



Environmental Data and Governance Initiative Website Access Assessment Report

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Change in Access to the EPA's "A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change" Website

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Change in Access to the EPA's "A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change" Website

The "A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change" subdomain of the EPA website is no longer accessible via the main EPA website and is incorrectly stated as captured in the EPA's January 19 snapshot. The "Student's" subdomain redirects to an update notice, which states, "If you're looking for an archived version of this page, you can find it on the January 19 snapshot." This subdomain, however, is not hosted on the January 19 snapshot, making it inaccessible from the epa.gov domain. A similar set of web pages continues to be available as an unlinked EPA subdomain but has extremely limited accessibility using a search without prior knowledge of the page.

Description of Change in Access

1. On February 15, 2017¹, the EPA posted a [snapshot of the January 19, 2017](#) version of the epa.gov website, releasing a [statement](#) that said "The Web Snapshot consists of static content, such as web pages and reports in Portable Document Format (PDF), as that content appeared on EPA's website as of January 19, 2017."
2. On April 28, 2017, the EPA issued a [news release](#) stating that "EPA.gov, the website for the United States Environmental Protection Agency, is undergoing changes that reflect the agency's new direction under President Donald Trump and Administrator Scott Pruitt."
3. Coinciding with the release, several epa.gov pages began redirecting to a [notice](#) stating that "This page is being updated". This notice also states, "If you're looking for an archived version of this page, you can find it on the [January 19 snapshot](#)."
4. The "[A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change](#)" website (Screenshot 1.1) is not accessible from the main epa.gov website or the January 19 snapshot.
 - a. The original URL of the "Student's" website redirects to the "[This page is being updated](#)" notice (Screenshot 1.2).
 - b. The "Student's" subdomain is not accessible from the [/climatechange/ subdomain of the January 19 snapshot](#) (Screenshot 2.1).
 - c. Note: A similar URL, <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange//kids/index.html>, with two forward slashes between "climatechange" and "kids" instead of one, points to a live version of similar content not linked from the epa.gov domain or from the January 19 snapshot. Google's [search index service](#) indicates that the "//kids" domain is significantly less well-indexed and, if a search must be used to find it, has extremely limited accessibility unless one has prior knowledge of the URL or the page's contents.

Note: This report only focuses on a subset of all the website changes associated with the EPA's news release. EDGI's Website Tracking Team is currently conducting a comprehensive investigation of changes to the EPA website and will detail additional changes in one or more follow-up reports, which will be posted [here](#).

¹ <https://techcrunch.com/2017/02/16/the-epa-posted-a-backup-of-its-website-dated-just-before-inauguration-day/>

Detailed Description of Change in Access

Page 1: A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change

- Original URL: <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/> or <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/index.html>
 - Includes subdomains (this is an incomplete list):
 - ["Learn the Basics" - /kids/basics](#)
 - ["See the Impacts" - /kids/impacts](#)
 - ["Think Like a Scientist" - /kids/scientists](#)
 - ["Be Part of a Solution!" - /kids/solutions](#)
- Prior to the changes noted above, redirects from URL: <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/students/index.html>
- Currently redirects to update notice page with URL: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/signpost/cc.html> (same as Screenshot 1.2)
- Redirect to update notice page began between **April 29, 2017 2:36 PM ET** and **April 30, 2017 7:52 AM ET**
- Corresponding January 19 snapshot: none available


Screenshot 1.1

- This subdomain is not accessible via <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/> (historical version of page at URL shown below) or <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/index.html> or <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/students/index.html>. All of these URLs redirect to the update notice (Screenshot 1.2).
- This subdomain is not accessible from the <https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange/...> subdomain (Screenshot 2.1)
- Similar or identical content is accessible via <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange//kids/index.html> (differs only by one forward slash: "...climatechange//kids...", indicating that there is an empty segment in the path).
 - This subdomain is not linked from the main epa.gov domain, nor can it be accessed from the January 19 snapshot.
 - The extent of overlap in content between the January 19 version of the "Student's" subdomain at "/kids" and the live version at "//kids" has not been determined.
- [Google's search indexing service](#) indicates how the site is indexed according to Google's algorithms and provides a metric for access to each domain. The following results indicate that the "//kids..." domain is less well-indexed and is thus less accessible from external pages:
 - 1 result for ".../climatechange//kids"
 - 84 results for ".../climatechange/kids"

https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/ Go

603 captures
14 Jul 2007 - 2 May 2017

DEC FEB MAR
2016 02 2017 2018

 a student's guide to
GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Learn the Basics

See the Impacts

Think Like a Scientist

Be Part of the Solution!

