended actions, are the direct findings of our research, our focus groups and our interviews. We have made every effort to ground the strategy goals, objectives, streams and timeframe in these realities. The bulleted recommendations are taken from our records of the focus group sessions, the summary of the Northwest Territories workshop, and our notes from interviews: we have used the words of the youth we have consulted with as much as possible. Readers may find some mixed signals and inconsistencies in the recommended actions; but we believe this adds to the dynamic nature of developing the strategy with young people, and does not invalidate our findings.

## **6.2. Preexisting attitudes and values in the group that can be triggered and reinforced**

### *Obstacles and opportunities*

Many young Canadians do not perceive a problem with the climate or a need for lifestyle changes. Other concerns are of greater importance than the environment, especially unemployment.<sup>11</sup> According to Environics President, Michael Adams, 67% of Canadian youth are either aimless, thrill-seeking materialists or social hedonists, with no desire to engage in social or environmental causes.<sup>12</sup> Reginald Bibby, in his 1992 survey, reported a significant lack of interest in youth groups.<sup>13</sup> This observation is supported by young adult services librarians, who noted that there are no environmental crusaders in today's 13-17 group.<sup>14</sup> More than half of young men and women (18-34) indicate that they have no extra time to do more in their lives than they are doing now.<sup>15</sup>

**However, Adams discovered that one third of young Canadians have respect for the environment and human rights as key values.<sup>16</sup> There may be significant overlap between this group and the one third of young Canadians who are volunteers.** This finding reinforces Bibby's earlier research in 1992 that youth born between 1973-77 (now aged 22-26) have strong environmental values and global perspectives. When asked about what

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<sup>11</sup> Bibby, 1995, p97

<sup>12</sup> Adams, p212-217

<sup>13</sup> Bibby, 1992, p189

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Young Adult Services Librarian, Saskatoon Public Library, February 1999

<sup>15</sup> Bibby, 1995, p90

<sup>16</sup> Adams, pp 212-217

Canada's priorities should be in finding solutions to global problems, 73% of his survey group placed environmental issues at the top of the list.<sup>17</sup>

**From our focus groups, we learned that youth saw climate change as a global problem, but they found it difficult to make it “personal”. As one participant said, “we don’t know what to do about it.”** In creating a cause and effect “tree” for climate change, most participants demonstrated a very basic understanding of the issue, but struggled with how climate change might impact on them. **We discovered that jobs and health were key triggers for them.** Youth leaders noted that while environmental values were strong, commitment to participate was “soft” – high turnover in environmental youth groups is a concern. Participants in the aboriginal focus group were able to talk about the environment at a more fundamental, passionate level – they felt more connected with the earth. In a report from the workshop held with Métis youth in the Northwest Territories the case was similar. “Métis youth easily identified with the impact of climate change in their lives. This is because of their connection with, and respect for the land.” We were not able to identify significant differences between urban and rural points of view on the environment and climate change. Apart from a somewhat stronger sense of “ecologism” on the west coast, we were also not able to identify significant regional variations in awareness and attitudes.

*Actions recommended from focus groups and interviews*

- Reinforce youth's current awareness of environmental matters, rather than focusing just on climate change. Encourage widespread dissemination of information on environmental issues to continue to raise awareness among youth.
- Encourage greater sharing of values and viewpoints of aboriginal youth, and youth from other cultures. Aboriginal youth believed strongly that respect for the earth should be everyone's responsibility.
- Northern youth believed that youth should lead by example and respect the land.
- Highlight individual causes and effects of climate change. Produce more information materials on climate change illustrating its global and local dimensions, its origins, personal impacts and how environmental degradation effects the economy and our way of life.
- Messages should come through the education system – “That's where all the kids are”. Poster campaigns are effective; Schoolnet is accessible. Integrate environmental education into school curricula from Grade 1 on. Youth should be educated on issues like climate change in an interactive participatory environment where they have the opportunity to be heard and to share their opinions and ideas as well as to be listened to. They are more apt to accept information if they are involved in the process. Establish training programs for teachers on the environmental aspects of their subject matter (not just science classes) to enable them to educate youth concerning environmentally friendly habits.
- Employment is a leading concern among youth. Connect the work needed to mitigate or adapt to climate change to employment opportunities.

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<sup>17</sup> Bibby, 1992, p163

- Health is a leading concern. Show how an environmentally friendly lifestyle will improve their health, and make the world a better place at the same time.
- Put a national climate change strategy into a global context. Build on the global perspectives and concerns of youth, but connect the strategy back to the community and their own lives. Provide first hand experience to youth. They are more motivated to act or care about an issue if they can see how it affects them personally.
- Reinforce current non-emissions producing behaviour (living communally, taking public transit, etc.). Extend the number of years that this audience keeps a lower consumption lifestyle.
- Setting examples can reach out to youth. Youth may follow examples set in the schools, the community and by peers and celebrities. Youth will listen to young and famous persons speaking to them about the issue. Encourage positive role models and messages.

### **6.3. Segmentation of the target group; tailoring of multiple messages and actions for each segment**

#### *Obstacles and opportunities*

Statistics Canada surveys data alone highlights the great diversity within the target group. Development and implementation of a climate change strategy to reach all youth in all age segments, with differing levels of education, from all cultural backgrounds, employed and unemployed, in all regions of the country could be too simplistic, difficult to measure effectively, and costly to run.

**From our focus groups, we found that those audiences most receptive to a climate change strategy would be youth actively involved in high school studies and extra-curricular work (13-17); aboriginal youth and northern youth; and the leaders or “early adopters” of environmental messages -- youth already involved in environmental and social movements. Social networks are strong among youth: with the successful engagement of one or more target groups, messages and commitments to action may well be carried to others.**

#### *Actions recommended from focus groups and interviews*

- There is no one strategy that will be effective in reaching out to young people on climate change. Many approaches are needed at the same time. Campaigns, programs, policies that affect youth must be built on an awareness and respect of the many differences among youth, rather than on an assumption that all youth are alike. The educational system and communities must implement a diversity of programs to involve youth.
- It may be more effective to tailor the strategy to those youth most likely to listen and be motivated to act. For early results, focus first on young leaders, on the “already converted” or “early adopters” of environmental values. Their messages and efforts will influence their peers, families and communities.
- Young Canadians value their individuality; they need a wide variety of options to participate in.

