



CARE 2025

Feedback

Outcomes

Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Climate Action Ripple Effect (CARE) is a student and community education and engagement program that matches students from grades 6-12 with mentors to create inquiry-based projects in support of municipal climate objectives and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

CARE is designed and delivered by the Fresh Outlook Foundation (FOF) in collaboration with school districts, local governments, and climate experts and advocates from all sectors, ages, and cultures in the Central and North Okanagan. Introduced in Vernon in 2022, CARE undertook its fourth round in Vernon and Lumby (School District 22) and its first round in Kelowna, West Kelowna, and Lake Country (School District 23) this spring.

CARE's Ripple Effect

As shown in this *CARE 2025 Feedback Outcomes Summary*, not only is CARE growing in reach and impact, but word of its success and popularity is spreading in both school districts.

CARE has grown from 135 teachers and students since its launch in Vernon, to almost 900 teachers, students, mentors, and judges in 2025. The "ripple effect" of this growth is significant beyond those participating, as shown by survey results that identified the number of direct and indirect contacts each participant made.

Results show that while 9,867 contacts were made directly with messaging about climate action and/or CARE, more than 75,000 contacts were contacted indirectly. And this is a modest estimate based on reporting from media, social media, and advertising sources.



**ENERGY EFFICIENCY
FUELED BY PURPOSE**

Grade 7 student Isaac worked with mentor Sean Shepherd to design a simple and cost-effect smart phone app for homeowners to track and regulate their energy use.

Isaac says, "This year what I'm most proud of is my CARE project. As a learner I've discovered something powerful about myself. I don't give up. Even when things felt overwhelming, I held onto that resilience. I've come to understand that my drive, when fueled by purpose, has no limit."

Isaac was selected for a CARE Community Impact Award, funds from which he will use to further develop his project for lasting community change.

Direct # of Contacts	Number of contacts made directly by CARE planners, teachers, students, mentors, judges, and exhibitors, plus the number of people who attended CARE events.	9,867 (confirmed by survey responses)
Indirect # of Contacts	Number of contacts made indirectly through FOF/CARE website and social media, earned media and social media, paid advertising, and social media shares by teachers, students, mentors, and judges.	75,000 (modest estimate)

Student Survey Outcomes

Students were surveyed before and after their CARE experiences to determine the impacts of its programming and events. Post-CARE survey outcomes based on 350 responses showed that most students enjoyed and benefitted from CARE programming, mentors, and events.

They also noted a change from feeling anxious about climate change to feeling empowered through climate action. Results also show significant growth in climate-focused values, attitudes, behaviours, and actions, along with advances in specific skills, collaboration, confidence, and agency. Students also thought it was helpful to have fun while learning about how to work with a mentor and possible climate-related careers.

Mentor Survey Outcomes

Again, CARE mentors were surveyed before and after their CARE experiences. Almost half of the 105 mentors responded. Final results show that the majority of mentors were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their teams’ enthusiasm, passion, innovation, skill building, collaboration, project quality, confidence, and agency.

Mentors benefited from CARE in a number of ways, the top three being:

- Sharing their experience, knowledge, and passion with students
- Building intergenerational relationships and capacities based on trust and mutual respect
- Connecting with others and building capacity in the climate-action community

Judge Survey Outcomes

CARE judges were surveyed after the CARE expos in Vernon and Kelowna. Feedback from 11 of the 42 judges shows that the majority were also “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their teams’ enthusiasm, passion, innovation, skill building, collaboration, project quality, confidence, and agency.

After CARE, most judges were “very encouraged” or “encouraged” about their community’s ability to respond proactively to climate change and youth’s ability to engage in, and contribute to, local climate action.

