

NISE Network Online Workshop

The Climate Action Playbook - Resources Focused on the Developmental Needs of Early Learners

December 2, 2025



Today's Presenters:

- **Brenda Baker**, Co-CEO, Madison Children's Museum
- **Amanda Strobel**, Manager of Strategic Initiatives + Executive Office Operations, Madison Children's Museum



Welcome! As we wait to get started with today's discussion, please...

Introduce yourself! Type your name, institution, and location into the [Chat Box](#)

Questions? Feel free to type your questions into the [Chat Box](#) at any time throughout the webinar. A selection of questions from the chat and workshop registration will be read aloud by moderators for presenters to answer during the Q&A.

Today's workshop will be recorded; those registered will receive an email when available here: nisenet.org/online-workshop-recordings

See You Next Time!

Upcoming Online Workshops...

- **How to Be a Part of 2.50 Million Acts of Science with SciStarter!**

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

2pm-3pm Eastern /
11am-12pm Pacific

- **Youth Programs Co-creating STEM Engagement Projects**

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Learn more and register at nisenet.org/events





Caretakers of Wonder: NISE Network Online Workshop

December 2, 2025



Madison Children's Museum

Caretakers of Wonder Project Team



Brenda Baker

Project Director

Co-CEO

Madison Children's Museum



Amanda Strobel

Project Manager

Manager of Strategic Initiatives +

Executive Office Operations

Madison Children's Museum



Gratitude Exercise



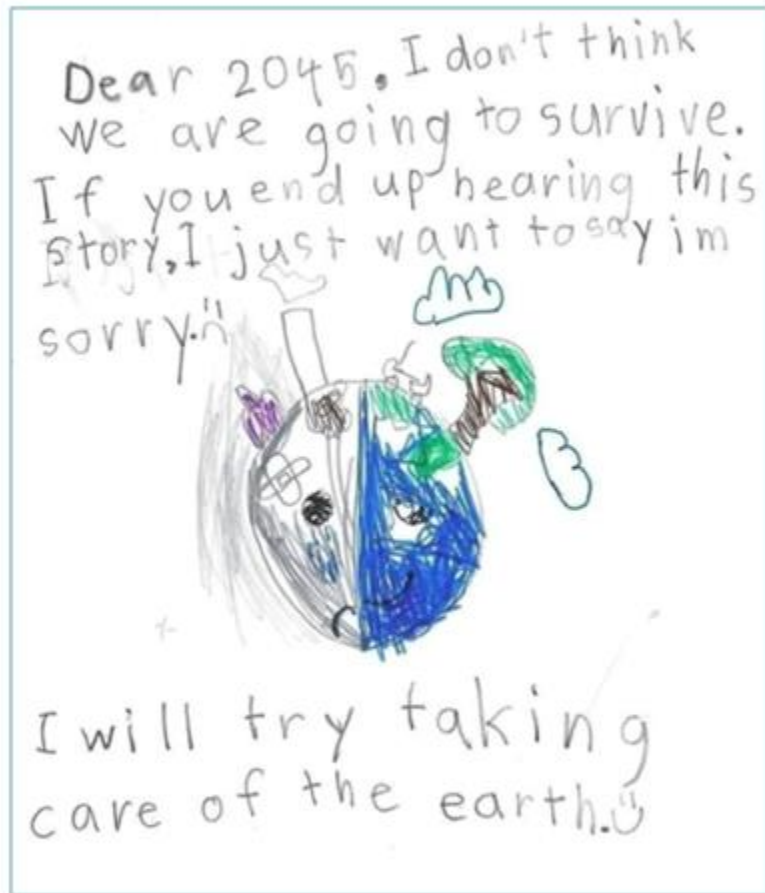
**Let us allow children to love the
earth before we ask them to save it**

David Sobel

Climate Change and Children's Health



Even young children experience eco-anxiety





77 %

of UK children aged 8 – 16 worry
about climate change at least once
a month

25%

of Australian children are afraid
that the world will end in their
lifetime

Early childhood climate engagement & education
Literature review | Jessica Kleczka, 2024

Children are angry at adults for not doing more

“The Climate Crisis is harming our mental health in significant ways. We feel isolated, doomed, and ignored. Some of us have lived through traumatic climate disasters like wildfires, extreme storms, or deadly heat waves. The rest of us understand the science and know our future will be severely impacted by climate change, which adds to all the stress, anxiety, and depression we’re already dealing with. **All of us feel ignored by adults, who almost all have some power to make a change to protect us and they aren’t acting urgently.**”

-Student from Oregon, Oregon State Climate Action Plan, 2020

The single greatest **opportunity** to improve the welfare of children around the country and around the world **is to act** on climate change.

Dr. Aaron Bernstein, Harvard Center for Climate, Health and the Global Environment

What do children need in a warming world?



