



Youth Climate Action Grants

Project Template: Car-Free Challenge

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

Project Overview

Lead a Car-Free Challenge at your school and help people choose more climate-friendly ways to travel.

Students and staff will try walking, biking, taking public transit, carpooling, or using other low-pollution ways to get to school. Students will collect information about how people travel before and after the challenge.

Students will learn how transportation affects climate change and air quality. By sharing what they learn, they can encourage more people to make climate-friendly travel choices.

Why This Project Matters

Personal vehicles create pollution that adds to climate change. They can also affect the air people breathe. Walking, biking, taking public transit, and carpooling can help reduce pollution and improve air quality.

Project Goals

Students will:

- Learn how transportation affects climate change.
- Learn what other ways of traveling can reduce pollution.
- Plan and lead a schoolwide Car-Free challenge.
- Build research, teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.
- Teach others about sustainable travel choices.

Project Results

By the end of the project, students will:

- Learn how students and staff travel to school.
- Organize a school-wide Car-Free Challenge.
- Track changes in how people travel.
- Create posters and learning materials.
- Engage students, staff, families, and community members.
- Share project results with the school community.



Data Collection

Students may collect and track:

- How many people walk, bike, take transit, carpool, or drive to school.
- The number of students, staff, families, and community members who take part.
- Comments or stories from participants.
- The number of trips made by walking, biking, taking transit, or carpooling.
- Photos, surveys, and notes from the project.

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 transportation affects climate change.
- Learn how vehicles create pollution.
- Explore ways to travel with less pollution, such as walking, biking, public transit, and carpooling.
- Learn how active travel helps people stay healthy and helps the environment.

Conduct a Transportation Survey

Before the challenge:

- Survey students and staff about how they travel to and from school.
- Record transportation methods such as:
 - Walking
 - Biking
 - Public transit
 - Carpooling
 - Driving
- Look for ways to encourage cleaner travel choices.
- Invite people to join the challenge and promise to use climate-friendly transportation.

Launch the Car-Free Challenge

- Share information about the challenge through announcements, newsletters, and posters.
- Encourage people to choose climate-friendly transportation.



- Track who takes part and how they travel during the challenge.
- Take photos and record activities.
- Host alternative transportation activities or workshops such as bike safety, intro to public transportation, School Streets events etc.

Measure Your Impact

- Repeat the transportation survey.
- Compare the results from before and after the challenge.
- Count how many more people used climate-friendly transportation.
- Discuss what worked well and what could be improved.

Share and Inspire

- Share your results through assemblies, posters, displays, or newsletters.
- Celebrate participants' achievements.
- Encourage people to keep using climate-friendly transportation all year.
- Reflect on what you learned.

Suggested Project Timeline

Time	Activities
3 weeks	Planning, choosing team roles, and complete the first survey
3 weeks	Run the challenge, encourage participation, and track transportation choices
1 week	Complete the second survey and compare results
1 week	Celebrate success, reflect on the project and share results

Suggested Project Supplies

- Poster boards and display materials
- Clipboards, paper, and pens for surveys
- Alternate transportation demo equipment
- Tire pumps and basic bike repair supplies
- Materials for presentations and displays

Sample Project Budget

Budget Item	Description	Amount
People/Labour	Cycling or transportation educator	\$250
Education/Awareness Materials	Posters and displays	\$150
Materials/Tools/Equipment	Bike safety and repair demo tools	\$250
Materials/Tools/Equipment	Helmets, lights, safety gear	\$250
Barrier Reduction	Refreshments for participants	\$100
	Budget Total	\$1000



Project Team Roles

Project Coordinator – Keeps the project organized, plans meetings, helps team stay on schedule, and communicates with teachers and school staff.

Activity Lead – Leads the hands-on activities and presentations.

Data Collection Lead – Takes photos, records who takes part in the project, records project results, and collects comments from participants.

Education & Outreach Lead – Shares information through newsletters, school announcements, social media, or assemblies and encourages students to get involved.

Reporting Lead – Helps the team share what they learned and their project results.

Safety and Accessibility

- Wear a helmet when biking.
- Follow traffic and pedestrian safety rules.
- Plan safe travel routes.
- Wear sunscreen and bring water during outdoor activities.
- Offer different ways for people to join the project.
- Remember that people may have different transportation needs.

Reflection Questions

- What did you learn about transportation and climate change?
- How do walking, biking, and taking transit help the environment?
- Did travel habits change during the challenge?
- What makes it hard for some people to choose climate-friendly transportation?
- What leadership and teamwork skills did you learn?
- How can your school continue supporting cleaner ways to travel?
- What would you change if you did this project again?
- Which activities helped most people take part?

More Project Ideas

- Host a bike repair workshop.
- Create maps showing safe walking and biking routes.
- Invite bike safety leaders or transportation experts to speak at your school.
- Organize a bike skills event.
- Start a walking school bus or bike train.
- Join Bike to School Week.
- Create a school plan to encourage cleaner ways to travel.



Project Resources

- [TransformTO Net Zero Strategy](#)
- [Sector-Based Emissions Inventory](#)
- [Low Carbon Transportation](#)
- [TCDSB - Bike Rack Program](#)
- [TDSB - Active, Safe and Sustainable Transportation \(ASST\)](#)
- [TDSB - ASST School Projects](#)
- [Public Transit in Toronto](#)
- [City of Toronto Cycling Resources](#)
- [Ontario Active School Travel](#)