

# Middle/High School Assembly

## Notes for educators:

This assembly can be used with a single class or a larger group, as an introduction to Freedom to breathe. Students can choose to share their views and ideas in a way that inspires them, in any creative way that they would like. The teacher can choose the most appropriate follow up for their class/group – for example, this could involve writing poems, songs or letters, creating drawings or posters, making short videos etc.

The Freedom to breathe teaching resources have been developed by educational professionals and will achieve three key learning outcomes. **Students will:**

1. Understand the state of air quality in their city, and how it compares to other cities.
2. Understand the health impacts of air quality on their physical health, mental health and their ability to learn.
3. Understand how they can claim their right to clean air by understanding what the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is. It is focused on their rights to the best possible health, clean water and a clean environment (article 24), but does not include the explicit 'right to clean air.'

**Curriculum links:** this primarily links to the Next Generation Science Standards, but of course also touches on History-Social Science Standards

**Freedom to breathe** aims to gather the support of 20,000 children from four target cities (starting with Beijing, Delhi, London, Los Angeles) - in support of a call to the UN to acknowledge Children's Right to Clean Air. Students will have the opportunity to join a virtual event in November to hear the response from the UN.





Freedom to breathe

What are  
the things  
we need to  
live a happy  
and healthy  
life?

**Food**

**Clean  
Water**

**Sleep**

What are  
the things  
we need to  
live a happy  
and healthy  
life?

**Warmth**

**Shelter**

**Fun!**

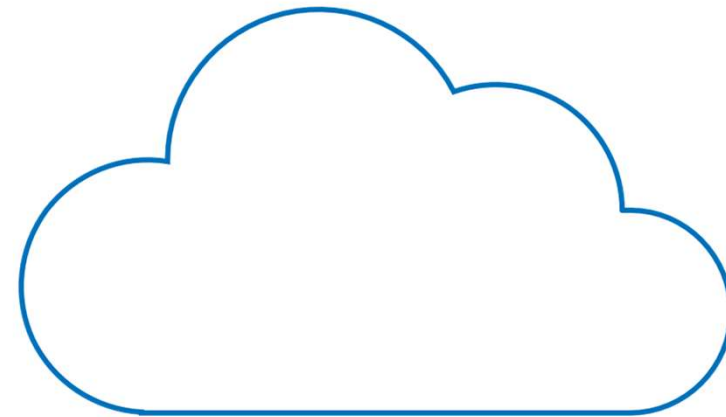
**Exercise**

**PAUSE POINT**

 **Freedom to breathe**

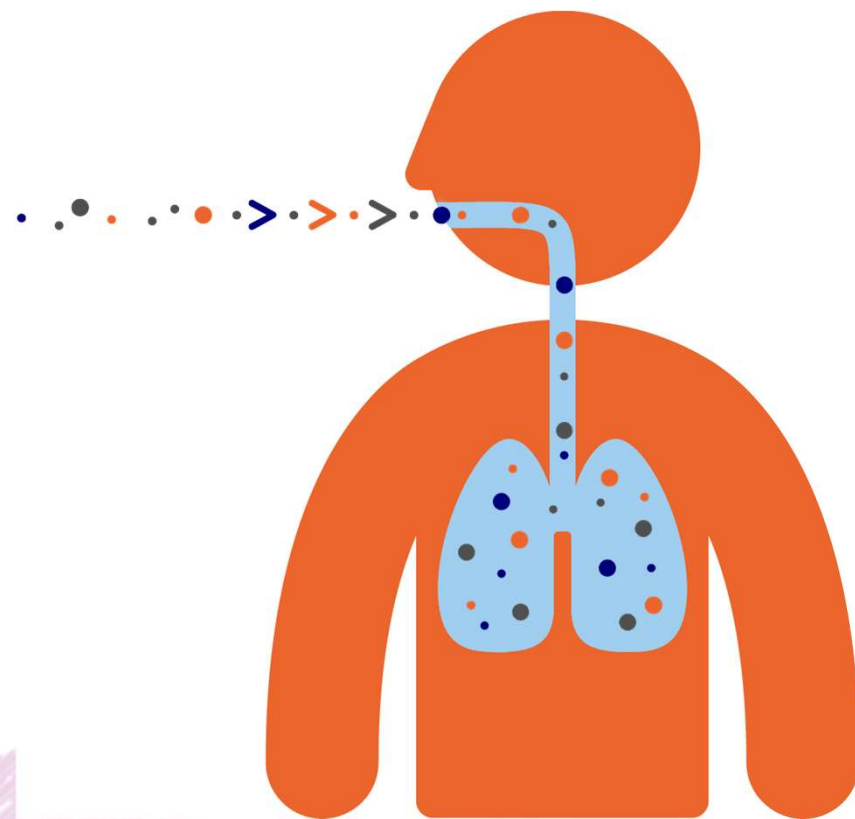
How about clean air?

