



# **GENERATION HOPE**

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# GENERATION HOPE

Kimberlie Hamilton



Character illustrations  
by Risa Rodil

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# WATER WARRIORS

**Water, water, everywhere ...** we use it for all sorts of things, from cooking and drinking to growing food to washing. We all need water to survive and it's something many of us take for granted.

But maybe we shouldn't. A lack of clean water is a big problem in many places around the world. Can you imagine:

- **SPENDING HOURS EACH DAY FETCHING HEAVY JUGS OF WATER?**
- **TURNING ON THE TAP AND HAVING DARK, BAD-SMELLING WATER TRICKLE OUT?**
- **GETTING A SKIN RASH AFTER TAKING A SHOWER IN DIRTY WATER?**
- **SEEING MOUNDS OF TRASH FLOATING DOWN A BEAUTIFUL RIVER?**
- **WATCHING CROPS DIE DUE TO DROUGHT?**
- **HAVING TO FLEE FROM RISING FLOODWATERS?**

Believe it or not, such things happen to people on a daily basis, including young people like you.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- A person can live about a month without food, but only three to four days without water.
- Although 70 per cent of earth is covered by water, most of it is salty or frozen.
- If all the world's water could be poured into a gallon jug (3.8 litres), only one tablespoon would be fit for human use.
- One in three people globally do not have access to safe drinking water.
- In some countries, people walk an average of 6.5 km (4 miles) a day to get water.
- A leaking tap can waste up to 3 litres (3 quarts) of water a day.
- Bottled water may not be as safe to drink as regular old tap water.
- Freshwater animals, such as river dolphins, are vanishing faster than those on land or at sea.
- A full bath uses about 80 litres (21 gallons) of water. A five-minute shower uses 40 litres (10.5 gallons).
- Every year, 300 to 400 million tonnes of poisonous waste are dumped into our waterways, made up of toxic sludge and dangerous chemicals, among other things.

**EWWW!**

## HEY, DON'T FLUSH THAT!

- medicine
- wet wipes
- cotton balls
- pet poo
- food waste
- menstrual pads, liners and tampons
- diapers

This stuff could get into the water system and harm animals!

Turn the page to find out what four activist kids are doing to help!

# KIDS TAKING ACTION

## ARAN COSENTINO

**Born:** 2003 **From:** Italy

**Known for:** fighting to save an Italian river

"WE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE TO THE STREETS UNTIL CONCRETE MEASURES AGAINST THIS CRISIS ARE IMPLEMENTED."

Aran became an activist at age twelve, when he started a school recycling project. A couple of years later, he heard about plans for a new hydroelectric power station on the Alberone River. Aran knew this project would take a terrible toll on one of Italy's last pristine rivers, which is home to freshwater crayfish and other wildlife. The power station would put these creatures in danger and harm the area's natural beauty as well.

Aran joined other activists to stop the project, getting the word out on social media about why it was so important to defend the river. The battle took two long years but the company finally dropped the project. The activists won! Aran now participates in weekly school climate strikes and hopes to meet Greta Thunberg someday.

## AUTUMN PELTIER

**Born:** 2004 **From:** Canada

**Known for:** being a "water warrior" for the Anishinabek Nation

"WATER IS LIFE. MOTHER EARTH DOESN'T NEED US, WE NEED HER."

Autumn is Anishinaabe from the Wiikwemkoong First Nation. She became an activist when she was eight. She has travelled the world with her message that water is sacred and must be protected and has taken part in important UN events.

One of her proudest moments came when she presented a ceremonial water bowl to Canada's prime minister, Justin Trudeau. He had supported oil projects in wilderness areas and the bowl was to remind him of his duty to protect nature. Autumn handed over the bowl and said she was very unhappy with the choices the prime minister had made. That was probably the last thing the prime minister expected to hear from a twelve-year-old girl!

"THIS IS OUR WORLD, NOT, 'I HAVE MY COUNTRY. YOU HAVE YOUR COUNTRY."

**Born:** 2002 **From:** South Africa

**Known for:** being a spokesperson for the African Climate Alliance

Ayakha has seen the impact of climate change with her own eyes, like the droughts that have taken such a terrible toll on southern Africa. Her mother can't plant crops due to lack of rain and some of their farm animals have died. Ayakha became so frustrated by the state of the world that she joined fifteen other kids – including Greta Thunberg – to file a complaint to the UN. The charge? Failing to take action on climate change, which they say is violating the rights of children.

Ayakha wants people to know that global warming affects everyone, not only those who can afford an eco-friendly lifestyle. She believes it's really important for the poor and people of colour to speak out. The time has come for all of us to stand up for the planet!

## AMARIYANNA "MARI" COPENY

**Born:** 2007 **From:** USA

**Known for:** demanding clean water for Flint, Michigan

When Mari was eight, her hometown had been without clean water for over four years. The drinking water had high levels of bacteria and lead. It smelled bad and looked brown and disgusting. No one wanted to drink it or bathe in it and those who did were often unwell – some even died.

Well, enough was enough and Mari had to do something. She wrote a letter to US President Barack Obama and told him about her town's water problems and asked to meet him. Her heartfelt words inspired him to come see what was going on for himself. The president gave the city US\$100 million (CDN\$135 million) to repair its water system. Mari still works as an activist and hopes to run for US President in 2044. Clean water will be one of her top priorities.

"MAKING ADULTS REALIZE I AM SERIOUS IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE."



# 18 WAYS TO SAVE WATER

**1. Don't flush.** "If it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown flush it down." This rule doesn't apply when you are out in public or at other people's houses!

**2. Re-wear those clothes.** Check your clothes each night and re-wear anything that is still mostly clean. Only toss things in the wash when they are good and dirty!

**3. Bathe less.** You only need a bath once or twice a week, unless you're really dirty.

**4. Reuse bath water for plants.** Don't let your bath water go down the drain. Scoop it up with a bucket and use it to water houseplants, your garden and trees.

**5. Take showers.** Showers use much less water than baths, especially if you're speedy.

**6. Reuse your towel.** Use the same towel for a whole week. After all, you should be clean after a shower! If you hang your towel to dry it will be all ready to go next time.

**7. Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth.** That will save litres of water every day!

**8. Be a leak detective!** Listen for dripping water and let someone know if you spot a leak.

**9. Fill the dishwasher.** Dishwashers use less water than doing dishes by hand. Fill the dishwasher all the way up before running it. Empty it, too, to score points with your parents!



**10. Use the same glass.** Don't grab a new glass every time you're thirsty. Use one and keep refilling it throughout the day. Fewer dishes to wash means less water wasted.

**11. Pour what you need and no more.** It's better to drink half a glass and go for a top-up than pour a whole glass and tip some away!

**12. Keep cold water in the fridge.** Running the tap for cold water is wasteful. Keep a pitcher of cold water in the fridge instead.

**13. Don't toss clean, unused water.** Instead, use it to water plants or refill your pet's bowl.

**14. Wash fruit and veg in a bowl of clean water.** Use a bowl instead of washing produce under running water.

**15. Grow your own food.** Gardening is fun and it's less wasteful than watering a grassy lawn.

**16. Give up the water guns.** Fun, yes. Wasteful, yes.

**17. Collect rainwater.** Ask your mum and dad to set up a rain barrel to catch rainwater.

**18. Ditch the hose.** Save water by washing your bike with a bucket and cloth, rather than using the hose.