#### 6.4. Effective use of media

##### *Obstacles and opportunities*

Youth are consumers of mass media: Canadian teenagers watch 17.3 hours of television a week; and television viewing seems to increase with age.<sup>18</sup> **But any TV ad campaign on climate change is going to run into direct conflict with other messages of consumption and personal transportation. How can a climate change ad providing information on the negative impacts of cars compete against a Nissan Pathfinder ad which states that their vehicle makes nature more civilized?**

Through media awareness campaigns, youth are becoming more media savvy. As one person puts it, “They have been deluged with advertising since age two, and they have accurate crap detectors. They don’t want to be dissed (disrespected) of their intelligence and ability to process a marketing strategy.”<sup>19</sup>

Youth do not rely solely on media for their information, tending to test media information with their friends (Did you see the ad for product x?) before responding to the ad by buying the product.<sup>20</sup> They exchange Internet web site information in the same way. **This two step information flow, media to friends, leading only then to action, should be considered in the development and evaluation of the reach of an engagement strategy.**

Youth are also consumers of alternative media, which tend either not to carry messages of mass consumerism, or advocate strongly against it (for example, Adbusters and its Buy Nothing Day campaign.) They are the early adopters of the Internet: reported statistics of Internet use (daily or weekly) vary between 25 and 30%. In 1997, an Angus Reid study of 16 to 30 year olds concluded that 6 in 10 report internet access at home (58%), at school (43%), at work (23%), or through a public library (12%).<sup>21</sup> Eight out of ten students use the Internet.<sup>22</sup>

Our focus groups participants all indicated that they did listen and respond to TV ad campaigns. They liked the anti-racism and drunk driving campaigns, and took notice of messages that were shocking, with hard facts and graphic images. They also liked poster campaigns in schools, although they noted that there are already too many of those campaigns around. With respect to the Internet, it will be more difficult to use the Internet as a primary outreach vehicle for youth – youth are avid users of chat rooms for meeting people and talking about sports, stars, etc – but they do not engage in discussion groups on environmental and social issues. We observed this problem with our Climate Change Youth Café – we had a number of “lurkers”, looking for information, but very few youth actually submitted a comment. However, many of our focus groups participants stated that they use the Internet extensively for information and research.

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<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/pgdb/people/culture/arts23.htm>

<sup>19</sup> (Shelly Reese, the Quality of Cool **Error! Bookmark not defined.**)

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Reginald Bibby, February 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Information provided by Environment Canada Climate Change Bureau staff

<sup>22</sup> Nielsen Media Research and the CBC, cited in the Globe and Mail, November 26, 1998.

*Actions recommended from focus groups and interviews*

- “No cheesy ad campaigns” was one clear message from 13-17 year olds. Ads should be meaningful and should not talk down to youth.
- A hard hitting TV campaign might be influential, so long as it is not the principal focus of the strategy, and clearly provides an opportunity for youth to respond with concrete actions.
- TV campaigns do not seem to be as big an issue with aboriginal youth, although they noted that aboriginal radio and the new cable channel will be excellent vehicles to send messages to this audience.
- Very targeted ad campaigns on individual channels (MTV, Discovery, Cartoon Network, etc.) could be effective, if they are focused on a single cause and effect of climate change and reinforce messages they are already hearing. For example,
  - “Plant a tree: breath easier” (with shots of car exhaust, smokestacks etc, in the background)
- National ad campaigns on education, training, volunteer and future employment opportunities in the climate change field may also be effective:
  - “Learn how to make a difference for the world”.
- Specific outreach activities that reach youth are necessary, such as programs at the YMCA, having speakers in classrooms or through popular TV shows such as Bill Nye the science guy, cartoons, and Street Cents.
- Conflicting messages within TV programs should be changed (“Why does no one on Beverly Hills 90210 take the bus?”). There is less smoking in TV programs than there used to be; and everyone puts on a seatbelt. Maybe something could be done on climate change messages.
- Campaigns need to become affiliated or integrated with events already known to youth such as Earth Day or Canada Day.
- Northern youth believed that educating people by word of mouth, in the far north, is an effective, affordable and acceptable way to mobilize communities.
- Youth may respond well to a cool video game on climate change or an interactive CD-ROM. Climate change web sites with solid content, hard facts, and practical information on what they can do will be needed.

## **6.5. The knowledge-behaviour gap: translating motivation into action**

*Obstacles and opportunities*

The knowledge – behaviour gap has to be overcome. (For example: 80% of sexually active teens see AIDS as a problem; but 1 in 3 admit it hasn’t led them to alter their sexual behaviour.<sup>23</sup>) **Almost all of our focus groups identified this gap, pointing out that young people know about recycling, but they don’t do it.** Trends in volunteering – signing up for more volunteer events, but not spending as much time, may also be symptomatic of the

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<sup>23</sup> Bibby, 1995, p71

knowledge-behaviour gap. Youth have identified that they often either don't know how to get involved, or they need to be asked by someone they know before joining volunteer activities.<sup>24</sup>

**Another reason for the gap could be that youth respond negatively to the knowledge-behaviour gap in their elders and authority figures: why should they change, if no one else is? Also, as noted above, youth have not seen many solutions to global problems. As a result, youth neither trust institutional mechanisms for problem solving, nor do they have successful models upon which to base their own actions.**

Our focus groups consistently noted problems with our current institutions, which make it even more difficult for youth to turn motivation into action:

- Government support for youth activities in any field is inconsistent and short term “flavour of the month” funding.
- Educational institutions are inflexible, partly through insufficient resources, but also curriculum development is rigid, with little opportunity left for teachers to be creative and to engage youth in longer, hands-on projects that might last a whole semester. Multi-disciplinary programs in colleges and universities are still limited.
- Although the economy is relatively good, youth unemployment is still high: there is a sense among youth that private sector businesses do not want to employ youth, and when they do, they are not open to the ideas and new approaches, technologies, etc. that youth can implement.

