

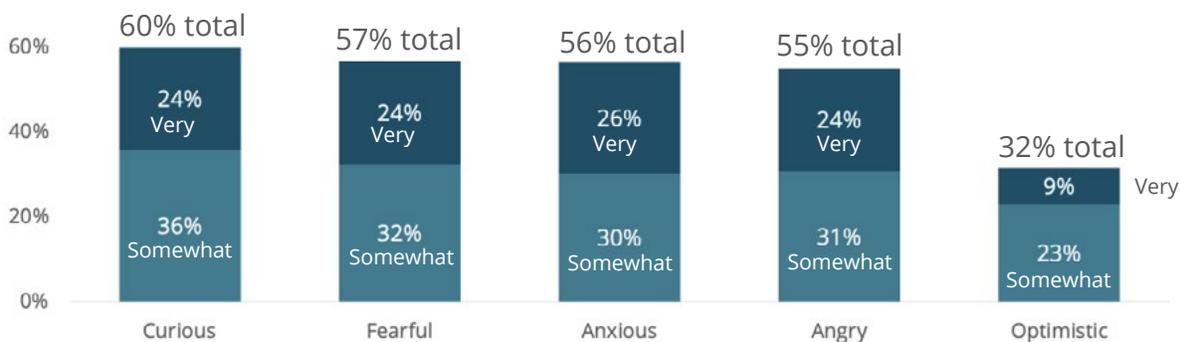
## Climate Change Sparks Emotional Responses

Over half of Americans report feeling fearful, anxious, and angry when they think about climate change. As part of Mental Health Awareness Month and National Public Health Week, ecoAmerica, in partnership with the American Public Health Association, surveyed people in the US on their emotions about climate change and perceptions of the health impacts of solutions. Findings show that a larger number of younger American adults report feelings about climate change than their older counterparts. The findings also indicate that parents are well-positioned to lead on the issue, given their understanding of the health benefits of climate action.

### What Do Americans Feel When They Think About the Changing Climate?

Over half of Americans report a negative emotional response to climate change, including roughly 1 in 4 survey respondents who report more intense feelings, such as very anxious (26%), very fearful (24%), and very angry (24%). Feelings of anxiousness about climate change are often referred to as [climate anxiety](#) or [eco-anxiety](#). Out of all the emotions listed in the survey, most respondents reported feeling curious on the issue (60%), which is a call to action to talk about climate change with friends, family, and colleagues. Only about 1 in 3 Americans feel optimistic when they think about climate change – a stark reminder that urgent action on solutions is required.

**Americans report feeling curious, fearful, anxious, and angry when they think about climate change.** Survey question: When you think about climate change, how do you feel? Results for “very” and “somewhat” 1,066 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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### Young People Report Stronger Emotions Around Climate Change

Compared to the national average and older adults, more young Americans between 18-29 feel curious, angry, fearful, and anxious when they think about climate change, and fewer feel optimistic. The gap is as wide at 16 points when comparing the 66% of young Americans feeling angry to the 50% of >60 Americans. There’s no question why young people feel angry — they stand to inherit a world afflicted by climate change and face the impacts for more years of their life should the trajectory of inaction persist.

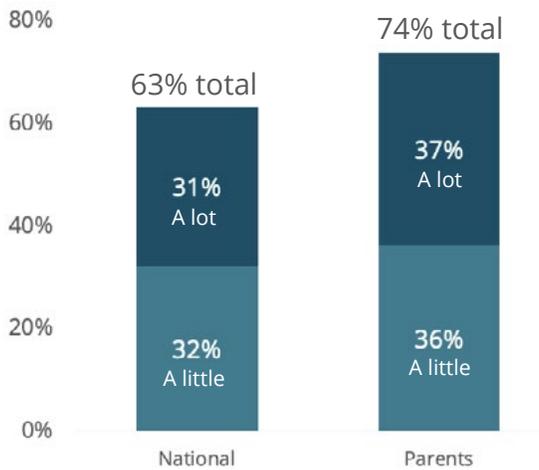
**More young Americans identify with feelings around climate change than older counterparts** Survey question: When you think about climate change, how do you feel? Results for “very” and “somewhat” 1,066 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.

|            | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-60 | > 60 |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Curious    | 66%   | 55%   | 59%   | 61%  |
| Angry      | 66%   | 53%   | 53%   | 50%  |
| Fearful    | 65%   | 58%   | 53%   | 54%  |
| Anxious    | 64%   | 57%   | 52%   | 54%  |
| Optimistic | 30%   | 34%   | 33%   | 29%  |

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**Americans Know the Health Benefits of Climate Action, Especially Parents**

**Parents recognize that climate action benefits health.** Survey question: If the United States took action on climate change, how would it affect your health? Results for “improve my health a lot” and “Improve my health a little” 1,066 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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When asked how it would affect their health if the United States took action on climate change, 63% of survey respondents said it would benefit. This includes 31% who said climate action would benefit their health a lot and 32% who said it would benefit their health a little. Compared to the general public, however, more parents appear to make the health and solutions connection. Nearly three quarters (74%) of parents say US action on climate change would benefit their health — 11 points more than the national average. This includes 37% of parents who say climate action would benefit their health a lot and 36% who said it would benefit their health a little. These findings show that parents are positioned well to participate and lead in climate advocacy and action, in building support for climate solutions.

Full data is available in the accompanying [toplines](#).

### Methodology

ecoAmerica and the American Public Health Association designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online on April 15, 2022 using Survey Monkey. The survey yielded a total of 1,066 complete adult responses and used the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to weigh the national general population and reflect the demographic composition of the US. Respondents were asked for information on their sex, race/ethnicity, age, state, and education level so Survey Monkey could weigh the results to be nationally representative. The sample was drawn from an online panel and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3%. In interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 1,066 respondents answered, "Yes" to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within 3 points, or range from 47% to 53%.

### Suggested Citation

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