

SEPTEMBER 23 CLIMATE STRIKE HIGH SCHOOL WALKOUT ORGANIZERS TOOLKIT



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WELCOME!

Hi! Thank you for doing this- you rock. And you're not alone- there are many other high school students working at other schools to get their peers on the streets. You're part of a powerful movement of people around Toronto, Canada, and around the world. Even if you don't have allies at your school, we have your back!

High school doesn't prepare you for fighting climate change, so don't worry if you feel unprepared or unsure about where to start. We hope that this guide gives you some ideas - once you've joined [Slack](#), feel free to message #high_school_mobilization or to DM us (@Lotus (she/they) @Zoe (she/her) @Theo (they/them)) if you have any questions :)

BACKGROUND

Here's some background information if you're interested.

We know that this is the crucial decade in which our actions matter most. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC- the UN's army of climate scientists) tells us that we have until 2030 to cut carbon emissions in half. Still, our governments and institutions continue to invest in fossil fuels, violate Indigenous rights, and ignore scientists, causing more intense fires, floods, droughts, famines, water and food insecurity, and social injustice. The climate strike movement allows us to call them out on their failures and demand action. **We will not stop fighting.**

Fridays for Future Toronto is the local chapter of the Fridays for Future global climate strike movement. We are a youth-led, grassroots organization with the primary mission of mobilizing to demand climate justice through the organization of school strikes, rallies, and marches. Fridays for Future Toronto recognizes that the climate crisis is not only an environmental crisis but a social justice crisis too. We have adopted a number of intersectional demands that aim to create a space for youth to advocate for a better world that uplifts marginalized voices, follows the principles of climate justice and empowers youth to demand a future that is sustainable and just for all!

Individuals don't change history, movements do. By mobilizing your high school, you are no longer worrying alone. You are joining a powerful movement of millions of young people across the world. We are coming together across divisions to build the safe and beautiful world that we deserve.

YOU ROCK! YOU'RE GOING TO DO AMAZINGLY!!

What is a Climate Strike?

A climate strike is a form of protest that you can take as a student to demand climate action. Climate strikes were started by Greta Thunberg in 2018, who went on strike from school and sat in front of her parliament building to protest government inaction on climate change. Her act of civil disobedience has since grown into an international movement of millions of students worldwide taking to the streets to demand climate justice. By striking from school, students put their normal lives on hold to prioritize climate action, setting an example for society to do the same.

However, the climate justice movement goes much further back, and has roots in the environmental movement, social and racial justice movements, and especially Indigenous rights movements fighting for land and treaty rights, sovereignty, justice, and self-determination.

Due to Covid putting a pause on mass protests, the last big climate strike in so-called Toronto was on September 27, 2019, in which tens of thousands of people took to the streets to demand climate justice.

Many of these people were **high school students**, and mobilizing high schools was one of the main reasons the strike was so massive. This strike was powerful too- later that year, the City of Toronto **declared a climate emergency**.

HOW TO MOBILIZE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL

BEFORE YOU START:

Join Slack:

'Slack' is a messaging platform that we can use to communicate and organize (like discord, but fancy). [Join Slack here](#) for updates, the ability to ask questions, and to meet other student volunteers.

Once you've joined, create a profile for yourself, and introduce yourself in #community!

Check out this video for a tutorial on how to use Slack: [How to use Slack](#)

Gather your team:

It's a good idea to have at least one or more students at your school to work with you! This way, you can get a lot more done.

- Start a groupchat with the other people you're working with
- At some point, go through this toolkit with them and discuss what actions you want to take, and who can take on which tasks.


CONNECTING WITH ADULT ALLIES:

(either or both of these work, but we recommend doing at least one of them!)

- Find a teacher ally:** Tell a friendly teacher at your school about the strike, and let them know that you'll be trying to raise awareness about it! If you want, go over this toolkit with them. They might be able to help you with school announcements, connecting with clubs, getting supplies, etc.

- Connect with your school's eco club or social justice club:** Climate justice-related clubs can help promote the strike within the club and around the school, by creating announcements, putting up posters, posting on social media, etc.

Write an email to the club or ask them at school.

Example message:  School Club Outreach Letter!

RAISING AWARENESS AROUND YOUR SCHOOL:

Postering: Postering is a simple and fun way to raise awareness. Bring your friends!

FFFTO has created some amazing posters for you to put up- check them out here: [Graphics](#)

You can print posters at home, at school, or ask us using this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1HSMIhwYL_CyTzs1dXspZkiTy-SO3UAAF7tq3PM5-w8s

(you can ask for [leaflets](#) using this form as well).

You can also visit one of the three locations listed below, which should have posters (no leaflets yet- use the form) on-site.