What is air  
pollution?



Air pollution is in the air that we breathe in.

The particles and gases enter our bodies and can damage our health.





Any amount of air pollution can be damaging to our health and physical and mental development, but the more that you are exposed to, the bigger the risk and the larger the impact it can have.



Which of these things  
contribute to air pollution?

PAUSE POINT

Books?  
Cooking?  
Factories?  
Trees?  
Cars?  
Bicycles?  
Burning wood?  
Cleaning products?

# Can you guess where air pollution comes from?

Try to finish the sentences:

- **Indoor** air pollution is caused by things like....
- **Outdoor** air pollution is caused by things like....

# Indoor air pollution is caused by things like...

Cooking - gases and particles are released when food is cooked.



Personal care products like shower gels and body sprays.



Chemicals in cleaning products or craft materials, that are released into the air. These harmful gases are called volatile organic compounds (VOC).



Dust, mould and bacteria.



# Outdoor air pollution is caused by things like...

**Vehicles** such as cars, vans, trains, ships and planes release gases and tiny particles (in soot) into the air



**Factories** that make things such as food, clothes and toys and **power stations** that generate energy by burning fossil fuels



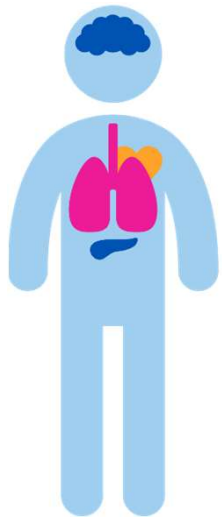
**Farming** often has a lot of animal waste and uses fertilisers and pesticides (chemicals) to help food grow, all of which can cause pollution



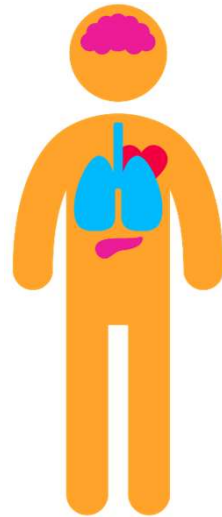
**Burning fuel** such as wood and coal to heat homes



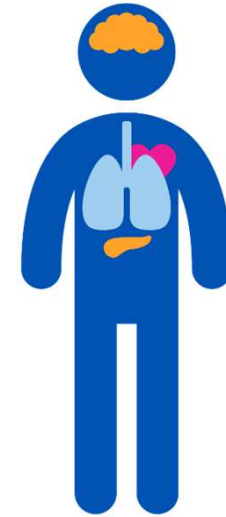
# How does air pollution affect us?



Air pollution can damage your **lungs** and impact your breathing.



Exposure to air pollution can affect your **brain** and therefore your ability to learn and your mental health.



Breathing in air pollution can impact your **heart** and cause future heart problems.

**PAUSE POINT**

**We can all help to make sure the air around us is cleaner.**

**What could you do?**

Hint: think about things you've done over the last week (e.g. at home/school, your journeys, your activities):

- Could you have done anything differently?
- Are you already doing something to help?

**PAUSE POINT**

## At home...



- Open windows to let the fresh air in – especially when
  - cooking
  - or cleaning
- Use fragrance-free milder cleaning and personal care products.

## When travelling to places...



- Walk, cycle, scoot or take public transport whenever you can instead of using your car.
- Don't idle – ask your parents/adults to turn off their engines when the car isn't moving.



What can  
you do to  
make sure  
we have  
cleaner air?

What can  
we do to  
make sure  
we have  
cleaner air?

What can  
everybody  
do to make  
sure we  
have  
cleaner air?