Students’ thoughts on CARE

- *“I’ll remember I did something amazing for my community and my family.”*
Mason, Grade 10
- *“I’m not doing this to look good or get a good grade. I’m doing it for our world and our future.”* Payton, Grade 6
- *“I’m most proud of joining the judging stream. We were originally super nervous, but Miss Fender kept saying our project was incredible. I’m so glad because it was so much fun and an incredible memory for me.”* Maddyn, Grade 7
- *“It was much easier to contact businesses than we thought, and they were happy to help us.”* Mackenzie

Mentors’ thoughts on CARE

- *“Mentoring a grade 11 student was a hugely rewarding and fun experience. His project was viable and impactful, and allowed him to develop key skills in planning, collaboration, and outreach. It was inspiring to see so many youth truly engaged in doing something to create a ripple effect for climate action in this way!”* Jude Brunt, purppl
- *“CARE features powerful programming and events that bring the community together with a shared focus on youth and climate action. It was an honour to be part of such a meaningful initiative.”*
Amandeep Singh, Home Zero Collective
- *“Meeting with my group of students was always the highlight of my week! They listened to my ideas and feedback and then took action on them.”* Sean Shepherd

General Reflections on What's Working

Students, mentors, and judges generally agree that CARE is important in the following areas:

- Enriching student personal and curricular competencies while enhancing their climate awareness, values, attitudes, and behaviours
- Engaging students with community mentors to build multi-sector, intergenerational, and cross-cultural, communication, respect, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration
- Building climate awareness and mobilizing broader community climate action
- Celebrating student learning and growing community climate action successes

Student comments, although not statistically valid, show they “like” many aspects of CARE, the top three being:

- Working with friends and teammates
- Meeting new people and talking about their projects
- Creating projects and learning from other projects

Mentor comments show they most liked:

- Students’ enthusiasm, passion, and innovation
- Mentor/student relationships
- School district/teacher support
- Meeting other mentors

Judge comments show they most liked:

- Meeting bright, engaged, determined, and innovative students
- Intersection of people from all sectors, ages, backgrounds, and interests
- Connecting with like-minded people

General Reflections on What Could be Improved

Students generally agreed the following would most improve their CARE experience:

- More in-class time for project work
- More mentors and earlier matching
- More time with mentors

Mentors generally agreed the following would most improve their CARE experience:

- Recruit more mentors and confirm and train them earlier
- Set and enforce a firm deadline for students to select their project ideas so mentor matching can be done much earlier

Teachers’ Thoughts on CARE

- *“We LOVED CARE so much! This was by far the highlight of our students’ year. They felt so special and excited to do such a large project.”*
- *“One of the most valuable aspects of CARE was the involvement of strong mentors who provided meaningful student support throughout their projects. It was also powerful to get students learning outside the classroom – engaging with community members, participating in hands-on projects, and taking ownership of real-world learning. Inviting elementary students to attend our presentations helped make the experience more authentic and gave our students a sense of pride and purpose. I hope we continue these community connections and authentic learning opportunities next year.”*
- *Overall, the CARE project helped foster a sense of purpose and community in our classroom, and I’d be excited to continue this work in the future.”*
- *“I liked how official everything was, like the kick-offs and nametags. This really helped with buy-in from students. It was also nice that a lot of topics tied into the grade 7 curriculum.”*
- *“I was glad to see my students learning about climate change in a way that was relevant, engaging, and action oriented.”*

- Ensure frequent communication and collaboration between mentors and students regarding mentor matching, meeting times and locations, progress reports, etc.

Judges generally agreed that lack of time was the biggest drawback. The suggested solution was to assign judges to fewer projects, which would give them more time per project and extra time to visit booths in the general stream.

Conclusions

2025 was a banner year for CARE with expansion into SD23. While there are certainly many opportunities for improvement – particularly in student and mentor matching, scheduling, and support – CARE is expanding in reach and impacts in ways that are proving to enrich student learning, confidence, and agency, while enhancing community climate engagement, awareness, and action.

We thank all participants for their contribution to a growing movement that’s achieving its passion for “mobilizing student and community climate action in Vernon and beyond.”

Next Steps

In keeping with CARE’s commitment to continual improvement, the planning team will use survey outcomes, anecdotal feedback, and information being gleaned from other like-minded individuals and organizations to refine educational programming and events, and to expand CARE’s reach and impacts.



