

## What can young people do to get their voices heard?

Young people like me have a lot to do. If I want to stand up and get my voice heard, it would be really hard. I adore Greta Thunberg for standing up and telling people what's wrong and what's right, because to stand up like this in front of everyone requires a lot of courage. Even if I want to go on the streets and protest, it is actually really complicated and hard, because protesting like that without the Government's approval is illegal. However, while the chances of getting everyone to do something to prevent climate change is very low, it is not zero, so we still have hope for Earth.

Every time I try to tell my classmates to do their part to prevent climate change, for example, switching off the lights and fans when no one is using them, only 1% of the people would listen to me and that 1% would do it for only a few days or weeks before they resume their old ways. I tried making posters to remind people but they would not even look at one sentence of my poster. I will always feel disheartened as my posters would always end up in the rubbish bin and all my hours spend on making them would go to waste.

I will always use both sides of the paper and whenever my father brings back a stack of unwanted papers or documents with one blank side, I will always collect those papers and use them again. I will also take showers that are not more than five minutes. Also, I would use refillable water bottles if I need to take away some drinks, and reusable lunch containers if I need to take away food. Moreover, people need to know that there are young people like me, who are willing to help the environment and want a chance to be seen. Yes, they might seem like they don't know anything about recycling and keeping the Earth safe, but it is a privilege to teach them from young and people must be happy that there are at least some children who volunteer. Never be too fast to judge, because people might need some extra hands, and maybe these children could help.

Most adults think that young kids and teens could not do anything important like saving the Earth, but actually we can do a lot more than adults. We can do all the small everyday things that add up into big things that can actually help the environment and the Earth. For example, conserving energy, water, electricity and reducing our carbon footprints. If everyone plays a part like this, we still have hope for our beloved Earth.

Speaking about carbon footprint, plants and trees help us take in carbon dioxide and give out oxygen most of the time. People are stressing about how carbon dioxide levels are ever rising, while oxygen levels are dropping. Plants and trees are the perfect solution for that. They are such wonderful things yet people still do not want to protect and take good care of them. Forests are still being cleared to make way for development and for raw materials.

Did you know that 27,000 trees are cut down each day so we can have toilet paper? Shocking right? But that is the sad truth about Earth today. I place plants on my window sill as plants are the most precious resource in the world in my opinion. They help to take in unwanted carbon dioxide and give out precious oxygen which is important to humans. I would always encourage my friends and classmates to plant some plants too. My favourite type of plant is green bean plant, as it is easy to grow and it grows fast.

Young people like me can come together to discuss new ways that other people — adults, teens or kids — can join us in the challenge to save the Earth. If not, we can also do our part individually by doing the things that I mentioned earlier like bringing our own reusables. In conclusion, young people like me can do a lot too in saving the Earth. We will also need to cherish the resources we have now and use it wisely. Thank you!

- 1E1 Rachel Chew Rui Qi