

Social Emotional Learning

Lesson 10: Responsible Decision-Making Being Responsible and Creating Change

SEL Objectives:

- To know who Greta Thunberg is
- To understand what it means to take care of the environment
- To understand how to help the environment at home

Talking Points:

- Briefly discuss who Greta Thunberg is and what she has achieved. *We have provided a biography of Greta Thunberg in Appendix A if you need background information.* Some questions you can ask to start the discussion are:
 - What world problem did Greta Thunberg feel very strongly about?
 - Can you think of one way that she helped to create change and solve the problem??
 - Why do you think she feels so strongly about protecting the environment?
- Discuss the problems and challenges that might face someone who is trying to create change. How do you think they could overcome these challenges?
- Together with your child, think of another person who has created change. Identify the issue they wanted to change, how they took responsibility for it, and the actions they took to change it. This can be someone well-known or a family member or friend. Talk about what they have achieved and how being persistent helped them to achieve their goals
- Ask your child to think of an issue they feel passionately about and why they feel strongly about it. Ask them how they think about which steps they would take to create that change. Share with your child something you feel strongly about
- Discuss with your child how taking care of the environment is our responsibility and ask them to either draw or list a couple of



consequences that we will face if we don't take care of the environment

- Together with your child, think of what you can do at home to help the environment. Ideas can be as simple as turning off the lights when leaving a room or making sure to recycle

Accompanying Video:

The Barnardo's SEL team have created a short video to help with the talking points above. Your video will be shared to www.facebook.com/pathseducation and <https://twitter.com/PATHSEdUK> on date/month/year.

Supplementary Activities:

There are 3 different SEL activities to complement this lesson that you may wish to use. These will be shared in an individual activities booklet along with the accompanying video.

Pre-School: Egg Carton Tree

Age 4-7: "Helping the environment at home" chart

Age 7-11: Letter to local councillor or MP

Reminders:

Following each SEL lesson, you could try to incorporate family complimenting as part of your weekly routine.

Appendix A

A Biography of Greta Thunberg - “The Greta Thunberg Effect”

Greta Tintin Eleonora Ernman Thunberg was born on 3rd January 2003 in Stockholm, Sweden.

When she was 8 years old, Greta first heard about the effects of climate change on our environment and was furious. She couldn't understand why no one talked about it and why so little was being done about such a big problem. She thought, if our future was at risk, why were the government not making more restrictions or why weren't people changing the way they were living? This discovery sparked Greta's interest in protecting the environment and protecting the world against the effects of climate change.



A few years later, Greta became depressed and stopped talking. Later, she was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome, Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and selective mutism. Despite the difficulties she faced, Greta continued her personal fight against climate change and had soon switched her family to a vegan lifestyle and had stopped flying due to the impact it has on our environment. Later, in her TED talk, she would say that being on the Autistic spectrum helped her see clearly what needed to be done to help the environment.

During the summer of 2018, Sweden experienced a number of heatwaves and wildfires. Greta, wanting to inspire change during the election of the new Swedish government and raise awareness of climate issues, decided not to attend school and instead sat outside the Riksdag (a Swedish Government building) every day for three weeks during school hours with a sign that read “school strike for the climate”. She started to gain attention from photographers and soon a video of her protest had reached 88,000 views on Youtube. After the Swedish General election, she continued striking from school on Fridays and by December 2018, more than 20,000 students had joined her, holding similar strikes in 270 different cities.

Greta became a figure head for climate change and across 2018-19 she spoke at protests, conferences and summits in London, Brussels, Sweden, Berlin and even addressed the United Nations Climate change summit. After this speech, her “school strike for climate” movement had spread globally. Soon, politicians and leading figures began to listen, and in February 2019, EU chief Jean-Claude Juncker unveiled a proposal to spend hundreds of billions of euros on mitigating climate change beginning in 2021.



On 15th March 2019, an estimated 1.4 million students in 112 countries around the world joined her call in striking and protesting for further action for climate change and a further event involving 125 countries took place on 24th May 2019. In July 2019, on behalf of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, secretary-general Mohammed Barkindo declared Greta and other young climate activists as “the greatest threat” to the fossil fuel industry.

During a speech at the World Economic Forum, Greta was famously quoted saying “*I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house was on fire—because it is.*”



Greta has received a lot of accolades despite her young age. She was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2019, she was featured (aged 16) on the cover of ‘Time’ magazine, there was a 50ft mural of her painted in Bristol and she has even had a book of her speeches “No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference” published. In Sweden, she was proclaimed one of the most important women of the year in 2019 and was one of ‘Time’ magazines 100 most influential people of the year. She has also been awarded the ‘Ambassador of Conscience Award’ by Amnesty International and is winning awards and prizes for her work in Germany, France and Norway.

As well as reaching millions of people across the world, inspiring thousands to protest and make change and enabling change on a global political scale, her work has also inspired wealthy investors from America to donate millions of pounds to help establish the Climate Emergency Fund. Swedish railways have also reported that since her protests, usage of trains in Sweden went up 8% following awareness around the impact of flying on CO₂ emissions. The media have described this impact on the world stage as the ‘Greta Thunberg Effect.’

On her Facebook page, Greta reportedly said if everyone listened to the scientists and acknowledged the facts “then we could all go back to school” and now says that her selective mutism, which may seem like a problem for a figure noted for speaking out, helped her to understand the power and necessity of speaking at all. She told the BBC after her diagnosis of Asperger’s that “*being different is a gift, it makes me see things from outside the box*” and that she was inspired by Rosa Parks as “*one person can make such a huge difference.*”

Greta’s message on climate change is clear in her TEDx Talk in which she said, “*We can’t save the world by playing by the rules because the rules have to be changed. Everything has to change, and it has to start today.*”

You can watch Greta’s TEDx Talk Here:

https://www.ted.com/talks/greta_thunberg_school_strike_for_climate_save_the_world_by_changing_the_rules/transcript?language=en