Caregivers need age-appropriate language and tools



Parents frequently experience sadness, hopelessness, and anxiety about the future of their children.

Empowering children means empowering the whole family.

Eco-parenting skills support long-term pro-environmental behavior in children

Early childhood climate engagement & education
Literature review | Jessica Kleczka, 2024

Gap in pre-cursor climate education for young children (0-8) and their caregivers



Evidence shows:

- A growing interest in addressing climate change among museums serving young children.
- A lack of understanding and resources about how to address this daunting topic in age-appropriate ways.

A decorative graphic in the bottom left corner consisting of a cluster of small, green, oval-shaped dots of varying shades, arranged in a roughly triangular pattern pointing towards the center of the slide.

Project Overview

Project big idea

Caretakers of Wonder activates a network of museums that commit to taking regenerative climate action and building educational initiatives that foster compassion, engagement, agency, and hope among young children and those who care about them



Project timeline



Museum Partners

- Association of Children's Museums
- Chicago Children's Museum
- The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon
- Discovery Museum
- KidsQuest Children's Museum
- Louisiana Children's Museum
- Madison Children's Museum
- Museum of Science and Discovery
- National Children's Museum
- The Wild Center

Phase One only

Phase One & Two



Project Resources

Created in Phases I & II



Climate Action Playbook

Developmental framework, focused on young children and climate change

Available online, PDF (available now at [caretakersofwonder.org](https://www.caretakersofwonder.org))

Promising Practices

Current climate education practices in partner museums

Available online*, PDFs (available Winter 2025)

TOOLKIT

Project website, holds both the Climate Action Playbook as well as Promising Practices

[caretakersofwonder.org](https://www.caretakersofwonder.org)

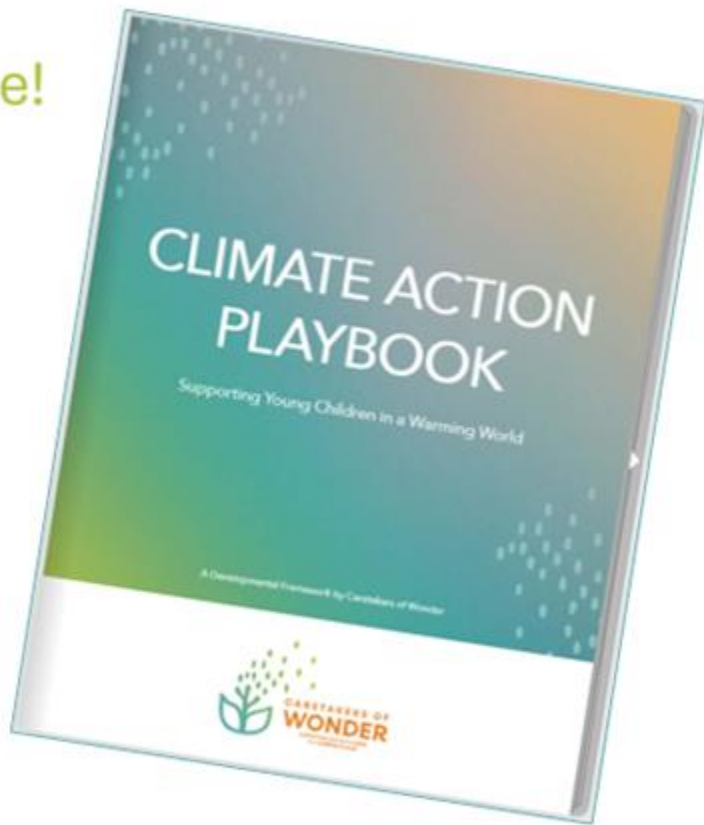
Climate Action Playbook



Climate Action Playbook – now online!



CaretakersofWonder.org



Climate Action Playbook – order now!

Email Amanda to join the list!

Astrobel@madisonchildrensmuseum.org

Sales will be live soon – English and Spanish versions available!



Playbook Structure Overview



Two Parts

- Part 1: Museum visitors
- Part 2: Museum staff

Three Categories

- Nature and Well-being
- Empathy and Resilience
- Hope and Collective Action

Three Age Groups

- Birth to Age 3
- Ages 3 to 6
- Ages 6 to 8

Playbook Charts

Each chart has two parts:

To think about

- Information about child development, climate action, environmental education, and more

To do

- Easy, accessible tips to support the healthy development of children's minds and bodies

Hope & Collective Action | Infants & Toddlers, Birth to Age 3



To Think About

Being together with other families and focusing on community helps develop an ethic of community care.

- Exploring events and activities in and around your community that attract people with shared interests can facilitate making new connections.
- Connecting with people in your

To Do

Find parents and families who share your interests.

- Spend time with other community members to help your toddler become comfortable with others outside of your family.

