Raising Climate Warriors: Cultivating Eco-Conscious Families & Communities

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Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.
The couples rethinking kids because of climate change

Want to fight climate change? Have fewer children

Is it OK to have a child?
Meehan Crist

To Breed or Not to Breed?
In a world of pandemic chaos, political strife and climate catastrophe, some would-be parents see the future as too dark to process.

Climate change is making people think twice about having children

Fears of climate change 'apocalypse' are stopping young people having children and 60 percent say they are worried their kids could ADD to the crisis, new study claims

Should We Be Having Kids In The Age Of Climate Change?

Having kids is terrible for the environment, so I'm not having any
The population explosion and climate change are linked, I want to do my part.

How Climate Anxiety Is Shaping Family Planning

BirthStrike: The people refusing to have kids, because of 'the ecological crisis'

The ethics of having children during a climate emergency

Would you give up having children to save the planet? Meet the couples who have

Want to help combat climate change? Have one less child, study says

Eco-anxiety: Fear of climate change stopping young people having children

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41286-023-00168-5/figures/1
What is thriving?

• set of positive “vital signs” in adolescence (e.g., academic success, caring for others and their communities, the affirmation of cultural and ethnic diversity, commitment to healthy lifestyles (Benson & Scales, 2009)
• dynamic and bi-relational
• stability and balance toward a goal
• current stage and future orientation
• growth trajectory
• culturally specific
• Critical thinking and decision making
• Planning and problem solving
• Taking care of your mental health
• Being flexible and adaptive to change
• Having a positive outlook
• Communication well with others
• Being caring
• Being confident in your personal capacity
• Speaking up and sharing ideas
• Contribute to the well-being of community

Connecting families, schools, and communities: A systems-contextual approach to sustainable futures for children

April Hoang | Matthew R. Sanders | Karen M. T. Turner | Alina Morawska | Vanessa Cobham | Carys Chainey | Erik Simmons
FIGURE 2 A collective model of joint efforts to promote children’s capacities toward sustainable living.
Green parenting
Eco-parenting

Nche et al 2019
Shrum et al 2023
Eco-parenting

- Training children on Environmental Ethics, Mitigation & Adaptation strategies
- Modeling of pro-environmental behavior
- Seeking/buying of green or environmentally friendly products/foods for children
Parent characteristics & environmental practices

Green parenting

Child environmental behaviour
Specific parenting practices & actions

• Parental modelling
• Communication with children
  • Incidental teaching
  • Explicit instruction
• Encouragement/facilitation
• Exposure to nature
• Advocacy
A scoping review of green parenting: Parents as promoters of their children’s pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours
(Gonzalez, Morawska, Jeffries, 2024)
Understanding parenting in times of climate change: A national survey on green parenting

(Gonzalez, Morawska, Jeffries, & Excell 2024)
Green Parenting Practices Scale

I use reusable containers for my child’s childcare or school lunch.
I talk to my child about the effects of climate change.
I praise my child when they take part in environmentally friendly practices at home.
I encourage my child to participate in clubs/activities that promote ‘green’ behaviour.
I take my child to visit natural environments such as parks or forests.
I teach my child what and how to recycle.
Research Gaps

• Clarity of definitions
• Lack of longitudinal studies
• Links between parenting and child outcomes
• Focus on younger children
• Lack of evidence-based parent support strategies
• WEIRD focus
Discussion

• Intervention targets?
• Individual vs collective action?
• Should parents and children shoulder the burden?
• Shame, blame, hopelessness
• Building personal agency
• Leveraging the transition to parenthood
Thank you
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