*Actions recommended from focus groups and interviews*

- **A climate change strategy must focus on older Canadians and Canadian institutions as well as youth. Youth must see real commitment and action on behalf of their elders and their institutions before they will begin to respond in greater numbers themselves. This does not preclude creating opportunities for youth leaders to set an example; but we believe that in order to engage broader youth participation in climate change work, and to keep the commitment of youth leaders, there will need to be visible commitment and action from other Canadians.**
- Northern youth noted that youth should lead by example; that youth to youth education is necessary, as is youth to community for broader education. It is our interpretation that participants in the northern workshop are recommending that youth can and should take opportunities to influence adults.
- The strategy must increase forms of partnerships between the government, private sector, educational system, NGO's, churches, sports groups, and so forth to promote major initiatives for emissions reduction for, by and with youth. Develop collaboration, communication and coordination between the stakeholders.
- Build more partnerships among youth organizations and reach out to other potential partners who deal with similar issues.

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<sup>24</sup> Caring Canadians, involved Canadians, p30.

## **A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change**

- Plan activities that can involve more youth, but for shorter periods of time – requiring less time commitment. Work with the “snowball” effect: the more young people involved, the more of their peers who will help too.
- In order for youth participation to be effective, involvement must be meaningful. Youth will become involved if the issues or decisions are interesting and stimulating. Give them opportunities to research, organize conferences, work on science projects, meet the people working on the issues and directly work on the issues themselves.
- Provide mechanisms to allow youth to be involved in decision making: hire more youth in policy and planning positions (both in the public and private sectors), and give them opportunities to participate in international conferences and high level meetings. Avoid tokenism.
- Promote volunteer programs, training programs for environmental technologies and management. Connect this with future employment opportunities.

## **6.6. Positive results and rewards for changing old ideas and behaviours or adopting new ideas and behaviours**

### *Obstacles and opportunities*

With climate change, there is an enormous gap between action and gratification, or tangible results: while a young person who stops smoking might experience an immediate improvement in health, an individual who starts taking the bus everyday is not going to see an immediate stabilization of weather patterns.

While youth may not see an immediate reduction and corresponding environmental response/reparation, there may be other ways to reward their actions. Our focus groups commented again and again that young people needed to be recognized, respected and rewarded for their contributions and accomplishments. In particular, there needs to be value attached to their volunteer work, in order to engage youth at the community level.

### *Actions recommended from focus groups and interviews*

- Identify good environmental/climate change practices, what works and what doesn't work, and reward what does – through prizes, press releases, Internet communications, and so forth. The strategy should provide incentives and rewards for youth who are making an impact in their community to reduce green house gas emissions because it reinforces their positive behavior. Inspiring stories of other successes are important to let youth know that they are working as a team with other peers and with older Canadians, not only as individuals.
- Focus on community projects, on the little things people can do to have an impact on climate change.
- Northern youth noted in particular that actions should focus on changing transportation habits, reducing home energy use and improving insulation, and better handling of waste (including not burning plastic or rubber, and proper disposal of toxics like paint and oil).
- A personal “CO2 calculator” or environmental impact monitor could be designed for grade school and high school students, so they can measure each day the effect they are having on their surroundings, both positive and negative.
- Profile in the media the environmentally friendly lifestyles of youth: Youth actions will be rewarded through the media attention; but the attention will also send positive messages to adults about better lifestyles.
- Active meaningful youth participation takes time and a youth strategy should take this into consideration.

## 7. An Engagement Strategy for Canadian Youth

### 7.1. Goals and Objectives

Based on our findings, we are proposing a strategy that focuses on youth as leaders and as participants working for change within their communities and country. This is an engagement strategy rather than a marketing strategy. **The goal is to engage the energy, enthusiasm and values of youth to work with their families, school and work colleagues and friends to reduce the 25% of emissions from personal lifestyles and to work with communities, the private sector and government to make significant inroads on reducing the 75% of emissions coming from our businesses and industries.**

The broad objectives are to provide young people with credible messages and access to further information on climate change and what they can do about it, with opportunities to make a difference, and with recognition and rewards for their work towards emissions reduction.

### 7.2. Key Messages

- “The Truth is Out There” – scientific evidence for climate change now exists; climate change is happening and it will have a significant impact on our lifestyle, and you can do something about it.
- Little actions can make a big difference, if practiced consistently over time.
- You can make a living changing the world. Young Canadians have knowledge and skills that can be put to use changing the world.
- Young Canadians are doing the right things: the rest of us should follow their example.
- Canada has to stand up straight on the global stage: we have the worst problem; we can make the biggest difference.

### 7.3. Specific objectives

Concrete, measurable objectives are required for any strategy. For each objective, we have tried to identify several indicators that the objective has been attained. Without good baseline data, we were reluctant to set percentage targets for most of the objectives.

- To create a concept of environmental citizenship among Canadian youth, through a blending of information and opportunities for action. This integrated sense of responsibility, knowledge and successful action is what will set Canadians apart in an era of globalization.
  - Canadian youth aged 13-29 will recognize the strategy’s messages; demonstrate an increased understanding of climate change and have an agreement with the messages.
  - Youth in this same group will participate in at least one hands-on activity within the strategy streams for community action and capacity building for youth.

- To create and strengthen our young leaders, both to learn from them now and to prepare them to become tomorrow's decision-makers.
  - The numbers of young Canadians volunteering in environmental activities will increase; their average time commitment to those activities will increase.
  - There will be an increase in youth employed in climate change – related policy, technology and management in Canada and abroad.
  
- To reinforce and reward existing environmentally friendly lifestyles among youth, thereby delaying or reducing the adoption of greenhouse gas emitting practices **among all Canadians**.
  - As a result of driver education programs and other transportation related projects, young people will either buy a car at a later date or choose to buy a car that is more environmentally friendly; when they do buy a car, they will maintain it properly; also they will continue to use other means of transportation (public transit, bikes, etc.).
  - Young people and older Canadians will become encouraged to travel locally, reducing airplane travel.
  - Through awards programs (such as the proposed GHG emissions reduction certificate/award), there will be an increase in the number of youth who as a regular practice, seek to improve the energy efficiency and reduce energy uses within their homes and businesses.
  
- To strengthen and build upon existing institutions and services for young Canadians, both to recognize and reward work already being done, to support new work within those institutions, and to avoid drawing funding away from current activities.
  - There will be an increase in the number of volunteer and NGO projects and actions related to climate change, among organizations both within and outside of the traditional environmental community.
  - Mechanisms will be created to communicate information about projects underway and share knowledge about what works.
  - More youth will become involved in organizations working on climate change.
  
