



# Environmental Sustainability Strategy

2026-2030

**SickKids® | 2030**

# LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronald Cohn'.

Dr. Ronald Cohn  
President and Chief Executive Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Young Lee'.

Young Lee  
Vice President, Finance and  
Chief Financial Officer

Climate change is one of the most pressing public health emergencies of our time. From increasing respiratory illness to more frequent wildfires, we are seeing the impacts on our community. At SickKids, we are committed to being part of the solution.

True to our vision of **Healthier Children. A Better World.**, we recognize that protecting the health of children means safeguarding the planet they will inherit.

The 2030 Environmental Sustainability Strategy builds on the foundation laid by our 2022-2025 Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Over the past few years, we made meaningful progress, and we know the work is far from done. We refined our goals, sharpened our metrics, and evolved our approach to ensure our strategy remains dynamic and impactful.

Aligned with our SickKids 2030 aspiration to drive sustainable operations, we are embedding sustainable infrastructure at every level of our multi-year campus redevelopment— supported by strategic partnerships, targeted investments, and a culture shift that will echo for generations.

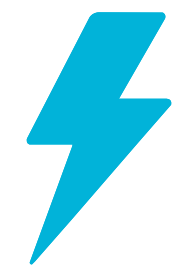
Progress demands both individual and collective effort. No matter where you sit within our organization, your role is essential. Every action contributes to a more sustainable SickKids—and a healthier future for all.

**We are not just imagining a better world. We are building it – together.**

# WHY IS ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT?

Our present actions have a direct impact on our future. What we do impacts the planet, and the health of the planet determines the health of children.

## HOW HEALTH CARE IMPACTS THE ENVIRONMENT



**2X more energy used by Canadian health-care facilities** per square foot than office buildings<sup>1</sup>.



**1.5% of scarce water consumed** by health-care systems globally<sup>2</sup>.



**33 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions** are linked to Canadian health-care systems, more than the entire country of Denmark<sup>3</sup>.



**5 million tonnes of waste produced** by Canadian and U.S. health-care institutions annually<sup>4</sup>.



**33 subject pollutants that can pollute water, air, and soil** tracked by Toronto hospitals<sup>5</sup>.

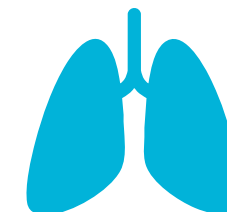
## HOW THE ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS PATIENTS AND FAMILIES



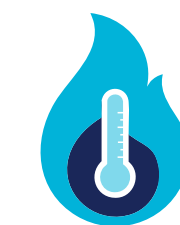
**4.2 million annual global deaths** linked to ambient air pollution<sup>6</sup>.



**3,600% increase in Lyme disease** since 2009 due to climate change affecting tick migration patterns in Canada<sup>7</sup>.



**Up to 30% increase in asthma-related paediatric ED visits** are projected each year in the U.S., due to declining air quality<sup>8</sup>.



**559 million children currently exposed** to high heatwave frequency globally<sup>9</sup>.



**242 million children experienced education interruptions** globally due to climate crises in 2024<sup>10</sup>.

**“On climate change, the science is clear— we must take action now to protect our planet and secure our children’s future.”**

— Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan

\*\*Sources in appendices (Page 13)

# OUR AIM AND MISSION

A Greener SickKids | Healthier Children. A Better World.



To drive environmental sustainability throughout SickKids by building a culture of environmental stewardship.

Fulfilling our purpose requires a holistic approach that rethinks and reshapes the way we operate and how our organization interacts with the environment.

# OUR COLLABORATORS

Sustainable progress is only possible through collaboration—our Sustainability Office works closely with internal and external partners to share knowledge, learn from one another, and advance a common goal: the health of children and the planet.

## Internal Collaborators



## External Collaborators



# HOW WE GOT HERE



**490+**

Staff from across SickKids



**60**

Staff contributing directly to strategy via workshops



**27**

Departments and councils supporting various focus group sessions

# INSPIRATION FROM MANY VOICES

“Environmental sustainability is an incredibly important initiative/goal. The organization needs to invest to help us become a national leader in this area!”

“I think it’s important to promote environmental sustainability initiatives internally for greater success in the program – I like the idea of cultivating a green health-care culture.”

