



## Greta Thunberg: I'm Too Young to Do This

**Talare**

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Aktivist

**Datum**

2 februari 2019

**Plats**

Stockholm

1 Recently I've seen many rumours circulating about me and enormous amounts  
of hate. This is no surprise to me. I know that since most people are not aware  
of the full meaning of the climate crisis (which is understandable since it has  
never been treated as a crisis) a school strike for the climate would seem very  
5 strange to people in general. So let me make some things clear about my school  
strike.

In May 2018 I was one of the winners in a writing competition about the  
environment held by Svenska Dagbladet, a Swedish newspaper. I got my article  
10 published and some people contacted me, among others was Bo Thorén from  
Fossil Free Dalsland. He had some kind of group with people, especially youth,  
who wanted to do something about the climate crisis.

I had a few phone meetings with other activists. The purpose was to come up  
15 with ideas of new projects that would bring attention to the climate crisis. Bo  
had a few ideas of things we could do. Everything from marches to a loose idea  
of some kind of school strike (that schoolchildren would do something on the  
schoolyards or in the classrooms). That idea was inspired by the Parkland  
students, who had refused to go to school after the school shootings.

20 I liked the idea of a school strike. So I developed that idea and tried to get the  
other young people to join me, but no one was really interested. They thought  
that a Swedish version of the Zero Hour march was going to have a bigger  
impact. So I went on planning the school strike all by myself and after that I  
25 didn't participate in any more meetings.

When I told my parents about my plans, they weren't very fond of it. They did  
not support the idea of school striking and they said that if I were to do this I  
would have to do it completely by myself and with no support from them.

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On the 20th of August I sat down outside the Swedish parliament. I handed out  
fliers with a long list of facts about the climate crisis and explanations on why I  
was striking. The first thing I did was to post on Twitter and Instagram what I  
35 was doing and it soon went viral. Then journalists and newspapers started to  
come. A Swedish entrepreneur and businessman active in the climate  
movement, Ingmar Rentzhog, was among the first to arrive. He spoke with me  
and took pictures that he posted on Facebook. That was the first time I had ever  
met or spoken with him. I had not communicated or encountered with him  
40 ever before.

Many people love to spread rumours saying that I have people ‘behind me’ or  
that I’m being ‘paid’ or ‘used’ to do what I’m doing. But there is no one  
‘behind’ me except for myself. My parents were as far from climate activists as  
45 possible before I made them aware of the situation.

I am not part of any organization. I sometimes supported and cooperated with  
several NGOs that work with the climate and environment. But I am absolutely  
independent and I only represent myself. And I do what I do completely for  
50 free, I have not received any money or any promise of future payments in any  
form at all. And nor has anyone linked to me or my family done so.

And of course it will stay this way. I have not met one single climate activist  
who is fighting for the climate for money. That idea is completely absurd.  
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Furthermore, I only travel with permission from my school, and my parents pay  
for tickets and accommodation.

My family has written a book together about our family and how I and my  
60 sister, Beata, have influenced my parents’ way of thinking and seeing the world,  
especially when it comes to the climate. And about our diagnoses.

That book was due to be released in May 2018. But since there was a major  
disagreement with the book company, we ended up changing to a new  
65 publisher, and so the book was released in August the same year instead.

Before the book was released my parents made it clear that their possible profits  
from the book, Scener ur hjärtat, ‘Scenes From the Heart’, will be going to eight  
different charities working with the environment, children with diagnoses and

animal rights.

And yes, I write my own speeches. But since I know that what I say is going to reach many, many people, I often ask for input. I also have a few scientists that I frequently ask for help on how to express certain complicated matters. I want everything to be absolutely correct so that I don't spread incorrect facts, or things that can be misunderstood.

Some people mock me for my diagnosis. But Asperger is not a disease, it's a gift. People also say that since I have Asperger I couldn't possibly have put myself in this position. But that's exactly why I did this. Because if I would have been 'normal' and social I would have organized myself in an organization, or started an organization by myself.

But since I am not that good at socializing I did this instead. I was so frustrated that nothing was being done about the climate crisis, and I felt like I had to do something, anything. And sometimes NOT doing things – like just sitting down outside the parliament – speaks much louder than doing things. Just like a whisper sometimes is louder than shouting.

Also there is one complaint that I 'sound and write like an adult'. And to that I can only say: Don't you think that a sixteen-year-old can speak for herself?

There are some people who say that I oversimplify things. For example when I say that 'The climate crisis is a black and white issue', 'We need to stop the emissions of greenhouse gases', and 'I want you to panic.' But that I only say because it's true. Yes, the climate crisis is the most complex issue that we have ever faced and it's going to take everything from our part to 'stop it'. But the solution is black and white: we need to stop the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Because either we limit the warming to 1.5°C over pre-industrial levels, or we don't. Either we reach a tipping point where we start a chain reaction with events way beyond human control, or we don't. Either we go on as a civilization, or we don't. There are no grey areas when it comes to survival.

And when I say that I want you to panic, I mean that we need to treat the crisis as a crisis. When your house is on fire you don't sit down and talk about how nice you can rebuild it once you put out the fire. If your house is on fire you

110 run outside and make sure that everyone is out while you call the fire  
department. That requires some level of panic.

There is one other argument that I can't do anything about. And that is the fact  
that I'm 'just a child and we shouldn't be listening to children'. But that is easily  
115 fixed – just start to listen to the rock-solid science instead. Because if everyone  
listened to the scientists and the facts that I constantly refer to then no one  
would have to listen to me or any of the other hundreds of thousands of  
schoolchildren on strike for the climate across the world.

120 Then we could all go back to school. I am just a messenger, and yet I get all this  
hate. I am not saying anything new, I am just saying what scientists have  
repeatedly said for decades.

And I agree with you, I'm too young to do this.

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We children shouldn't have to do this. But since almost no one is doing  
anything, and our very future is at risk, we feel like we have to continue.

And if you have any other concern or doubt about me, then you can listen to  
130 my TED talk, in which I talk about how my interest for the climate and  
environment began.

And thank you everyone for your kind support! It brings me hope.

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**Taggar**

2010-tal, 2019, Fridays for future, Kvinna, Miljö och klimat

**URI**

<https://www.svenskatal.se/tale/greta-thunberg-i-m-too-young-to-do-this>

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