- To advance private sector support for youth work on climate change.
  - There will be an increase in the contracting and hiring of young Canadians in private sector work related to climate change.
  - Through the leadership and participation of young employees, corporate cultures will change: energy and waste audits will be conducted, alternative transportation options encouraged (public transit, carpooling, work from home days), climate change friendly office practices instituted.
  - More private sector funding will be available for community actions related to climate change.

- To gain global recognition and support for Canada's youth strategy
  - Youth from other countries will learn about the work of Canadian youth; will provide advice from their own experience and will join in international partnerships.
  - Specific streams and activities from this strategy will be utilized in / adapted for other countries.
  - Canadian youth activities will attract international sources of financing.

#### 7.4. Structure of the strategy

- We recommend an approach which will focus on three interrelated streams of activity:
  1. information and awareness campaigns,
  2. capacity building for youth, and
  3. community actions.
- We recommend a flexible, multiple project approach rather than investing in a single national campaign. This approach is more responsive both to the diversity of youth and diversity of funding and other resources available. We have grouped possible projects by broad categories of actions.
- Within the three streams, projects should be developed which account for the diversity of Canadian youth. At this stage of strategy development, we propose three target audiences, based on the broadest possible categorization – how they are occupied:
  1. secondary school (our 13-17/18 age group)
  2. college/university (our 17/18 –24 age group)
  3. the employed/ unemployed youth(our 17/18 to 29 age group)Within these audience segments, multicultural perspectives, and in particular the perspectives of aboriginal youth must be incorporated; and specific regional issues must be responded to.
- Responsibility for the elaboration and implementation of the strategy can be assigned or contracted out at the stream level, at specific audience segments within that stream, or at the project category level within the stream.
- Intergenerational: A climate change campaign should reach out to everyone. Opportunities should be created for young people and adults to work together. Campaigns must be easy, accessible and convenient for youth to participate. Projects need to encourage interaction, information and knowledge sharing, and participation among the community as a whole.
- Multisectoral: Business and industry need to be part of the solution. More integration between the economy and the environment is needed.
- Inclusive: Youth need to be involved in all processes and stages of expanding and implementing the strategy. They need to know where their input will go and how it will make

a difference (the kind of decisions or impacts they can affect, realistic timelines for change, and what they can expect to see). Youth must participate further in the design, planning and delivery of an outreach campaign, ads, projects, and other aspects of this strategy.

## 8. Strategy Streams

The following streams -- information and awareness, capacity building and community action -- emerged directly out of our research findings. An education stream was originally built into this strategy. At the request of the Youth Working Group, we have removed this stream, which will be dealt with by the Education Working Group. **Nevertheless, we remind the Youth Working Group that we were requested to develop this strategy in close consultation with youth, and that as much as possible, youth should be the designers of this strategy. Youth participants in our focus groups without exception insisted that climate change must be taught in the schools. Our emphasis on education as the lead stream came from the youth themselves. Education is also important to the success of the capacity building stream: young Canadians will need the climate change science and socio-economic causes and impacts in their education and training in order to be able to work in this field. We hope, therefore, that the ideas brought forward on education will be incorporated into an education strategy. We also hope that such a strategy will be acted upon quickly.**

Our youth participants also commented on the demand for more information, and on the need to make climate change practical and personal by providing opportunities for work and action within the community, hand in hand with adults.

We have therefore built the youth strategy with information and awareness as the starting point. As young Canadians acquire a better awareness of the critical issues, opportunities should be immediately at hand for them to acquire leadership and employment skills, in order to work more effectively on the problem. If information is the “head”, then this capacity building is the “heart”: over and over, we read and heard from youth that they want to work; they want to be engaged. **This is a key “trigger” for the success of the strategy: by creating the right programs and partnerships, we have an opportunity to engage young Canadians to work in the public and private sectors to help us achieve our international commitments.** Finally, we have a stream for community actions, to keep climate change as personal and close to home as possible.

Within each stream, we have provided a selection of campaign ideas and on-the-ground projects. We have chosen these on the basis of their consistency with the objectives of the strategy, their practicality (or their innovation!), and their potential for intersecting with and enriching other strategies being developed by the PEO Issues Table. The projects are drawn from a longer list of ideas proposed by focus group participants, youth organizations we interviewed, and our own strategy development team. The full list of project ideas is in Appendix VIII. Projects, which may be relevant to the development of a separate Education Strategy, are listed in Appendix IX.

At the request of the Youth Working Group, we have also provided a very brief annotation on the feasibility and impact of each project.

### 8.1. Stream 1: Information and Awareness Campaigns

The information and awareness campaigns focus on increasing young people’s knowledge and access to information on climate change. We have identified several broad categories of work within this stream:

- a) Mainstream media campaigns, both to profile and reward youth for their low GHG-emitting lifestyles, and to catalyze youth to take notice of the problem and look for more information and ways to become engaged.
- b) Direct marketing tools – primarily the infrastructure of the call centre/web site used in more traditional direct marketing campaigns, to provide information.
- c) Web marketing campaigns, as innovative new ways to catch the attention of youth
- d) Community awareness and education: youth using local community media (local newspapers, local cable shows) to talk about climate change.
- e) Special promotions and events, emphasizing novelty and entertainment.

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility & Impact
<b>Mainstream Media Campaigns</b>			
<i>Youth to Adult Communications</i>			
National TV/magazine ad campaign	Prepared by professional ad agency. Profile youth and their environmental awareness to adults: use youth as role models.	Older Canadians; All youth	Easy to organize; expensive to execute; impact will be moderate.
<i>Youth to Youth Communications</i>			
TV / magazine ad competition for youth	‘Climate Change Ad Challenge’ in which youth compete to produce locally and nationally broadcast advertisements. Outlets for ads include mainstream TV, specialty channels and aboriginal television, ads in movie theatres, poster campaigns, ads in youth market magazines. Sponsoring private sector corporations would provide judges and funds to produce advertising material. <i>Modeled on Health Canada’s Anti-Smoking campaign</i> <i>Note: video contest for K-9 already funded under CCAF</i>	All	Time consuming to organize; private sector sponsorships needed to reduce costs; impact will be high.
<b>Direct marketing</b>			

