

What is climate justice? It means making sure everyone is treated in a **fair and equal** way while we protect the Earth from the effects of climate change.¹ Here is what it is all about:



Helping people

Some people's lives may be made harder because of climate change. We need to make sure those of us who live in places with extreme weather, who don't have much money, or who have health problems get the help they need.



Having a safe place to live

Everyone, no matter where they come from, should have clean air to breathe and a healthy environment.



Taking Responsibility

The impact of climate change isn't the same for everyone. Some people feel it a lot more than others. Most of the time, those people aren't even the ones causing the problems. The countries and companies that pollute the most should help out more to make things fair.²

Why does climate change affect people differently?

Climate change doesn't affect everyone the same way. Things like where you live, how much money you have, or your race and gender can make a difference.

Some **communities of colour** might live in places with lots of pollution. They might also not have many parks, forests, or green spaces.³ This can be a big problem when it's hot out. These places more likely to get extreme heat than other places.

Climate change can hurt **women and girls** more in some parts of the world. It can make it harder for them to get the things they need to take care of their family.⁴

In many parts of the world, **Indigenous Peoples** help protect the land they live on. They know what it takes to keep the water, air, and earth clean and healthy. But they don't always get a say in the big decisions on climate change.⁵

Sources:

¹ [Climate Justice](#), United Nations

² [Climate change is a matter of justice - here's why](#), UNDP

³ [Canadian City Parks Report](#), Park People

⁴ [Why women are key to climate action](#), United Nations

⁵ [Inclusion](#), UNDP

Let's take a look at an example in Canada:

2021 was a very hot year for British Columbia. It was the warmest weather they've ever had. A lot of people had a hard time staying cool. Here's why:

- **Age:** Older people's bodies can't cool down as quickly as younger people. They might also have health problems that make things worse. That's why elderly people were some of the most hurt by the heatwaves.⁶
- **Ability:** It's not as easy for people with disabilities or health problems to move around. When the heatwaves hit, they couldn't get to cooler safe places.⁷
- **Money and resources:** During the heatwaves, it was hard for people with less money to cool off.⁸ They might not have had air conditioning or a safe home. If they got sick from the heat, they might not have gotten medicine. They might live in neighbourhoods with fewer parks and trees. This makes things even hotter because trees help keep things cool!

Listening and learning

People in B.C. who were hurt the most by the extreme heat spoke up! They know this kind of weather will happen more because of climate change. The Government of B.C listened to their stories and made a report to plan better ways to keep people safe in the future.

So, how can you get involved?

There are lots of ways that kids and young people can help. Here's how you can say "YES!" to climate justice in Canada and around the world.



Talk about it: Tell your friends, family and classmates what you have learned here. The more people know, the more they can help find ways to make a safe and healthy world.



Join or create a group: There are many groups already working to make things fair for everyone. You can ask an adult to help you find a group near you. You can also start one at your school. Working together with others can make a bigger difference!



Listen to others: Pay attention to the people most hurt by climate change. Listen to their experiences. They might have ideas to help solve the problem.

Sources:

⁶ [BC Heat Dome Recommendations](#), CBC News

⁷ [Lived Experiences of Extreme Heat in BC](#), Government of BC

⁸ [Lived Experiences of Extreme Heat in BC](#), Government of BC