1. Greenpeace Office, 33 Cecil St: Monday to Thursday, from 9 am to 5:30 pm.
 - a. Buzz at accessible front door or text 647 886 2275. **mask required for entry**

2. Trinity St Paul's United Church, 427 Bloor St W: Daily from 9 am to 9 pm.
 - a. Buzz at Bloor St accessible entrance: ask for "Climate Strike posters" **mask optional but recommended**

3. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave: Mon to Sat from 8:30 am to 10 pm (after 6 pm, call # on door for entry)
 - a. enter at Jackman St accessible entrance **mask optional but recommended**

Postering inside the school building: Poster where people are likely to gather, or to spend time. Poster in easy to see places- not the ceiling, although that'd be hilarious and someone please try that.

- In the stairwell
- On walls
- On the lockers of consenting students
- In the washrooms (and behind toilet stall doors- no teacher looks there, and people have time to read it!)



For postering inside, use tape- preferably wide, transparent tape, but whatever works. Have someone hold the poster up while you tape- make sure to tape it thoroughly on all sides, so people can't rip it down.

Postering outside:

- Put posters up on telephone poles around the school grounds (cement ones).
- Put them around the neighborhood too — anywhere students gather, or are likely to walk past when they come to school.
- Poster near traffic lights, so people read them when they're waiting for the light to change
- **Poster TTC stops**, 'cause people spend a lot of time waiting there.
- Don't vandalize anything, that's illegal! For instance, don't poster on top of TTC advertisements, or on city signs. Go [here](#) for more info.

To poster outside, you *can* use tape, but it's better to use 'Wheat Paste'. This is a mixture of flour and water that you can literally paint over your posters. It works like glue — it soaks through the poster and sticks. It also makes the poster rainproof and impossible to rip down.

[Wheat paste recipe](#), [another wheat paste recipe and postering instructions](#)

Watch [this video](#) for a (brief) glimpse of what your mixture should look like at each stage

(NOTE: making wheat paste involves boiling water. Be careful. Also, make sure you have a clean workspace before you start, as it can get a little messy.)

After you've made a batch, carry it around in a container or a bucket! Bring a thick paintbrush, or borrow one from your art room (ask first ofc). Using it is easy:

1. Paint and cover the place you want to put the poster with wheat paste.

2. Put your poster up
3. Paint some more wheat paste on it!

Leafletting:

Check out our leaflets here: [Graphics](#)

To get leaflets, submit [this form](#).

You can leaflet by handing them out to people, or just leave the leaflets around (on desks, etc).

Tip: Be confident, and know your facts! We want to make sure people have all the right details about the strike.

Chalking:

Places to chalk:

- At school — ask a teacher if it's ok to chalk on school grounds. If so, write on the concrete outside school entrances, or places where people gather
- Write on the sidewalk around the school, at crosswalks, and at TTC stops
- Get a group of people to come chalking with you around the neighborhood! It's actually fun.

Example chalk messages:

- Climate Strike! Sept 23rd
- Climate Justice Now!
- Anything else! Add art too, like protest fists, people protesting or a big earth.
- If you have space, make sure to include our organization's name or the website url: fridaysforfutureto.org

Examples from other strikes:





School Announcements:

This is a great way to get your entire school to listen to you!

You can do this yourself, or you can work with an eco or social justice club to create the announcements. Clubs usually have contacts with the teachers who run announcements.

If you're doing it yourself, ask a teacher or someone at the office how to get on the PA system!

Example announcements:

[☰ Example Announcements about Climate Change](#)

Social Media:

Go through this toolkit for example posts and resources:

[☰ S23 Global Strike Promotional Toolkit](#)

Go here for graphics: [FFFTo Graphics/Media](#)

- Create social media accounts for your strike outreach. Eg, schoolname_climatestrike on Instagram.
 - Personalize your account!
 - Use the profile picture generator from the International FFF org (scroll to bottom): [September 23 - Fridays For Future](#)
 - Repost Fridays for Future Toronto's information about the strike, and do it consistently!
 - Tips:

- Make a countdown to the strike and repost it often!
- Who to follow:
 - Follow as many clubs and people at your school as you can
 - Fridays for Future Toronto
 - Insta: [@fridaysforfutureto](https://www.instagram.com/fridaysforfutureto)
 - Twitter: [@TOforfuture](https://twitter.com/TOforfuture)
 - Tiktok: [@fridaysforfutureto](https://www.tiktok.com/@fridaysforfutureto)
- After you create your account(s), get info about the strike posted on existing school social media accounts as well.
 - Ask school clubs, groups, and people to repost you!