## A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility & Impact
Climate Change "Call Centre" or Information Centre	<p>This would be the central point of information for youth (and adults) to get more information about climate change, and to learn about projects they can participate in, or individual actions they can take themselves. <i>Environment Canada has already established a 1-800 line. We recommend that this "call centre" be staffed by youth.</i></p> <p>Key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Information pamphlets on causes and effects of climate change</li> <li>b) Database of projects by community/region so youth would know where to go to get involved</li> <li>c) Individual actions suggestions</li> </ul>	All	Easy to organize; low impact but a necessary infrastructure piece.
Climate Change Facts Campaign	Climate change facts posted on YTV, Much Music and other youth-oriented programs; printed on fast food court tray inserts, on food packaging and in youth market magazines.	All	Private sector support required; time consuming; moderate impact
<b>Internet media</b>			
Climate Change Web site	<p>An extensive Web site, or <b>network of Web sites</b>, will need to be established to complement all other aspects of the Youth Strategy.</p> <p><i>Intersects with Climate Protection Solutions Web site funded under CCAF.</i></p> <p><i>Environment Canada has contracted IISD to prepare a separate report on how to develop a Youth Climate Change web site. If any work is to be done in building awareness and commitment among young Canadians to help with climate change impacts and greenhouse gas reductions, <u>it is absolutely essential that a well developed Web site be available for them to consult and interact with.</u></i></p>	All	Essential to do. Also easy to organize; moderate costs; high secondary impact.
Games and simulations	Develop an online and CD-ROM game where the effects of Climate Change are produced or mitigated by universal patterns of consumption, exploitation, agriculture, and other causes. Cool graphics in exciting ecological zones (rain forest versus alpine, taigo versus maritime) would enhance its playability. Independent decisions lead to catastrophe or redemption. Think Myst.	Secondary School	Development costs can escalate when programming games and simulations. Impact restricted to slightly younger audience (10-16).

## A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility & Impact
	Set up a Climate Change Clock on the web, in the form of a simulation, aggregating current consumption and tying that to global climate activities and catastrophes.	All	Impact could be high. Development costs may be more manageable if variables kept simple.
Internet Advertising	Screensavers, wallpaper, and electronic postcards with climate change messages are distributed to schools, organizations and companies. National or provincial design contests held in educational institutions.	All	Moderate design costs; organizing competition straightforward; easy to deliver results; impact moderate
Ad Banners on youth-market web sites (eg, Games sites, chat rooms)	<p>Campaign designing web banners to appear on Internet game sites. Launched through local community centres, art schools and design shops.</p> <p><i>Modeled on IISD's ad banner on Yahoo: Think Global Warming is a Good Thing? Think Again! ... with links to climate change information</i></p>	All	Easy to do; moderate costs; low-moderate impact. Requires strong predeposition to the issue to follow the link from the ad banner.
<b>Community Awareness and Education</b>			
Weekly Newspaper Column	Initiate a regular (weekly or daily) column in local newspapers that discusses issues related to climate change with articles written by young people. Some examples of possible topics include: describing how climate change has affected northern native land; introducing some of the major players in climate change politics; discussing proposed solutions such as carbon tax; and illustrating the linkages between environmental and other problems such as poverty. These articles can also be distributed either as a book about climate change, on a web site, or as a teaching resource package at various levels.	Secondary school University / College Employed/ unemployed youth	Time consuming to organize; requires private sector support from newspapers; would benefit from strong link to education strategy; high local impact.

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Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility & Impact
Community Cable TV shows	This is particularly popular and effective in the north. Youth can develop either full shows on local climate change impacts and ways to reduce emissions; or produce short clips that can be shown throughout the cable broadcast day.	All	Time consuming to organize; requires private sector support from newspapers; would benefit from strong link to education strategy; high local impact
"Each one teach one"	Northern youth identified oral communication as key to building community awareness. A "Climate Change Awareness" project could be designed along the lines of literacy campaigns, using the "Each one teach one" approach.	Focus on northern and aboriginal youth	Time consuming to organize; would benefit from strong link to education strategy; high impact with very small audience
Driver Education	<b>We believe that Driver Education and Training courses, offered through high schools, private companies and associations, are excellent venues for informing youth about the impact of emissions from motor vehicles. Materials on proper car handling and maintenance, choices in fuel, what to consider when buying a used car, etc. could be developed for inclusion in driver education courses.</b>	All	<b>High, broad impact; will be more effective if provincial depts. of motor vehicles are involved.</b>
<b>Promotions and Events</b>			
Hands across the Trans-Canada Trail	<b>This is one of our favourite concepts for a campaign: It touches the preexisting environmental values of youth, their desire to get out and do things, the connection with "stars" (role models) and their ability to use new technologies and media to communicate.</b> Youth from all regions or eco-zones, including aboriginal and rural communities, walk their part of the trail, videotaping the environmental impacts. Tapes could be passed on to the next "crew" and results posted on the Internet as the trip progresses. Canadian artists could produce theme music for the tour.	All	High, broad impact. Time consuming, needs private sector support; involves a multitude of partners. A lot of work, but we think it would be well worth it.

## A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility & Impact
Climate Change Friendly Air Miles	An incentive program that rewards consumers with points to enjoy local attractions or travel.	All	Difficult to execute – requires a lot of negotiations with travel organizations
Climate Change Express	Zero-waste Buses powered by Hydrogen Fuel cells, with displays on climate change impacts on various Canadian eco-zones, travel across the country to provide climate change resources to schools and community groups. As part of the program, bus staff provide opportunities for interactive learning through popular theatre, aboriginal learning circles or participatory games.  <i>Modeled in part after the Global Change Game.</i>	Secondary school	Easy to do: lots of experience to draw on. Low-moderate impact.
Demonstration Cars and Races	The Solar Cars and Electric Cars developed by Canadian engineering students and the private sector should be displayed at shopping malls. Climate change pamphlets / posters would be handed out, with contact information for the Call Centre. More Corporate Sponsorship for the Solar Car Races and Electric Car Races should be encouraged.  <b>We suspect that more awareness of new low emissions cars may encourage youth to delay purchasing automobiles until these cars are on the market. But price point will be a major barrier. <u>It will be a major conflicting message to youth if only older, well-off Canadians can afford “environmental citizenship”.</u></b>	Secondary school; University/ College	Needs a lot of coordination with car designers, car makers, and venues for displays/races May have greater impact if combined with driver education program
Booths at colleges and trade fairs	<i>Multi media Exchange Tour already funded under CCAF.</i>		Easy to do; low impact

### 8.2. Stream 2: Capacity Building for Youth

As mentioned above, this is the “heart” of the strategy. Youth need to be provided with opportunities to develop their skills, training and experience. Young people are concerned with gaining meaningful employment. They also need to be given opportunities to participate in decision-making processes both at the national and international level, to broaden their perspectives and hone their leadership abilities. By encouraging youth to seek their own answers and define their solutions, stakeholders can help youth to realize the impact and significance of their actions and decisions.