THE CARE EXPO in Vernon featured Hall of Hope photos taken by 118 grade 6/7 students from Hillview Elementary in Vernon. In preparation, two students visited the creek restoration site at Polson Park to capture images of how environmental assets that support climate action can be enhanced within urban settings.

CARE 25 Feedback Outcomes Summary

BACKGROUND

The Fresh Outlook Foundation (FOF) – a registered charity founded in 2007 and based in Vernon, BC – delivers the Climate Action Ripple Effect (CARE) program in collaboration with school districts, municipalities, and community climate experts and advocates in Vernon (School District 22) and the Central Okanagan (School District 23).

CARE is a climate-focused education and community engagement program where students from grades 6-12 collaborate with community mentors to create projects that support municipal climate objectives and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Since its launch, CARE has been undertaken four times in Vernon and once in the Central Okanagan. It has grown from 120 students creating 32 projects in 2022, to almost 900 teachers, students and mentors building more than 200 projects in 2025 aimed at advancing local climate awareness and action (see CARE growth chart below).

These projects focused on six categories, including Nature & Biodiversity, Agriculture & Food, Energy & Buildings, Waste Reduction, Eco-Friendly Transportation, and Human Health & Culture. Students created projects that reflected their skills, talents, passions, and personalities.

Each round of CARE ends with a celebration of student learning where project teams showcase their projects to other teachers, students, mentors, and judges. Project judging has evolved over the four rounds, with 2025 introducing CARE Community Impact Awards to selected teams with projects that will be developed further to foster lasting community climate action.

The CASE for CARE

Climate change is a serious and urgent challenge requiring mitigation and adaptation efforts by whole communities, including youth.

We know that a powerful antidote to climate change/anxiety is climate action, particularly for youth who simultaneously experience fear and powerlessness in a warming world, and who are inheriting the potentially devastating impacts of past decisions.

To honour youth and support them in deserving, respectful, and practical ways, we must provide the capacity-building opportunities they need to undertake well-informed, timely, and beneficial actions.

We must also help youth build a culture of climate action that will grow exponentially via the 'ripple effect' exemplified in CARE. And whether they choose careers in government, business, academia, arts/culture, and/or the nonprofit sector, our aim is to help students appreciate and embrace the opportunities inherent in climate action, starting NOW.

Year/Semester	Teachers	Students	Projects	Mentors	Judges
2022 (spring)	6	120	32	0	9
2022 (fall)	10	160	42	20	9
2024 (spring)	14	275	106	40	60
2025 (SD22 spring)	14	272	92	50	42
2025 (SD23 spring)	20	422	119	55	8
TOTALS	64	1,249	491	165	128

**Please note that some teachers, mentors, and judges participated in two rounds of CARE*

Program growth – along with its popularity among teachers and students – is due, in great part to CARE’s focus on these goals:

- Enriching students’ cognitive, socio-emotional, and vocational skills and capacities
- Building awareness and passion for climate action and energy conservation/efficiency
- Provoking personal connections and commitments to climate action
- Replacing climate anxiety with confidence, agency, and climate action
- Adopting and promoting climate-friendly behaviours
- Learning about climate-focused careers and businesses opportunities
- Mobilizing youth climate action in their communities

To those ends, CARE:

- Integrates inquiry-based learning approaches, coaching, and resources
- Optimizes student learning and community engagement through mentors (multi-sector, intergenerational, cross-cultural)
- Provides ongoing training, coaching, and support for teachers, students, mentors, and judges
- Evaluates and refines program and event objectives, resources, and support during and after each round of CARE

This commitment to ongoing program/event improvement will again be reflected in changes made in response to outcomes from online surveys conducted before and after CARE 2025.

ONLINE SURVEY OUTCOMES

Methodology

While all CARE students, mentors, and judges from both school districts were invited to participate in the feedback process, only a portion of each group did so. Of the 694 students involved in CARE 2025, 451 (65%) responded to the pre-CARE survey, while 350 (49%) completed the post-CARE survey. Responses from mentors totaled 48 (46% of the 105 who participated), while 11 of the 42 judges (26%) completed the survey.

