You(th) Be the Change (YBtC) is Acterra’s Next Generation Science Standards-aligned education curriculum for students in grades 6 through 8. The curriculum covers climate change science and solutions at the local and global scale, and emphasizes communications and leadership skills. In its first iteration, in early Covid, YBtC primarily served as a self-paced online offering. In FY 2022, YBtC transitioned to providing in-school or after-school sessions held in-person, which were facilitated by Acterra or host school staff.

Sites
During FY 2022, YBtC was piloted in an after-school setting by Gabby Faria, a seventh-grade science teacher at Martin Luther King Middle School in Clovis, CA (Fresno County). At Casa Di Mir Montessori School, in Campbell, Nueva School in Hillsborough, and Luther Burbank Middle School in San Jose, YBtC was offered to middle schoolers and taught by Acterra staff.

YBtC Program Highlights
- Every student participating in YBtC committed to a personal climate action pledge (and most students chose multiple!)
- YBtC began a more robust partnership with San Mateo County Office of Education and Office of Sustainability’s Youth Climate Ambassadors program, where Youth Climate Education Associate Lily de la Espriella began coaching students through community projects
- YBtC completed its first teacher training to four staff from Veggielution, who now have the tools needed to include climate change education in their youth programming
- YBtC conducted its first in-person class at the Cupertino Public Library
- YBtC is exploring ways to bring the curriculum to schools for the hard of hearing by offering the content in American Sign Language

acterra.org/ybtc
The You(th) Be the Change (YBtC) program assesses the impact of its curriculum by embedding pre- and post-program surveys. Surveys help measure “exposure” and “readiness” both before and after the programming — in other words, if the students have already had lessons or coursework on climate change science, and how prepared students feel before or after completing the curriculum.

The questions include:
1. Have you taken courses on climate change prior?
2. How prepared do you feel to take some climate change actions as an individual? (Pre course & Post course)
3. How prepared do you feel to lead members of your community to take some climate change actions? (Pre course & Post course)
4. Did you accomplish what you were hoping to achieve from the You(th) Be the Change Program?

Notes:
Pre and post program survey respondents are not 1:1. Pre program respondents total 128, while Post program respondents total 83. 84 students received programming and did not fill out either surveys.
Description: n=128. For the pre-program survey, 39% of respondents had not taken any courses on climate change prior to the You(th) Be the Change Program. The first goal of climate change education is to give students the language they need to be able to conceptualize this complex topic at a high level. For many, this program is the first time they had defined terms like global warming, climate change, greenhouse gases, and the greenhouse effect.
Description: n=128. Survey respondents had the option to choose a number ranging from 1 to 5 for how prepared they felt to take any sort of climate action in their personal lives. The options were translated as follows: 1 = "not prepared," 2 = "slightly prepared," 3 = "prepared," 4 = "confident," and 5 = "very confident." 61.7% of survey respondents selected a 3 or lower for their personal preparedness score, while the remaining 38.3% selected a 4 or 5, indicating that over half could benefit from the programming. Almost half of survey respondents chose 3= "prepared," indicating that survey respondents felt a moderate amount of preparedness pre-programming.
HOW PREPARED DO YOU FEEL TO LEAD MEMBERS OF YOUR COMMUNITY TO TAKE SOME CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS? (PRE-COURSE)

Description: n=128. Survey respondents had the option to choose a number ranging from 1 to 5 for how prepared they felt to take leadership level climate actions on a community level. The options were translated as follows: 1 = "not prepared," 2 = "slightly prepared," 3 = "prepared," 4 = "confident," and 5 = "very confident." 78.5% of survey respondents selected a 3 or lower for their community-level preparedness score, while the remaining 21.5% selected a 4 or 5, indicating that the majority of students were not prepared to take initiative outside of their personal lives.
HOW PREPARED DO YOU FEEL TO TAKE SOME CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS AS AN INDIVIDUAL? (POST COURSE)

Description: n=83. After completing the program, students were asked again how prepared they felt to take climate actions on a personal level, scores ranging from 1 to 5. 63.9% of survey respondents selected a 4 or 5 for their personal preparedness score, contrasting with the pre-course percentage of 38.3%. Additionally, no survey respondents selected 1 ("not prepared at all"), indicating that after only 6 lessons on introductory climate change lessons, students felt more prepared in their agency on climate issues in their personal lives.
Description: n= 83. After the course, 37.4% of survey respondents selected a 4 or 5 for their community level leadership preparedness score, contrasting with the pre-course percentage of 21.4%. Additionally, only 7.2% scored a 1 (“not prepared”) post-programming, contrasting with a 19% pre-programming.
DID YOU ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WERE HOPING TO ACHIEVE FROM THE YOU(TH) BE THE CHANGE PROGRAM?

Yes 84.3%

Maybe 8.4%

No 7.2%

Description: n= 83. After the program, 84.3% of survey respondents felt they accomplished their goals with the program.
From analyzing survey data, we found a large comprehension level discrepancy between the private and public schools we worked with. Early on in the YBTC programming, we tiered the lessons from their baseline level so that there were 1. remediated options, 2. non-altered options, and 3. enrichment options.

In addition to this modification to the curriculum, we also found that pre- and post-program survey questions should be multiple choice rather than open form. This will enhance Acterra's ability to analyzing whether the content is reaching students while solving for writing-level discrepancies.

The final learning that we will be implementing going forward is to interview teachers after the programming to make sure we fully understand how the program was received, including what went well and what can be improved upon in the future.

Learn more about YBTC by contacting us at ybtc@acterra.org