Word of Mouth:

Talk to people about the strike. Ask them if they're going, and be welcoming to any questions! It's ok if people don't know much about climate change!! It's not their fault, as governments and companies spread a lot of misleading information to seem more 'eco-friendly' ([especially fossil fuel companies](#)).

Other Fun Activities

Sign-Making Party! Get everyone together to make protest signs for the climate strike. Ask people to bring cardboard and markers, or find them at school.

- Sign Suggestions: [☰ Sign Suggestions](#) [📄 2021 Climate Strike Signs](#)

Make sure your signs are clear and make a point — target the systemic causes of climate change, such as fossil fuels, government inaction, social injustice, the violation of Indigenous rights. Talk about solutions, like renewable energy, or ones for people at the strike (voting, protesting, etc).

Try not to focus on individual actions like recycling or turning off the lights! This distracts from the root causes of the crisis. Learn more [here!](#)

Example signs:



Letter-Writing Party!!! Write to your elected officials!

This is super powerful. Get everyone together to write letters to your elected officials. You can write to your MP (Member of Parliament - federal); MPP (Member of Provincial Parliament); City Councilor and your school trustee.

→ **Why:** It is important all elected officials know that climate justice is an issue you care about. As there will be a municipal election on October 24th, it's especially important that councilors and trustees know that you want action on this issue.

Green circles!

What are they?

Green pins were first worn in Québec as a way for people to show their support for the climate justice movement. Now, we wear them all across Canada on strike days!

These are useful because people who can't skip school can show their support. As well, they can be used to educate others.

How do you make them?

All you need is any green fabric (we usually use felt) and a safety pin. Cut the fabric into a circle (~4cm in diameter), and stick a safety pin through it. Simple!

(If you don't have fabric, you can also use green paper circles too.)

What to do with them?

Option 1: Bring them to the strike or give them to someone you know is attending.

Option 2: Wear them & share them with other students during school if your uniform allows. If not, the pins make a unique backpack accessory for you and your peers! Be sure to explain their significance if others are curious- you can also hand out a [leaflet](#) to anyone who wants to learn more.

LOGISTICS:

What the day of the September 23 action will look like

This rally will consist of (hopefully) thousands of people, if not tens of thousands.

Where: Queen's Park (on the lawn outside the Ontario Parliament).

When: 2pm

1. (30-60 mins) Speeches and performances:
 - a. There will be speeches by inspiring climate, social justice, and Indigenous Rights activists, covering a broad range of topics related to climate justice, but emphasizing the systemic causes of climate change and who needs to be held to account.
 - b. There'll also be a lot of performances! Music, spoken-word poetry, etc!! Lots of high energy music, protest music, etc.
 - c. Please try to come to the start of the rally, but if the timing doesn't work for you, you can join the rally in this period.
2. March!
 - a. We'll be marching from Queen's Park east along Wellesley, then south along Yonge to Yonge-Dundas Square.
 - b. There will be music during the march as well!

Accessibility at the Rally

Please email us (fridays4futureto@gmail.com) for any transportation and accessibility needs, and we will do our best to accommodate.

1. During the Rally:
 - a. There will be a sign-language (ASL) interpreter for all of the speeches
 - b. Seating will also be provided, close to the stage!
 - c. There will be a medical station at the rally location as well.
2. During the March:
 - a. There will be an Accessibility Van for transport during the march
 - b. There will be a quiet area at Queen's Park where people can stay if they don't want to participate in the march!

Talking to your parents:

Make sure you let your parents know that you are going to the strike. Let them know when you will be leaving school, where you'll be going, and when you'll be back. This makes sure you're safe at all times. As well, you may need parental consent to sign out of class.

- Make sure to explain to your parents why you are striking, and what climate change means to you. Explain to your parents why you feel the need to join with the thousands of students around the world in demanding action. Explain how it directly affects your future, and how critical the situation is.
You could ask them to join you if they have time, as the protest is open to anyone.
- While you're at it, you might also want to encourage them to vote with climate change in mind in the Municipal Election this fall!
- Keep in mind that this strike is family friendly, and people of all ages will be coming.

Signing Out of School:

- If you have to leave class before lunch, let your teacher know beforehand what time you and your friends will be leaving.
 - It's best to sign out as a group, as there is solidarity that way!
- Go to the office, and ask to sign out. You need parental consent to sign out, so bring a note from your parents, or call them from the office.

Getting to the strike: Get to the strike any way you feel the most safe and comfortable. Plan your route beforehand.

- Let other people in your school know how to get to the rally beforehand. You might need to take the TTC, so be sure everyone knows where to go and is traveling with a partner for safety.

Will you get in trouble?