CARE’s Ripple Effect

Following CARE 2024, we used survey feedback from students, mentors, judges, and exhibitors – along with modest media outreach estimations – to determine that about 6,000 people had been directly and indirectly reached with climate action messaging and/or CARE project and event information.

In 2025, we used survey outcomes from similar groups, modest media and social media reach estimations, and advertisers’ minimal reach reports to calculate the numbers of contacts made directly and indirectly. The numbers show significant growth in CARE’s reach and impact in one year. (For calculations see Appendix 1)

Direct # of Contacts	Number of contacts made directly by CARE planners, teachers, students, mentors, judges, and exhibitors, plus the number of people who attended CARE events.	9,867 (confirmed by survey responses)
Indirect # of Contacts	Number of contacts made indirectly through FOF/CARE website and social media, earned media and social media, paid advertising, and social media shares by teachers, students, mentors, and judges.	75,000 (modest estimate)

Student Feedback Summary

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Most of the 350 student responses (69%) were from School District 23, with 26.3% from School District 22, and 4.6% from Aberdeen Hall, a private school located near UBCO
- Eleven of the 12 CARE middle and secondary schools in both school districts responded to the survey, with Canyon Falls Middle (SD23), Charles Bloom Secondary (SD22), Constable Neil Bruce Middle (SD23), and Glenrosa Middle (SD23) having the most responses
- The largest percentage of students were in grade 6 (36.9%), followed by grades 7 (25.4%), grade 8 (21.1%) and grades 11 and 12 (16.6%)

OVERALL GAINS

Robust student survey responses (411 in pre-CARE survey and 350 in post-CARE survey) show strong gains in:

- Climate change/action awareness
- Understanding of local climate goals
- Climate-friendly behaviours
- Presentation and public speaking skills

The following tables show specific percentage improvements for each question asked and responded to by 350 students in both school districts.

How much do you know about climate change and problems it is causing in your city/town?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
I know very little about it	12.6%	6.6%	-6%
I know a few basic facts about it	55%	25.7%	-29.3%
I know quite a bit about it	26.7%	50%	+23.3%
I know a lot about it and can explain it to others	5.7%	17.7%	+12%

How much do you know about things you can do to help with climate change problems in your city/town?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
I don't know anything	9.1%	2.5%	-6.6%
I know a few general things	64.7%	38.3%	-26.4%
I have some specific ideas about how I can help	23.7%	48.6%	+24.9%
I have many specific ideas about how I can help	2.4%	10.6%	+8.2%

How often do you make choices that will help with climate change?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
Once or twice a year	21.6%	13.1%	-8.5%
Once or twice a month	37.5%	28.6%	-8.9%
Once or twice a week	29.1%	42.3%	+13.2%
Once or twice a day	11.9%	16%	+4.1%

How much do you know about your city/town’s climate action plan/goals?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
I know nothing about them	35.5%	15.4%	-20%
I’ve heard about them but don’t know much	42.6%	34.9%	-7.7%
I know a few basic facts about them	16.4%	27.7%	+11.3%
I know several things about them	4.3%	19.1%	+14.8%
I know a lot about them and can explain them to others	1.3%	2.9%	+1.6%

How do you feel about your ability to make positive change in your city/town through climate action?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
I don’t think I can make any change	11.1%	8%	-3.1%
I think I probably won’t make much of a change	22.6%	20%	-2.6%
I’m not sure/don’t know	37.5%	24.6%	-12.9%
I think I might make some change	24.5%	39.1%	+14.6%
I think I can make a lot of change	4.3%	8.3%	+4%

How easy is it for you to make presentations or speak to the public?