## A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility
<b>Employment Strategies</b>			
Climate Change Internship and Exchange: National and International programs	<p>Provide opportunities for recent graduates to gain experience, and possible future employment, on climate change related policy, technology and implementation in Canada and in other countries.</p> <p>The national program would provide young graduates with opportunities in both the public and private sectors. The international program could be set up as an exchange program where a Canadian organization would provide a Canadian intern to an overseas agency; and receive a youth intern from that country in exchange; thereby creating more opportunities for sharing knowledge about what works in climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p><i>Modeled on the federal government's Youth Internship program, and IISD's 'Young Canadian Leaders for a Sustainable Future' Program</i></p>	Employed/ unemployed youth	Models already exist; easy to establish program. Very high impact with smaller audience (youth leaders, those trained in climate change work).
Indigenous Environmental Exchange	<p>Provide reciprocal opportunities for aboriginal youth to live and work overseas in other indigenous communities to share experiences and knowledge on climate change and other environmental issues. Upon return, participants transfer what they learned to their home communities.</p>	Employed/ unemployed youth	High impact with limited audience
Youth (including Aboriginal youth) Environmental Entrepreneurs Program	<p>Provide grants / low interest loans for self-employment opportunities for youth interested in working in the climate change field such as providing environmental products or services to reduce greenhouse gases.</p>	Employed/ unemployed youth	Needs support from financial institutions; once that is in place, should be straightforward to administer program. High impact with limited audience.
Climate Change Career Program	<p>High school students job-shadow professionals or civil servants working on various aspects of climate change, and receive course credits for participation.</p>	Secondary school	Needs connection to education system; not expensive to set up but time consuming; impact low-moderate
Climate change job bank	<p>Internet registry of Climate change related jobs in both the private sector, include high tech sector, and the public sector, including policy and planning positions, and positions within NGOs and universities.</p> <p><i>Modeled on IISD's SD Job Bank</i></p>	Employed/ unemployed youth:	Model exists now; easy to do; low cost; high impact with limited audience.
<b>Networking Opportunities</b>			

## A Youth Strategy for Public Outreach on Climate Change

Project	Description	Target Audience	Feasibility
Climate Change Youth Knowledge Network	Form a North-South youth knowledge network on climate change: this network of youth organizations working on climate change around the world will address the issue from a youth perspective, looking at critical issues such as access to credible information, advocacy work, communication barriers and technological applications. <i>Based on IISD and IDRC's work on Knowledge Networks.</i>	University/ College  Employed/ unemployed youth	Requires an institution to anchor the network; International funding may be available; High impact with limited audience.
<b>Awards and Funding</b>			
GHG reduction Awards	A competition in which youth have the opportunity to win national recognition for their work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in their homes, schools or workplaces. Private sector sponsorship.	Secondary school University/ College Employed/ unemployed youth	Models exist; Difficult to organize but not costly to do: figuring out how to measure the reduction in order to give the award will be tricky. Moderate impact with broader audience
Youth Climate Change Fund (sub-fund under the Climate Change Action Fund)	This fund provides access to funds a) for innovative academic research in the area of climate change for undergraduate/graduate work b) school / community projects on climate change c) individual youth projects on climate change. Only youth can apply.	Secondary school University/ College Employed/ unemployed youth	Easy to do; high impact with limited audience

### 8.3. Stream 3: Community Actions

We believe that it is important to provide concrete actions that everyone in the community can take to mitigate the effects of climate change. **Youth should not just be a target of the message; they can be the bearers of the message by working with their family, friends and neighbours to persuade them to take action in their own lives.** In our research findings, we noted the “two-step” process of communications among young people: from media to friends. That process trickles down even further, into family and neighbourhoods. Projects that support youth participation and promotion of sustainable livelihoods within their community will be the most effective. We have selected four categories for action:

- a) awareness – which intersects with the broader information and awareness campaigns above
- b) transportation – of great interest to youth, who usually don't have their own cars, need support for their alternative transportation methods, and would often like to continue with those methods rather than succumbing to the car culture.

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- c) conservation and nature – consistent with the personal, positive connections many youth have with the environment (camping, sports and so forth).
- d) Energy efficiency – one of the few areas in which it may be possible to measure more concrete emissions reductions results.

Project	Description	Target Age	Feasibility
<b>Community Awareness</b>			
Toolkits for Community Groups	Develop information kits for municipalities	All	Models exist; straightforward to create but moderately expensive to produce; moderate impact.
Community youth groups	Provide community groups such as Scouts & Guides with climate change information and requirements for earning a 'Climate Change' badge.	Secondary school	Time consuming to organize but may be low cost and may have high impact in this segment.
<b>Transportation</b>			
Bike to Work/School Days	Civic or organizational events either self-organized or as part of a provincial or national campaign.	Secondary school University/College Employed/ unemployed youth	If combined with event such as Earth Day, may be easy and inexpensive to organize and promote. Moderate impact with broad audience
Active and Safe Routes to Schools	<i>Already funded under CCAF</i>	Secondary school	
Municipal Transit Contest	<b>Note: we struggled a bit with the issue of municipal transit projects: our basic concern is to find ways to make it easier for young people to do simple things (eg, ride a bike) for longer periods of time. Over and over we heard about bike lanes, safe spots to lock up bikes, cheaper bus fares, more buses, etc.</b> The problem comes back to whether municipalities are willing / able to respond. Our proposal is a municipal transit contest, where youth submit their urban traffic planning designs to show cities how to "green" their traffic corridors.	All	Difficult to organize; impact may be limited
Local Travel Promotions	Youth-oriented travel agencies like Travel Cuts feature or promote local travel.	Secondary school University/College Employed/ unemployed youth	May be difficult to sell the concept to travel agencies who make their money off charters etc.
<b>Conservation and Nature</b>			

