

## ***Climate Science, Not Climate Silence - Our Open Letter on Psychologically Safe Climate Education in Australia***

### **Abstract:**

- **Background:** In May 2025, a policy report argued that climate education (or “alarmist” teaching) was driving mental distress in pre-adolescents and adolescents and recommended scaling back climate curricula. At the same time, young Australians report elevated climate concern (67 %) and accelerating experience of climate-related events (84 % affected by disasters since 2019) - evidence that avoidance of climate topics is not protective.
- **Approach:** In response, ECOMIND convened over 150 signatories, spanning psychologists, educators, youth leaders and climate scientists, to author and publish the “Climate Science, Not Climate Silence” open letter. The letter publicly challenged the notion that climate education causes harm; instead, it argued for emotionally safe, accurate, and age-appropriate climate education that honours young people’s lived realities and nurtures resilience.
- **Outcome:** The open letter received broad endorsement across mental-health and climate sectors, generating media interest, influencing discourse around curriculum policy, and sparking invitations to participate in advisory rounds for climate-mental-health integration in schools. It has provided a rallying point for linking climate education with emotional-resilience frameworks in adolescent health.
- **Innovation:** This initiative flips the prevailing narrative of “climate education as harm” to one of empowerment and emotional processing - emphasising that well-designed climate curricula can be mental-health promoting rather than threatening. It leverages youth voice, interdisciplinary signatory backing, and a public policy lens in a way that is unusual in the adolescent mental-health space.
- **Significance:** For practitioners in adolescent health, education and climate-mental-health intersection work, this open-letter model illustrates how strategic advocacy, grounded in evidence and young-person voice, can shift policy narratives and practice frameworks. It underscores that supporting youth in the climate era means embedding emotional resilience and enabling agency - a crucial dual mandate for adolescent health in Australia today.