RESPONSE OPTIONS	BEFORE CARE	AFTER CARE	CHANGE
Very hard	22.6%	9.1%	-13.5%
Somewhat hard	29.6%	18.9%	-10.7%
I’m not sure/don’t know	14.3%	23.4%	+9.1%
Somewhat easy	24.3%	33.7%	+9.4%
Very easy	9.2%	14.9%	+5.7%

SKILL DEVELOPMENT & PERSONAL GROWTH

Student survey outcomes also indicate that CARE was generally thought to be “very helpful” or “helpful” in developing the following skills and capacities:

- Research and analysis
- Project design, planning, development, and presentation
- Collaboration
- Problem-solving
- Confidence in sharing opinions, ideas, and passions
- Agency (ability to contribute to positive change)

Quantitative responses also show that the majority of students believe CARE was “very helpful” or “helpful” in them:

- Feeling less worried about climate change
- Meeting new people
- Working with others in a team
- Having fun while learning
- Learning about possible climate-related careers
- Learning how to work with a mentor

MENTOR EXPERIENCES

While a noteworthy number of students responded, “I’m not sure/don’t know”, the vast majority of those who chose other responses believe mentors were “very helpful” or “helpful” in the following areas::

- Knowledge, experience, passion
- Ongoing support and encouragement
- Project design/development
- Project quality
- Research support
- Presentation development
- Community connections

EXPO EXPERIENCES

The CARE Expo of Awesome was held at UBCO and showcased projects created by SD23 middle-school students in collaboration with their mentors. Students were excited to share their learning with other teachers, students, parents, and community members. Judging for CARE Community Impact Awards highlighted student climate awareness, passion, innovation, and action. Seven teams received funding to help them implement their projects for lasting community impact.

The second CARE Expo was held in Vernon and celebrated projects created by all SD22 students and SD23 secondary students. Almost 1,000 CARE participants and guests enjoyed student projects in the judging and general streams, 25 climate-focused exhibitors from government and business, the Hillview Hall of Hope photo gallery, an Alexis Park choir, eco-friendly door prizes, and local food trucks. Six secondary teams and three junior teams received seed funding to continue developing their projects.



CARE COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARDS

A total of \$10,000 was awarded in amounts between \$100 and \$800 to 16 project teams from grades 6-12 in both school districts.

One such project was undertaken by grade students Carter (left) and Jayda, who worked with Kelly Fehr (Vernon City Councillor), Maddy Watson (Cammy LaFleur Outreach Program coordinator), and Marnie Birkeland (George Elliot Secondary teacher) to create and distribute CARE Bags outfitted with hygiene products, food, and other items for local unhoused folks.

This support is increasingly important as climate change brings extreme temperatures and emergency events such as wildfires. They won a CARE Community Impact Award to continue their work next year.

About two-thirds of survey respondents were from SD23, the rest were from SD22. The majority of respondents who didn't respond with "I'm not sure/don't know" thought their expo experiences were "very good" or "good" in the following areas:

- Agenda/program
- Venue/layout
- Food
- Judging for CARE Community Impact Awards
- Interaction with other students
- Learning from other projects

In 2026, we will ask survey questions specific to each expo, so we can identify opportunities for improvement with each one.



More than 50 Alexis Park Elementary grade 2/3 students dazzled Vernon expo goers with climate-focused songs written by Holly Arntzen and Kevin Wright, creators of the Artists Response Team.

OVERALL CARE EXPERIENCES

When asked, "How likely are you to recommend CARE to other teachers and students?", 42% said they would likely or definitely do so. Almost 30% of respondents were not sure/didn't know, while 29% responded likely not or definitely not.

While not statistically sound, comment-based survey responses identified what students most liked about CARE:

- Working with friends and teammates
- Meeting new people and talking about their projects
- Creating projects and learning from other projects
- Learning new skills
- Experiencing the expos
- Choosing project team, topic, and judging
- Helping community
- Having the freedom to be creative
- Getting support from teachers and mentors
- Having fun!

Comment-based survey outcomes also showed what students think should be improved:

- More time in class for project work
- More mentors and earlier mentor matching
- More time with mentors
- More support with research and development of display boards
- Better explanation of CARE process, judging criteria, and expo agendas
- More interaction with other schools and students during project development

Mentor Feedback Summary

Of the 105 mentors who helped with CARE in Vernon and the Central Okanagan, 48 responded to the pre- and post-CARE surveys.

REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING

Mentors participated in CARE for the following key reasons:

- Climate action will only be achieved if people from all walks of life contribute to positive change
- Youth have a huge role to play in climate action
- We have a duty to support young people
- They are involved in other community sustainability/climate action programs
- They get satisfaction from addressing local sustainability/climate action challenges
- They have young people in their lives and want to give them a better future
- A colleague or family member recommended it

STUDENT SKILL-BUILDING

The majority of mentors surveyed were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the following aspects of skill development among students:

- Project design, development, and presentation
- Research and analysis
- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Confidence
- Agency

EXPERIENCES WITH STUDENTS

The majority of mentors surveyed were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the following:

- Relationships with students
- Student respect and appreciation
- Student project outcomes

MENTOR BENEFITS

In alignment with CARE’s goals for mentors, they benefited from being a CARE mentor in the following ways:

- Shared experience, knowledge, and passion with students
- Built intergenerational relationships and capacities based on trust and mutual respect

A Principal’s Thank-You to CARE Mentors

“On behalf of our entire school community, I extend my deepest gratitude for your generous involvement in the CARE initiative. Your time, expertise, and care have made a powerful and lasting impact on our students, our school, and our broader community.

Through your mentorship, our students were not only empowered to explore climate issues in meaningful ways, but they also learned how to collaborate, innovate, and contribute toward real-world solutions.

The CARE project aligns beautifully with our school’s vision to *Connect, Nurture, and Belong*. You helped our students feel connected to passionate adults in our community who model responsible citizenship. You nurtured their curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. And you gave them a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves – a hopeful, action-oriented movement for a better world.

Your contributions supported not just learning outcomes, but life outcomes. We saw students come alive with purpose as they worked alongside you on projects tied to local and global climate goals. Your involvement reaffirmed the powerful truth that when a community comes together to support its young people, remarkable things happen.

Thank you for investing in our students. Thank you for believing in them. And thank you for helping build a climate-conscious culture rooted in care and collaboration.”

*Mr. Kuhn, Principal
Constable Neil Bruce Middle School
School District 23*

- Connected with others and built capacity in the climate-action community
- Shared information about their businesses or nonprofit organizations
- Built capacity for a proven community problem-solving model
- Worked with people from different sectors
- Hastened the mobilization of community climate action
- Learned new things about climate change and climate action

OVERALL CARE EXPERIENCES & RECOMMENDATIONS

While not statistically sound, comment-based survey responses identified what mentors most liked about CARE:

- Students' values, goals, passions, and enthusiasm
- Mentor/student relationships
- School district/teacher support
- Expos
- Meeting other mentors
- Sharing skills and networks
- Student innovation

Comment-based survey outcomes also showed that mentors think the four aspects of mentorship needing the most work are mentor recruitment, mentor matching, communication, and student commitment to mentors.

Recommendations to increase mentor recruitment include the following:

- Recruit more mentors in each school district
- Recruit members from the business sector
- Confirm and train mentors early so they're prepared to start right away

Recommendations to improve the timing and appropriateness of mentor matching include the following:

- Set and enforce a firm deadline for students to select their project ideas and mentors
- Try a speed-matching approach at CARE kick-offs where mentors in each category are able to talk with students
- Develop a public-facing document that shows which mentors have been matched with which student teams

Recommendations to improve communication among mentors, teachers, and students include the following:

- Better communication between mentors and teachers about communication processes and tools
- More frequent communication between mentors and students pertaining to mentor matching, meeting times and locations, progress reports, changes to schedules, etc.
- Better communication with CARE team regarding time commitments, mentor matching process,

A number of mentors reported that their project teams were indifferent to mentorship in general and them in particular. Some reported students being uninterested in mentor help, unresponsive to mentor communication, and unaware of mentors being volunteers. This observation is supported by additional anecdotal feedback that



MENTOR SUPPORT provided by senior biologist Kyle Hawes, with Eco-Scape Environmental Consulting in Kelowna (centre), helped Lake Country students prepare for the Earth Day nature walk at George Elliot Secondary. They cleaned up around the school, removed invasive plants, and planted flowers for visitors' enjoyment.

was received from mentors who didn't respond to the survey. This is problematic for a variety of reasons, and must be addressed in more focused teacher training and student coaching and follow-up.