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<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Target Age</b>	<b>Feasibility</b>
Youth Turf: Community Green Spaces	Youth managed community green spaces in which school groups, environmental clubs or other groups 'adopt' a green space or create a new one in the community.	Secondary school University/College	Can be included in Community Tool kit; leave it to communities to pick up the idea. Low-moderate impact; needs longer time frame to be useful
National Tree Planting Campaign	A 'National Tree Planting Day' where students and youth groups plants trees. This would be accompanied by an information session on climate change and the role of forests in climate change mitigation.	Secondary school Employed/ unemployed youth	Again, could link to another national event, like Canada Day. Moderately expensive, unless private sector sponsors the trees. Risk of failure if trees not cared for.
Aboriginal Earth Retreat Program I	Provide opportunities for urban aboriginal youth to reconnect with the environment. Building upon traditional practices of giving back to the Earth, the program would allow urban youth to spend time in the wilderness, revisit Aboriginal song and dance and conduct traditional ceremonies. Community elders would participate in this program to provide guidance.	Secondary school University/College Employed/ unemployed youth	High impact with limited audience. Funding will be required.
Aboriginal Earth Retreat Program II	Provide opportunities for aboriginal youth to share their traditional connection with the environment with non-native youth. Youth participants would spend time in the wilderness, learn Aboriginal song and dance and observe traditional ceremonies.  Traditional Northern and aboriginal values, of using all that you take and not wasting anything, could be emphasized in this retreat.	Secondary school University/College Employed/ unemployed youth	Non-native youth may be willing to cover costs of their participation in the retreat; but difficult to organize; many risks; nevertheless may have high impact with limited audience.
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>			
Community Energy Efficiency Training Programs for Youth	These short workshops would illustrate how environmental technologies are usable in homes, schools and workplaces. Information would be included on topics as energy efficient lightbulbs, appliances and energy saving tips. Northern youth noted home energy use as a place for effective and affordable action in the north.	Secondary school University/College Employed/ unemployed youth	Stronger if linked to education system (more likely to get youth participation).

## 9. Time Frame for strategy roll out

This is a 5-year strategy. By the end of five years, a significant proportion of the target audience will be over 30 and a new generation of teens will have entered this target audience. Changes in values and attitudes will be inevitable (not to mention changes in technologies and communications media). Therefore we recommend a complete evaluation of the strategy at the

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end of five years, followed by the design of new approaches to engage youth, building on the best practices from the original strategy and looking for innovation in the new generation.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Stream</i>	<i>Description</i>
Year 1 <i>Focus on setting up the resources and infrastructure to support the strategy</i>	Information and Awareness	Review existing 1-800 call service: are materials relevant to youth; can youth be employed to operate the service? Establish Youth Climate Change web site; development of games and simulations Approach provincial govt depts of motor vehicles; driver education programs to deliver materials related to climate change. Initiate discussions with potential private sector sponsors for selected projects, including community TV and newspaper products, entrepreneurship programs, the climate change express bus and related booths/exhibits/demonstrations of solar cars, and so forth.
	Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create funding structure for international internship and exchange program,</li> <li>• Set up Youth sub- fund under the Climate Change Action Fund.</li> <li>• Create Climate Change job bank</li> </ul>
	Community Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Tool kits for community groups</li> <li>• Work with youth groups (4H, Scouts, Guides etc) to create climate change projects and badges</li> </ul>
	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract polling firm to establish baseline levels of youth awareness and practice.</li> <li>• Establish evaluation mechanisms</li> </ul>

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<p>Year 2 <i>Focus on leaders or “early adopters”</i></p>	<p>Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of “Call Center” and Web site (Build CONTENT, roll out games and simulations).</li> <li>• National TV and magazine ad campaign (youth to adult communication), profiling youth choices.</li> <li>• Roll out Drivers Education campaign</li> <li>• Community awareness media projects: local newspaper articles; local cable shows</li> <li>• Develop “each one teach one” approach for climate change communications</li> <li>• Set up and promote Hands across Trans- Canada Trail</li> </ul>
	<p>Capacity Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue funding of youth projects</li> <li>• Set up Climate Change Youth Knowledge Network</li> <li>• Execute International Climate Change Internship Program.</li> <li>• Execute Youth Environmental Entrepreneurs Programs</li> <li>• Execute Indigenous Environmental Exchange</li> <li>• Set up climate change career program.</li> </ul>
	<p>Community Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce tool kits to communities;</li> <li>• Introduce programs to youth groups</li> </ul>
<p>Year 3 <i>Focus on Information and Learning</i></p>	<p>Information and Awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TV Ad competition for youth</li> <li>• Run the Trans Canada Trail event</li> <li>• Youth Climate Change Express; Demonstration cars and races; Booths at fairs etc.</li> <li>• Internet advertising</li> <li>• Ad banners on youth market Web sites.</li> </ul>
	<p>Capacity Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue internships, exchanges and entrepreneurial program</li> <li>• Climate change career program</li> </ul>
	<p>Community Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal earth retreat I</li> <li>• Community energy training program</li> <li>• Municipal Transit Contest</li> <li>• Bike to work days; Safe routes to schools program</li> </ul>

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Year 4 <i>Focus on Community and Continuation</i>	Information and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change facts campaign</li> <li>• Ad banner youth market Web sites</li> <li>• Climate change air miles</li> </ul>
	Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green house gas reduction awards program</li> <li>• Continuation of existing projects</li> </ul>
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Earth Retreat II</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Youth turf community green space</li> <li>• Local travel promotions</li> <li>• National tree planting</li> </ul>
Year 5 <i>Focus on Evaluation; Design of New Strategy</i>	Evaluation Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrap up some of the existing projects</li> <li>• Conduct evaluation</li> <li>• Have a national conference for and by youth where youth decide the future direction of the strategy.</li> </ul>

## 10. Evaluation

The strategy should have an impact evaluation system in place to learn the effect of the strategy on youth, and to provide means by which youth can provide feedback and input.

Our research has indicated that assessing the impact of social marketing campaigns is problematic. It is difficult to attribute attitude and behaviour changes solely to such campaigns when other extraneous factors can also be strong influences on behaviours and attitudes.<sup>25</sup> As well, it appears that a culture of evaluation is not well developed within organizations implementing social marketing campaigns. Most organizations surveyed did not have concrete or established indicators of success or practised consistent evaluation procedures.