Get outside with other families and their infants and toddlers.

Climate Action at Madison Children's Museum



Current climate action efforts

- **Climate Action Plan**
 - Establishing baselines for our carbon emissions
 - Plans to lower scope 1 and two emissions
 - Working to operationalize sustainability
- **Sustainable exhibit design**
 - Nice Age Trail (2024)
 - Wonderground (2021)
 - Trash Lab (2020)
 - GreenExhibits.org (2005)
- **Strategic Planning**
 - Utilizing the Climate Action Plan written with Verdis Group, sustainability is one of our strategic lenses for our five year plan



What is your why?



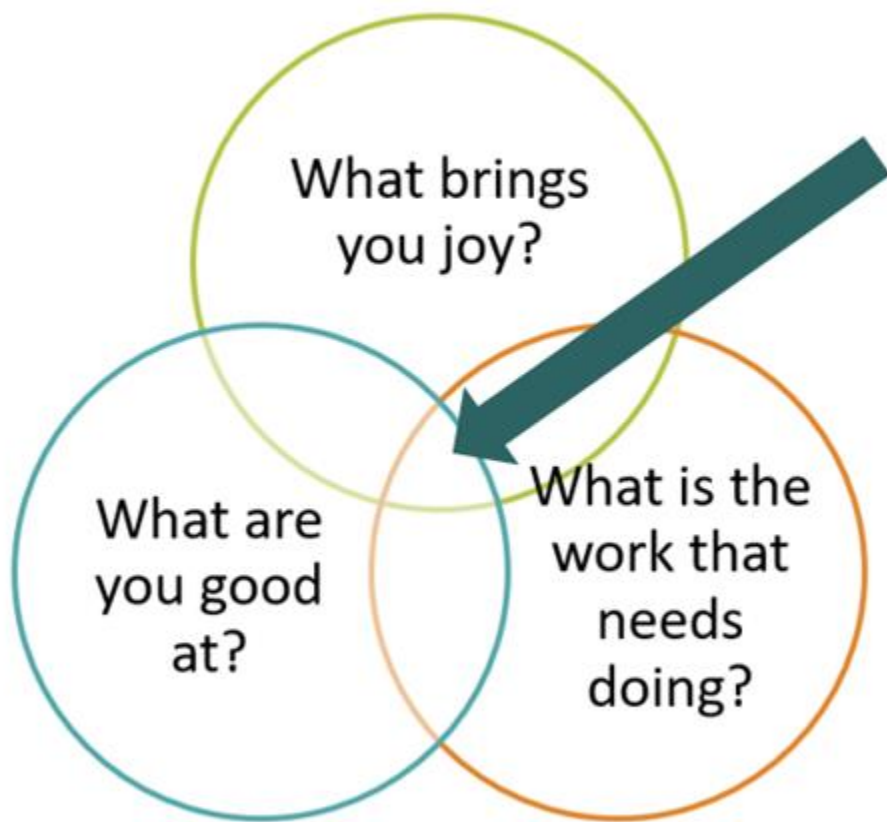
Climate Action Venn Diagram

Ayna Elizabeth Johnson

<https://www.ayanaelizabeth.com/climatevenn>







Climate Action

What is the intersection of:

What brings you joy?

What are you good at?

What work needs doing?

What brings you joy?

- Charts
- Overly complicated spreadsheets
- Halloween
- True crime podcasts

What are you good at?

- Organizing others
- Being bossy
- Making PowerPoint decks
- Event planning
- Communicating
- Sewing

What work needs doing?

- Building a network
- Connecting communities
- Solving the crisis



Amanda's Worksheet

What brings you joy?

- Charts
- Overly complicated spreadsheets
- Halloween
- True crime podcasts

What are you good at?

- Organizing others
- Being bossy
- Making PowerPoint decks
- Event planning
- Communicating
- Sewing

What work needs doing?

- Building a network
- Connecting communities
- Solving the crisis

Climate Action for Amanda:

Project managing
Caretakers of Wonder





Hope is a verb with its shirtsleeves rolled up.

David Orr

Professor Emeritus of Environmental Studies, Oberlin College



Amanda Strobel

Project Manager | Caretakers of Wonder

Manager of Strategic Initiatives + Executive Office Operations

Madison Children's Museum

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Thank you!

Resources, Reminders and Q&A

NISE Network Resources

- **Climate & Weather**

<https://nisenet.org/climate>

- **Early Learners**

<https://www.nisenet.org/earlylearners>

<https://www.nisenet.org/early-learner-earth-space>

- **Sustainability**

<https://nisenet.org/sustainability-resources>



Resources & Opportunities



Learn more and access
the NISE Network's online
digital resources
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Thank You



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ASU Center for Innovation in
Informal STEM Learning
Arizona State University

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Q & A