TAKE A CLIMATE CHANGE EXPEDITION! join us!

Climate Change Basics

SHARE

CALCULATE YOUR EMISSIONS start

did you know?
The Earth's climate has changed before, but this time is different because people are mainly responsible.

Home | Expedition | Glossary | Educator Resources | References | Frequently Asked Questions | Calculator | Contact Us

Internet Archive

- [Redirect from /students/ to /kids/ subdomain - April 29, 2017](#)
- [Redirect from /kids/ subdomain to EPA's update notice page - April 30, 2017](#)
- [Live version of //kids subdomain landing page - May 4, 2017](#)
- Old versions of "Student's" subdomains from the /kids/ subdomain (this is an incomplete list):
 - ["A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change" - February 2, 2017](#)
 - ["Learn the Basics" - February 3, 2017](#)
 - ["See the Impacts" - February 3, 2017](#)
 - ["Think Like a Scientist" - February 3, 2017"](#)
 - ["Be Part of a Solution!" - February 3, 2017](#)

Screenshot 1.2

- The EPA's update notice, which appears when you follow the "[Student's Site](#)" link in the January 19 snapshot, in Screenshot 1.1



Environmental Topics

Laws & Regulations

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Search EPA.gov



This page is being updated.

Thank you for your interest in this topic. We are currently updating our website to reflect EPA's priorities under the leadership of President Trump and Administrator Pruitt. If you're looking for an archived version of this page, you can find it on the [January 19 snapshot](#).

[Here's what our Public Affairs Office released about these changes.](#)

Other ways to help you find what you are looking for:

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- [See our list of website topics](#)
- [Browse our A-Z index of terms and topics](#)
- [Search frequently asked questions or submit a question](#)
- [Search EPA Web Archive](#)
- [Browse EPA's snapshot website as of January 19, 2017](#)
- [Report a website issue](#)
- Go to our [home page](#)

You can also search our site.

What are you looking for?

sites production files signpost cc

Search EPA.gov

Internet Archive:

- [EPA's update notice page - April 28, 2017](#)

Page 2: Climate Change: Basic Information

- Original URL: <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange/climate-change-basic-information>
- Currently redirects to update notice page with URL: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/signpost/cc.html> (same as Screenshot 1.2)
- Redirect began between **April 27, 2017 6:15 PM ET** and **May 2, 2017 10:43 AM ET**
- Corresponding January 19 snapshot URL: https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange/climate-change-basic-information_.html

Screenshot 2.1 - January 19 Snapshot

Note: This page is presented here as a representative example. The sidebar on this page is also on other pages in the [19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange/...](https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange/) subdomain.

- The text "Student's Site" (see red arrow below) links to URL <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/students/index.html>.
- Within the snapshot, links to the "www.epa.gov" domain all appear to have been converted to links to the "19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/" domain, however this "www3.epa.gov" link was not converted in a similar manner.
- Clicking on the "Student's Site" link results in a popup window that states, "You are now leaving the EPA January 19, 2017 Web Snapshot." Clicking "OK" in the popup window returns the viewer to the update notice (same as Screenshot 1.2). *Note: This popup window does not consistently appear across all pages within the snapshot when the "Student's Site" link is clicked.*

This is not the current EPA website. To navigate to the current EPA website, please go to www.epa.gov. This website is historical material reflecting the EPA website as it existed on January 19, 2017. This website is no longer updated and links to external websites and some internal pages may not work. [More information](#) »


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Climate Change: Basic Information

On This Page

- [Climate change is happening](#)
- [Humans are largely responsible for recent climate change](#)
- [Climate change affects everyone](#)
- [We can make a difference](#)

Climate change is happening

Our Earth is warming. Earth's average temperature has risen by 1.5°F over the past century, and is projected to rise another 0.5 to 8.6°F over the next hundred years. Small changes in the average temperature of the planet can translate to large and potentially dangerous shifts in climate and weather.

How is the climate changing in the U.S.?

Observations across the United States and world provide multiple,

Internet Archive:

- [Redirect from original "Climate Change: Basic Information" URL to the update notice page - May 2, 2017](#)
- [January 19 snapshot of "Climate Change: Basic Information" - May 4, 2017](#)