Also, it is difficult to measure the success of youth participation efforts. Youth participation is an ongoing, developmental process. Early evaluation may miss some of the long term benefits. It is important to reflect on youth participation efforts on an ongoing basis while recognizing that concrete outcomes take time.

Social marketing campaigns are traditionally evaluated for creating a positive and significant impact according to the following criteria:

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<sup>25</sup> Making a Difference: The Impact of Health Promotion Directorate's Social Marketing Campaigns 1987-91, **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

- Awareness – A broad awareness of the campaign, its theme and its basic messages among youth
- Attitudes – An general acceptance of the campaign messages among youth
- Interpersonal communications – Demonstrated increased willingness and commitment to disseminating information on the issues to others among youth exposed to the campaign
- Current use - Discernable differences in behaviors that can be currently changed, such as taking the bus, carpooling, using appliances efficiently and other personal contributions
- Trends – A development of general long-term trends in attitudes and behaviors, especially among the targeted audience
- Use of Campaigns as Models – Adoption of strategies or specific projects by groups not included in the strategy, or by groups wanting to adapt strategies or specific projects for campaigns on different issues and topics and requests for expertise or consultancies<sup>26</sup>

**It is absolutely essential to establish good baseline data at the beginning of this strategy: otherwise, evaluation of increased levels of awareness and action at the end of the strategy will be subjective at best.**

Opportunities may exist with Reginald Bibby, author of Teen Trends, to insert questions related to environmental and climate change awareness into his next survey of Canadian teens. It may also be worthwhile to contract a polling firm for a more comprehensive assessment of the whole target audience (13-29).

**It is also important to note that throughout the duration of the strategy, some youth will leave the age bracket of 13-29, so it will also be important to evaluate the strategy for long term results in the adult community.**

Testing of indicators would be completed by the following qualitative and quantitative methods:

- Tracking surveys for individual projects
- Tracking surveys for the strategy
- Tracking surveys for youth to measure their increased awareness and knowledge of climate change issues before the campaign, mid-way and upon completion.
- Formal and informal discussions with young people and adults, using focus groups, consultations, conferences, through out the time frame of the strategy.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

We have made an effort to make the specific objectives of this strategy as tangible and measurable as possible. The strategy would be considered effective if the indicators of success listed under each objective were attained.

We would also recommend that the agency responsible for implementing this strategy also look carefully at other methodologies for assessment currently in use within the federal government, such as the results-based management approach now being used by CIDA.

**In one final burst of creativity, we thought we might suggest the development of a national emissions clock (similar in concept to the Population Clock at the International Development Research Centre) which will monitor every minute the number of GHG emissions produced in Canada. In our wildest dreams and hopes, we might see a turning point as the numbers waiver, and then slowly begin to drop.**

## **11. Limitations and Strengths of the Proposed Strategy**

Some difficulties were experienced in developing the Youth Public Outreach Strategy on climate change. These are listed below:

### *Time Frame of the Project*

- More set up and promotional time was required to obtain a better representation of youth for the focus group sessions. We had a low turnout for some of the sessions.
- More time was needed to survey youth organizations, both nationally and internationally.
- We did not have time to validate the draft strategy with the Youth Round Table members or with the other youth participants in the focus groups. We will post the strategy on our Climate Change Youth Café, but we do not anticipate receiving sufficient input before the final version of the strategy is to be submitted by the end of March.
- Internet conference projects like the Climate Change Youth Café require more set up time and promotional time than was available.
- Costing out a strategy like this requires more time to arrive at as accurate a picture as possible. Access to this information on the cost of TV advertising, PSA's etc. also takes time to obtain.

### *Available information*

- Most of the literature available on youth communications focuses on strategies for youth at risk such as the anti-smoking, anti-drugs, and anti-drinking and driving campaigns. Less information is available on alternative communication strategies and on environmental communication strategies. This information had to come from phone interviews with

organizations and from the youth themselves. Much of the information on successful environmental communications campaigns is not documented.

- Baseline data on emissions generating behavior for this age group is difficult to isolate. For example we were unable to determine the level of personal car ownership in this group. Useful measures of emissions reductions from simple actions like planting a tree are not readily available.

### ***Staff Resources***

- We were fortunate to have two interns funded under another program to work with us on this strategy. Without them, the budget would have been insufficient to provide the depth and range of options we have gathered in this report.

### ***Internet***

- For this project, and this topic, we found that the Internet was not an effective tool for engaging youth. We can validate the fact that people use the Internet to obtain information: the ratio of youth who signed up but did not participate to those who did submit comments was about 4 to 1. We believe they were more interested in listening to others (the “two step” flow), and obtaining information. More time is needed to engage people to participate in a forum like this one.

### ***Gaps in the information***

- The PEO Issues Table requested, and provided funding for, additional focus group sessions to draw out the opinions of youth in Quebec, the Atlantic Provinces, Toronto and Vancouver. We were not requested to conduct a session in the far north; but we have reviewed and incorporated the results of the Climate Change Youth Strategy Workshop with the Métis Nation – NWT Environmental Youth Corps.
- Although we had input from youth from rural areas, we didn’t find clear, notable differences that would lead to strong recommendations on rural programs versus urban programs. More work on urban/rural differences might be useful.
- We would have liked to have more input from youth in Quebec. We made extensive contacts with organizations prior to conducting the two focus sessions in French in Montreal, but few people participated.

### ***Strengths of the process and outcomes***

- The modified appreciative inquiry methodology worked well in the focus groups. By asking participants to look for the positive rather than the negative, we found that many were able to find in the end the personal connections with climate change. When this happened, they

became more creative in proposing communications ideas and strategies for mitigating climate change.

- The session with aboriginal youth was a very positive experience – again, because of the many other obstacles facing aboriginal youth, their personal values and connections with the environment were inspiring.
- The session with teens at the YMCA in Halifax was a turning point in the project. This was a group of visible minority, disadvantaged youth who had no knowledge of or concern for environmental or social issues, and no awareness of national or international events (eg, the ice storm; Hurricane Mitch). To hear from youth who are not concerned with environmental issues or who have not found opportunities to learn and discuss these issues made us more aware of the need to focus this strategy on the education system and participatory projects within the communities to engage these youth; while information and awareness campaigns, and capacity building, might be more targeted at youth leaders.
- Youth-driven and youth-based organizations surveyed by phone were very supportive in taking the time to provide us with the necessary information. We could see a real potential for collaboration amongst these stakeholders.