**Climate Change communication: How and Why to Do It in Libraries**

**Learner Guide**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/climate-change-communication.html>

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What are the best practices for discussing climate change? View this webinar to explore effective communication strategies developed through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (which has been advancing this work for over a decade) and the new National Climate Action Strategy for Libraries. Gain insights from Seeding Action, an initiative aimed at fostering a culture of planetary health action with communities through science centers and museums. Discover how libraries and museums communicate about climate change, its causes, and its solutions. Participants will leave empowered to engage staff, board members, and community members in meaningful conversations that inspire action and foster a proactive response to climate challenges.

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| **What are your personal and team goals for viewing this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Exploring public perceptions of climate change** |
| Although there are still misconceptions about what people across the country believe about climate change, the webinar shared important data that tells a different story. From the Yale Program on Climate Change Communications and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communications, [Climate Change in the American Mind](https://www.climatechangecommunication.org/climate-change-in-the-american-mind/) research, we know:* Public awareness: Americans who believe global warming is happening outnumber those who do not by nearly 5 to 1 (72% versus 15%).
* Personal responsibility: Sixty-three percent of Americans say they feel a personal responsibility to help reduce global warming.
* Broad support for action: A super majority of registered voters, across political parties, support public policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**Reflection question:**How might your library use this information to inform your community? How could you use this in conversations that connect these public perceptions to, and at, your work? |
| **Focus on the key facets** |
| [George Mason University’s Center for Climate Change](https://www.climatechangecommunication.org/) shares that realistic and practical conversations about climate change always center around six facets. 1. **It’s real.** Global warming is happening.
2. **It’s us.** Human activity is the main cause.
3. **Experts agree.** More than 97% of the world's climate experts are convinced, based on the data that human activity is warming the planet.
4. **It’s bad.** The impacts are serious, and they affect people, especially our children and grandchildren.
5. **Others care.** You are not alone. Most people are worried about global warming, and they support climate action.
6. **There’s hope.** There are actions we can take that will make a big difference.

**Reflection question:**Consider or discuss these key facets and how they can help you scaffold your strategies around communication. Identify any relationships between the facets and the library’s opportunities for playing a role in this work. |
| **Scope and focus** |
| The presenters covered some important key talking points that can help your library move forward with confidence in this work:* Libraries are non-partisan. Full stop. Our mission is to serve everyone in our communities, schools, and campuses, regardless of political affiliation. Libraries are for everyone.
* Every community member wants a better future for their children, and current trends predict challenges that could harm the health and well-being of today’s youth.
* Everyone deserves a safe, healthy place to live—with clean air, water, and access to nutritious food.
* Protecting families and neighbors during severe weather is a shared goal across all communities.
* Supporting local businesses strengthens economic opportunities and ensures resilience close to home.
* No single agency or organization can tackle these challenges alone. Collaboration is essential to address the scale of what we’re facing.

**Reflection question:**How can you highlight and promote the work your library is already doing, intentionally framing it as part of efforts to support sustainability and community resilience? |
| **Centering values** |
| Shared values can help mitigate political polarization because they help us to find common ground with each other. They have the potential to create a sense of unity among otherwise divided groups, reminding us that at the highest level, we all want many of the same things for our shared future. Consider these values shared in the webinar:* Fairness
* Health
* Resourceful
* Innovative
* Future generations

**Reflection question:**How can you identify information needs, design programming opportunities, or explore other actions that align with these shared values? Think about what a manageable first step, or next step, might look like for your library.  |