OVERALL CARE IMPACTS & REFLECTIONS

The majority of mentors surveyed felt CARE was "very impactful" or "somewhat impactful" in the following ways:

- Building student awareness about, and commitment to, climate action
- Building community awareness about climate action
- Fostering community-wide climate collaboration and mobilization

The majority of mentors were:

- "Very encouraged" or "encouraged" about their community's ability to respond to climate change
- "Very positive" or "positive" about youth's ability to engage in, and contribute to, local climate action

Most also agreed that mentorship is "very important" or "important" in building student climate awareness, passion, capacity, and action.

The majority also are "very motivated" or "motivated" after their CARE experience to be involved in responding to climate change locally.

Judge Feedback Summary

Of the 42 judges who evaluated the CARE Community Impact Awards at the Vernon expo, 11 responded to the post-CARE survey.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

The vast majority of judges found student outcomes to be "very strong" or "strong" in the following areas:

- Enthusiasm and passion
- Innovation and creativity
- Confidence
- Project potential for lasting community impact
- Project design and delivery
- Research and analysis
- Presentation skills
- Hope for the future
- Collaboration with each other and mentors

STUDENT SKILL-BUILDING

All judges were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with CARE's ability to help students build confidence, collaboration, and research/analysis skills.

The vast majority of judges were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with CARE's ability to help students build the following skills:

- Problem-solving
- Project design, development, and presentation
- Agency
- Communication

IMPORTANCE OF CARE

All judges felt CARE was “very important” or “somewhat important” in the following areas:

- Celebrating student climate action in our community
- Encouraging and supporting students in their current and future climate efforts
- Advancing the mobilization of community climate action

The vast majority of judges felt CARE was “very important” or “somewhat important” in the following areas:

- Building intergenerational trust and respect
- Learning new things about climate change and climate action
- Building capacity and passion for a proven community problem-solving model
- Adjudicating projects that could have lasting community impact
- Connecting with other judges from the climate action community

GENERAL REFLECTIONS

After participating in CARE, the vast majority of judges:

- Are “very encouraged” or “encouraged” about their community’s ability to respond proactively to climate change
- Are “very positive” or “positive” about youth’s ability to engage in, and contribute to, local climate action
- Think mentorship is “very important” or “important” in building student climate awareness, passion, capacity, and action
- Are “very motivated” or “motivated” to be involved in responding to climate change locally

Why Judges Care about CARE

- *“Serving as a judge was both encouraging and educational. Encouraging because it was immediately apparent these students fully grasp the importance of environmental care and sustainability issues. I’m from a generation that still doesn’t fully recognize the significance of the issue. These students get it! Educational because one after the other I observed groups of students who passionately and creatively applied their knowledge to find solutions they had no part in creating. All around, a very worthwhile experience that bodes well for our future.”* Tim Schroeder
- *“CARE gives me a renewed sense of hope, but also gives students a sense of meaning and purpose in a time of confusion and superficiality.”* Norbert Maertens, North Okanagan Naturalists Club
- *“It is inspiring to participate as a judge for CARE. The creative student project ideas and presentations show there are many ways to make positive contributions to address climate change, many of which are fun and deeply rewarding!”* Darren Murray, Regional District of North Okanagan
- *“The students had such creative ideas and were genuinely interested in making a difference in the environment. Their passion showed in the quality of their work.”* Arlene Schroeder

APPENDIX 1: CARE's Ripple Effect

Following CARE 2024, we used survey feedback from students, mentors, judges, and exhibitors – along with modest media outreach estimations – to determine that about 6,000 people had been directly and indirectly reached with climate action messaging and/or CARE project and event information.