The logo features a stylized sunburst or fan shape on the left, composed of several curved lines in shades of brown and blue. To its right, the words "CALIFORNIA" and "CLEAN AIR DAY" are stacked in a blue, sans-serif font.

# CALIFORNIA CLEAN AIR DAY

A PROJECT OF THE COALITION FOR CLEAN AIR

OCTOBER 6, 2021







# To get involved in California Clean Air Day, you could take the clean air pledge for kids!

[www.cleanairday.org/pledge/kids/](http://www.cleanairday.org/pledge/kids/)

## CLEAN AIR PLEDGE FOR KIDS



Bike to school, the store or a park



Plant a tree



Tell my parents to turn off the car when idling



Walk to school, the store or a park



Tell my parents to turn off the car when idling



Give a report to my class on the environment



Grow a seed or plant a garden



Give a report to my class on the environment



Do an air quality experiment



Make a craft or art project about air quality to raise awareness

**Everybody can play a part to make sure  
we have cleaner air!**

There's something else we can do too...

# What is a right?

Rights are important things which we **need** to live a happy and healthy life.

We talked about some of these earlier...

PAUSE POINT

**Clean  
Air**

**Food**

**Clean  
Water**

What are  
the things  
we need to  
live a happy  
and healthy  
life?

**Warmth**

**Shelter**

**Fun!**

**Sleep**

**Exercise**

**PAUSE POINT**

 **Freedom to breathe**

# Needs and wants

What is the difference?

Need:

Something we must have to live a happy and healthy life

Want:

Something we like but we don't need

# Need or want?

What is the difference?

Xbox  
Clean water  
Netflix  
Chocolate  
Hospitals  
Education

Clean Air?

PAUSE POINT



A young girl with curly hair, wearing a striped shirt and blue shorts, is smiling on a colorful playground. The playground has blue, red, and yellow sections. The text "The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

The United  
Nations  
Convention on  
the  
Rights of the  
Child (UNCRC)

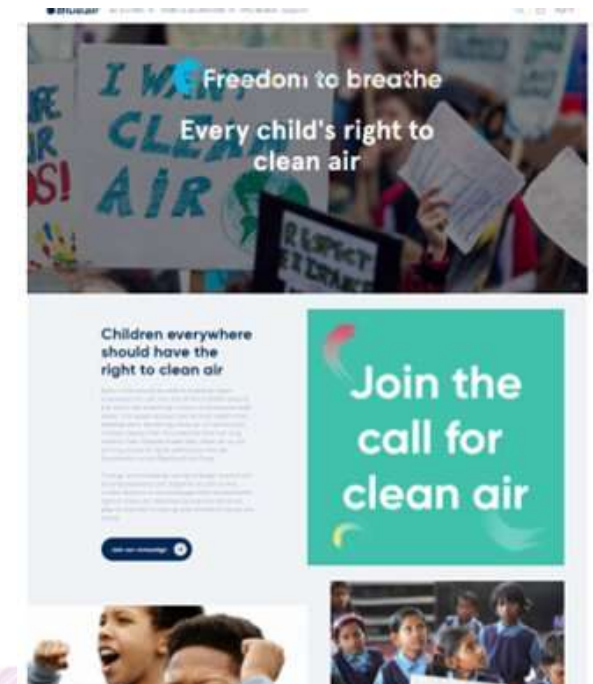
The UN says that children should have access to hospitals, clean water, healthy food, a good and clean environment and education.

But they do not clearly say that clean air is a right!



# The UNCRC does not explicitly state Clean Air should be a right.

- Do you think it should?
- Raise your hand if you agree.
- Your teachers will make sure that the right people know you think clean air should be a clear right, by adding the number of children who voted 'yes' to <https://www.blueair.com/us/freedomtobreathe.html>



# What happens next?

- 20,000 children calling for the Right to Clean Air all over the world – starting in Beijing, Delhi, London & Los Angeles!
- Event in November bringing together the children's voices to the UN
- Your ideas are really important – we'd love to know what they are so we can help you share them with the UN! Examples of things you might like to do, could include:
  - Stories, poems, letters, songs
  - Artwork
  - Videos or photography (of actions and places, not people)

Please ask your teacher to share a selection of your work with us via email:  
[freedomtobreathe@ccair.org](mailto:freedomtobreathe@ccair.org)



Freedom to breathe