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Having Kids Urges UN to Include Family Planning to Combat Climate Change
Group says that issue has been ignored for too long

As people from more than 200 nations gather in Madrid for an international conference to fight climate change, the human rights advocacy group [Having Kids](#) is urging the United Nations to incorporate universal family planning policies as the most effective long-term solution to the crisis.

“[Previous conferences](#) have focused on industrial emissions. It’s time that we start at the source, and avoid the mistakes in past family planning modeling that created the ecological and social crises of today,” Having Kids Executive Director Erika Matthews [wrote](#) in a letter to Patricia Espinosa, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The letter was also sent to dozens of other organizations participating in the 25th Conference of the Parties, or COP25, the UN global climate summit underway in Madrid.

It’s crucial that nations stop ignoring the biggest factor in the climate crisis: poor family planning policies.

Last month, the lead author of a climate emergency warning from more than 11,000 climate scientists published in the journal *BioScience* [stated the connection](#) clearly: “The greatest influence individuals can have in combating climate change is to have one fewer child.”

Having Kids is urging the UN to recommend non-coercive, child-centered policies that will reduce family size, such as replacing tax policies that encourage big families with ones that incentivize delaying parenthood and having smaller families; and fully funding the development of and availability of the [male contraceptive pill](#).

Given how the world is failing to hit even the modest targets in the Paris Agreement, we owe it to future generations to take the most effective action now - and that means family planning.

Having Kids advocates a [Fair Start family planning model](#), which promotes smaller families sharing resources to invest more in every child, and ensure a fair start and a sustainable future. A summary of the model was recently [published in a peer-reviewed article](#) in the journal *Social Change*.

“If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to plan for a child,” Matthews wrote. “Please consider promoting a universal ethic of cooperative Fair Start family planning, and smaller and more equitable families, as the most effective and comprehensive way to achieve a socially and ecologically regenerative society, and address the climate crisis.”