In 2025, we used survey outcomes from similar groups, modest media and social media reach estimations, and advertisers' minimal reach reports to calculate the numbers of contacts made directly and indirectly. The numbers show significant growth over one year in CARE's reach and impact.

Students, mentors, and judges were asked to indicate about how interactions they had about CARE in their communities (aside from CARE planners, teachers, and classmates) they talked with about CARE. Responses showed the following:

	1-5 contacts	6-10 contacts	11-20 contacts	More than 20
Students	50.3%	25.1%	12.3%	12.3%
Mentors	40%	27%	19%	14%
Judges	45.5%	45.5%	0%	9%

NUMBER OF DIRECT & INDIRECT CONTACTS

Direct Contacts

For each surveyed group, we took the total number of participants in each group and multiplied them by the percentages of contacts they had. Then we calculated the numbers based on mid-range values of numbers of contacts made.

The numbers shown for students, mentors, and judges reflect online post-CARE responses from 2025. While the numbers of contacts made by exhibitors are based on percentage calculations from 2024, the numbers for teachers reflect anecdotal evidence.

Groups & Total Numbers	1-5 people	6-10 people	11-20 people	More than 20	Total Contacts
Students (total 694)	694 X 50.3% X 3 contacts = 1,047 contacts	694 X 25.1% X 8 contacts = 1,394 contacts	694 X 12.3% X 15 contacts = 1,280 contacts	694 X 12.3% X 25 contacts = 2,134 contacts	5,855
Mentors (total 105)	105 X 40% X 3 contacts = 126 contacts	105 X 27% X 8 contacts = 227 contacts	105 X 19% X 15 contacts = 299 contacts	105 X 14% X 25 contacts = 368 contacts	1,070
Judges (42)	42 X 45.5% X 3 contacts = 57 contacts	42 X 45.5% X 8 contacts = 153 contacts	0%	42 X 9% X 25 contacts = 95 contacts	305

Exhibitors (25)	25 X 21% X 3 contacts = 16 contacts	25 X 5% X 8 contacts = 10 contacts	25 X 37% X 15 contacts = 139 contacts	25 X 37% X 15 contacts = 139 contacts	304
Teachers (34)	0%	34 X 40% X 8 contacts = 109 contacts	34 X 40% X 15 contacts = 204 contacts	34 X 20% X 25 contacts = 170 contacts	483
TOTAL					8,017

For an accurate estimation of total numbers of people connected directly with information about climate action in general and CARE in particular, we added the following:

- Number of contacts made by four CARE coaches in Vernon (125)
- Number of elementary students who were exposed to CARE students and projects during class time (700)
- Number of elementary students who attended the expo (75)
- Number of public attendees at the Vernon and Kelowna expos (400)
- Number of contacts made by volunteer Youth Climate Corp of BC ambassadors (400)

CARE’s “ripple effect” to direct contacts from all sources was significant in 2025, with an estimated total of 9,867.

Indirect Contacts

For an accurate estimation of total numbers of contacts made indirectly with information about climate action in general and CARE in particular, we calculated the following and used half the total number.

- Number of media releases submitted and posted (10 X minimum viewership of 500/post = 5,000 contacts)
- Number of Castanet online ads (10 @ minimum viewership of 131,000 contacts)
- Number of social media post contacts made by participating mentors, judges, and sponsors (2,000 contacts)
- Number of FOF (CARE) social media posts
 - Facebook (80 posts from September ‘24/July ‘25)
 - FB post views – 8,640 contacts
 - FB post + video likes – 224
 - FB post + video shares – 36
 - FB video / reel views – 1,279
 - Instagram (85 posts from September ‘24/July ‘25)
 - IG post views – 4,618 contacts
 - IG post + video likes – 352
 - IG post + video shares – 60
 - IG video / reel views – 3,809

CARE’s “ripple effect” to indirect direct contacts from all sources was also significant in 2025, with an estimated total of 75,000.