



**BIOSPHERE**  
INSTITUTE OF THE BOW VALLEY

PO Box 8789, 201-600 9th St.  
Canmore, AB T1W 3L9

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Youth of the Bow Valley Combat Eco-anxiety with Solutions and Celebration April 17, 2024**

On Saturday, April 20th, over 30 youth ages 14-18 from Mînî Thnî, Canmore and Banff will come together to learn, connect and celebrate the Earth. Taking place at the Banff YWCA, the half-day event features workshops to support mental health, sustainable lifestyles and reconcili-action.

The event is created by the Future Leaders Youth Council of the Biosphere Institute, an engaged group of youth who are taking environmental change into their own hands. In response to the overwhelming amount of 'doom and gloom' narrative about climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, the Future Leaders Youth Council expressed feelings of eco-anxiety.

This group of 9 inspiring youth didn't dwell in despair; they are transforming concern into action. The event content and title "Not the End of the World" is a needed antidote to the dominant negative headlines. Since September 2023, the Future Leaders Youth Council have been learning about Earth solutions and brainstorming workshops. This event is the culmination of their learning and will cover solutions to support sustainable fashion, planet-based cooking, reconcili-action and practical guidance to support mental health.

Future Leaders Youth Council member and event co-organizer Ko Ueno (he/him, 19) from Canmore commented, "we've poured our hearts into creating this event and we'd love for youth to join us because it is 'Not The End of The World'". Nami Dwyer (she/her, 17), another co-organizer from Canmore added, "this is a great opportunity for youth to meet other young people of the Bow Valley and learn about the Earth."

Future Leaders Program Manager, Heidi Widmer (she/her) of the Biosphere Institute is supporting the youth in planning. She added, "this event is medicine for eco-anxiety. By coming together, youth feel supported in solutions"

Respected leader Banff Mayor Corrie DiManno will present an Opening Address at the event. Mayor DiMannor added that "now more than ever, we need youth to step into environmental leadership roles as they are our future leaders. I am endlessly inspired by these youth who are transforming concern into impact. I look forward to where their learning and skills take them and our communities."

The event is generously supported by the Banff YWCA paired with the environmental knowledge of the Biosphere Institute. Special thanks also to Calgary Foundation for the financial support.

Registrants for this free event will leave with an upcycled tote bag, information from Parks Canada representatives about wildlife, tasty planet-based snacks, connect with Indigenous stories from Îyarhe Nakoda member Gage Beaver (he/him) and practices for supporting mental health through poetry writing and brave conversations. The event finishes with a local meal from Co+Kitchen and an open mic celebration of music, songs and dancing.

The media is welcome to attend the event on Saturday, April 20th, 12:30-10pm. For more information, contact Heidi Widmer at [education@biosphereinstitute.org](mailto:education@biosphereinstitute.org) or visit [www.biosphereinstitute.org/april-20th-youth-event](http://www.biosphereinstitute.org/april-20th-youth-event)