



# Youth Climate Action Grants

## Project Template: Lights Off Campaign

This template can help you get started. Feel free to change it and add your own ideas!

### Project Overview

Lead a school-wide Lights Off Campaign to encourage students and staff to save energy.

Students will learn how using electricity can contribute to climate change. They will look around the school to find places where lights are left on when they are not needed. Then, they will encourage everyone to turn off lights and save energy.

Students will collect information, track their progress, and share what they learn with the school community. Together, they can help make their school more energy-efficient.

### Why This Project Matters

Schools use electricity every day for lights, computers, and other equipment. Making and using electricity can create greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. By turning off lights when they are not needed, we can save energy, reduce emissions, and help protect the environment.

### Project Goals

Students will:

- Learn how energy use contributes to climate change.
- Find ways to save electricity at school.
- Encourage others to build energy-saving habits.
- Measure the impact of their actions.
- Build leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.

### Project Results

By the end of the project, students will:

- Complete a classroom or school lighting audit.
- Run a 'Lights Off' campaign.
- Create posters and learning materials about saving energy.
- Share project results with the school community.
- Help others learn about energy conservation and climate action.



## Data Collection

Students can:

- Count how many students and staff participate.
- Record how many classrooms join the challenge.
- Track how often lights are left on before and after the campaign.
- Count how many people promise to save energy.
- Estimate how much electricity was saved.
- Take photos of project activities and events.

## What You'll Do

### Get Organized

- Create a project team and choose a staff supervisor.
- Give each team member a role
- Decide what you want the project to achieve.
- Create a project timeline.

### Learn and Explore

- Learn how electricity use contributes to climate change.
- Learn how saving energy helps reduce emissions.
- Research ways to save energy such as:
  - Turning lights off when they are not needed.
  - Using natural daylight when possible.
  - Using energy-saving lightbulbs.
  - Using motion sensors that turn lights off automatically.
- Learn other ways schools can reduce electricity use.

### Conduct a Lighting Audit

Before starting the campaign:

- Observe how lights are used in classrooms and shared spaces.
- Record when lights are left on when they are not needed.
- Identify areas with good natural light.
- Take notes and photos of what you observe.

### Launch the Lights Off Challenge

- Encourage classrooms to turn off lights when they leave a room.
- Use natural sunlight whenever possible and safe to do so.
- Place reminder signs or stickers near light switches.
- Create announcements, posters, newsletters, or social media content.



- Encourage students and staff to make energy saving promises.
- Track participation throughout the campaign.
- Record how many people and classrooms participate.

## Measure Your Impact

After the challenge:

- Complete another lighting audit.
- Compare results with your first audit.
- Look for changes in energy-saving behaviours.
- Estimate how much electricity was saved.

## Share and Inspire

- Share results through assemblies, posters, and announcements.
- Share tips for saving energy all year.
- Discuss what worked well and what could be improved.

## Suggested Project Timeline

| Time    | Activities                                              |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 Weeks | Planning, choosing team roles, learning about energy    |
| 1 Week  | Completing the first lighting audit                     |
| 1 Week  | Creating posters, signs and campaign materials          |
| 4 Weeks | Run the Light Off Challenge                             |
| 1 Week  | Complete a second lighting audit and review the results |
| 2 Weeks | Share results, reflect, and celebrate your success      |

## Suggested Project Supplies

- Poster-making materials
- Stickers or reminders for light switches
- Auditing supplies – Clipboards, pens, pencils, and markers

## Sample Project Budget

| Budget Item                   | Description                                        | Amount       |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| People/Labour                 | Speaker who teaches about energy and energy saving | \$250        |
| Materials/Tools Equipment     | Reminder labels for light switches                 | \$20         |
| Materials/Tools/Equipment     | Clipboards and recording supplies                  | \$50         |
| Education/Awareness Materials | Posters and displays                               | \$150        |
| Education/Awareness Materials | Printing costs for materials                       | \$30         |
|                               | <b>Total Budget</b>                                | <b>\$500</b> |



## **Project Team Roles**

*Project Coordinator* - Keeps the project organized, schedules meetings, and communicates with teachers and staff.

*Energy Audit Lead* – Organizes lighting audits and tracks project data.

*Campaign Lead* – Develops challenge activities and encourages student and staff participation.

*Education & Outreach Lead* – Creates posters and educational materials and helps spread the word.

*Reporting Lead* – Summarizes project results and helps create presentations and reports.

## **Safety and Accessibility**

- Make sure classrooms and hallways have enough light for learning and safety.
- Follow all school safety rules.
- Keep exits and emergency routes well lit.
- Make sure everyone understands their role and responsibilities.
- Have an adult present during activities.
- Offer different ways to participate, such as data collection, poster design, or presentations.

## **Reflection Questions**

- What did you learn about energy use and climate change?
- How does saving electricity help the environment?
- Which energy-saving action worked the best?
- How can students save energy at home?
- What teamwork and leadership skills did you build?
- How can your school continue saving energy?
- What would you do differently next time?

## **More Project Ideas**

- Run an energy-saving challenge at home with your family.
- Learn about LED light bulbs, motion sensors and other energy-efficiency technologies.
- Explore ways schools can save energy for heating and cooling.
- Invite an energy expert to speak to students.
- Create a school energy-saving action plan.
- Compare results between classrooms or grade levels.



## **Project Resources**

- [TDSB Environment, Energy and Climate Action Webinars](#)
- [Energy Campaign, Lights Half Off](#)
- [TDSB EcoSchools Energy Conservation Support](#)
- [Energy Retrofit Loans](#)
- [City of Toronto Building Emissions Performance Standards](#)