At the 2019 strike, the TDSB director gave students leave to go on strike, and asked teachers not to give tests or assignments on that day. The TDSB is being asked to do this again, so we will update you if this happens!! ([Join Slack](#) for updates).

As a citizen of Canada, you have the [legal right to protest](#) and you cannot be legally punished for not attending school or holding a peaceful rally. Your school cannot punish you for participating in the walkout beyond a normal punishment for missing class. The TDSB and most other school boards have strong policies on human rights, and these policies can protect you in a protest that exists to protect human rights.

If you have any concerns, an FFFTO member is very happy to speak with you! Reach us at: fridays4futureto@gmail.com, or ask a question in our [Slack](#).

RESOURCES:

Other Toolkits:

☰ Outreach Toolkit : Fall GCS 2022

☰ S23 Global Strike Promotinal Toolkit

Links:

[FFFTO- Fridays for Future Toronto Website](#)

[Fridays for Future International](#)

[TDSB Youth Climate Action Guide](#)

GENERAL GRAPHICS: [FFFTo Graphics/Media](#)

- **Posters and Leaflets:** [Graphics](#)
- **Social Media Graphics:** [Social Media](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA EXAMPLE POSTS:

☰ S23 Global Strike Promotinal Toolkit

Climate Info and Resources:

☰ Background Resources + Climate Justice Info

Scientific Info: You might not think this is necessary, but (due in part to fossil fuel companies' denial and advertising campaigns) most people do not understand the basics of climate change, and many more people hold misconceptions about it that are a barrier to action.

Videos:

▶ CLIMATE 101 with BILL NYE

▶ Climate Science: What You Need To Know

Links:

[NASA Climate Change](#)

[xkcd: Earth Temperature Timeline](#)

[The Guardian- Climate Change Facts](#)

[Big 5 and the Climate Crisis — Banking On A Better Future](#)

Other climate justice groups:

[Banking on a Better Future](#)

[Leadnow](#)

[Indigenous Climate Action](#)

[Migrant Rights Network](#)

[Toronto Climate Action Network](#)

[350.org](#)

[Greenpeace](#)

[Environmental Defense](#)

[Climate Justice Toronto](#)

[David Suzuki Foundation](#)

[Stand.earth](#)

More Detailed Climate Info

What is the climate emergency?

We are currently facing an existential climate crisis. The continuous burning of fossil fuels since the industrial revolution has resulted in a 260% rise in atmospheric greenhouse gasses. This combined with other capitalist and colonialist practices such as deforestation and industrial agriculture have resulted in more destruction and disruption than our planet has ever seen. Rising sea levels and temperatures, droughts leading to water shortages and famine, forest fires, and floods and the onset of the sixth mass extinction are only a few examples. The climate crisis exacerbates all other issues in our society, as those who face the most social injustice are facing the brunt of

climate change. However, what may be more distressing than these warning signs of catastrophe, is the apathy and inaction from governments and corporations across the globe. The temperature of the world has already increased by 1C since the industrial revolution. In order to spare ourselves from the worst effects of climate change we must not allow it to reach above 1.5C. To reach this goal we would have to reduce emissions by a global average 45% by 2030, and not one country is even close to getting there. Since people in positions of power have failed to adequately address this crisis, we are taking matters into our own hands and demanding action!

Incomplete list of consequences of climate change:

- Droughts
- Floods
- Forest Fires
- Hurricanes
- Sea level rise
- Heat waves
- Delayed seasons
- Changes in precipitation patterns
- Changes in ocean currents
- Famines
- Water shortages
- Political instability, conflict, and war
- Increased inequity
- Increased social oppression *in all forms*
- Loss of cultural knowledge (especially Indigenous knowledge)
- Mass extinctions
- Increased invasive species
- Increased risk of insect-borne diseases

Calendar and Timeline

Vague week-to-week plan (100% flexible):

1st week:

- Networking: Join Slack, gather your team and find a teacher ally
- Raising awareness: Start a social media account, poster around the school area

2nd week:

- Networking: Reach out to clubs to get them to support the strike
- Raising awareness: Create announcements at your school, do poster and chalking, hand out leaflets, more social media

3rd week:

- Networking:
- Raising awareness: Have announcements daily (if possible), poster everywhere, etc etc etc. Hand out green circles.

Use this calendar to plan actions!

September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
28.	29.	30.	31.	1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.	7. First day of School (TDSB)	8.	9.	10.
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23. STRIKE DAY!! 2pm, Queen's Park.	

THANK YOU!

You are not alone in this movement.

Thank you for joining with us to demand better for this world and for the future.

Together we have power and we will support you.

YOU ROCK!!!!!!!!!!!!