“We have a lot of work to do to get to the ideal place for environmental sustainability. As a large hospital we can be doing better at all levels.”

“Thank you for all your efforts in mobilizing a greener workspace!”

# IMPACT THROUGH ALIGNMENT

## ALIGNING WITH SICKKIDS 2030

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy is our roadmap to advance the aims of SickKids 2030 across all the strategic directions and key enablers with sustainability in mind. Our KidsGoGreen program brings together staff from across SickKids to embed sustainability throughout the campus.



## ALIGNING WITH EXTERNAL FRAMEWORKS

In order to build a pathway to impact change beyond the boundaries of our campus, the SickKids Environmental Sustainability Strategy aims to align itself with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on climate change; the World Health Organization on sustainable health systems; Environmental Protection Act, 1999; Toronto Transform TO; and other related guidance.





## Take Action on Climate Change

- Collaborate on climate action within the health care sector.
- Build climate resiliency and mitigate risk across our infrastructure.
- Embed environmental sustainability principles in redevelopment and building modernization.



## Operate for Tomorrow, Today

- Minimize waste across the organization.
- Reduce building greenhouse gas emissions and water usage.
- Ingrain sustainability principles across our supply chain.
- Integrate artificial intelligence and data analytics into facility operations.



## Foster an Environmentally Responsible Culture

- Advance sustainability outcomes through staff, patient, and family engagement.
- Enhance sustainability education and knowledge translation.
- Drive accountability through transparency and reporting.

As leaders in child health, we partner locally and globally to improve the health of children through the integration of care, research and education.

Compassion

Integrity

Collaboration

Inclusion

Innovation

Excellence

# TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE



## Our objectives:

### Collaborate on climate action within the health care sector.

- Develop internal and external partnerships to advance environmentally sustainable health systems.
- Strengthen research highlighting impacts and solutions of climate change on Precision Child Health.
- Collaborate with local, national, and international governments and agencies to achieve climate goals.

### Build climate resiliency and mitigate risk across our infrastructure.

- Prepare for extreme weather that may create emergencies increasing pressures on health resources.
- Mitigate climate related infrastructure and supply chain disruptions to reduce impact on delivery of care.
- Mitigate health and well-being risks through developing healthier environments that support patients, families and staff health.

### Embed environmental sustainability principles in redevelopment and building modernization.

- Champion environmental stewardship - achieve min LEED Gold for buildings.
- Enhance redevelopment governance.
- Deliver capital projects that reduce carbon emissions.

## Why are we taking action on climate change?

We are committed to thoroughly understanding, addressing, and responding to climate change. We must take responsibility for our role in shaping a climate-friendly future within and beyond health care for the health of our planet and patients.



# OPERATE FOR TOMORROW, TODAY



## Our objectives:

**Minimize waste across the organization.**

- Reduce, reuse and recycle supplies and equipment.
- Minimize the use of environmentally toxic substances and pollutants.
- Optimize medical and hazardous waste disposal practices.

**Reduce building greenhouse gas emissions and water usage.**

- Improve energy and water utilization efficiency.
- Expand renewable and district energy sources.
- Meet Transform TO's 2040 Net Zero targets.

**Ingrain sustainability principles across our supply chain.**

- Embed sustainable procurement throughout the supply chain.
- Develop sustainable food systems and options.

**Integrate artificial intelligence and data analytics into facility operations.**

- Adopt responsible use of AI technology.
- Enhance building and systems integration.

## Why are we working to operate for tomorrow, today?

To build a better future, we must take real-time action within our operations. The decisions we make today will impact tomorrow and beyond. By maximizing efficiency, minimizing waste, and meeting Transform TO's 2040 Net Zero targets, we are ensuring that our current actions support a sustainable future.



# FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE CULTURE



## Our objectives:

**Advance sustainability through staff, patient, and family engagement.**

- Engage and partner with staff to implement customized sustainability solutions.
- Expand sustainability events, activities and branding identity.
- Enable staff to access low carbon modes of transportation.

**Enhance sustainability education.**

- Increase resources to educate staff, patients and families on environmentally sustainable practices.
- Deliver ongoing, campus-wide sustainability training.

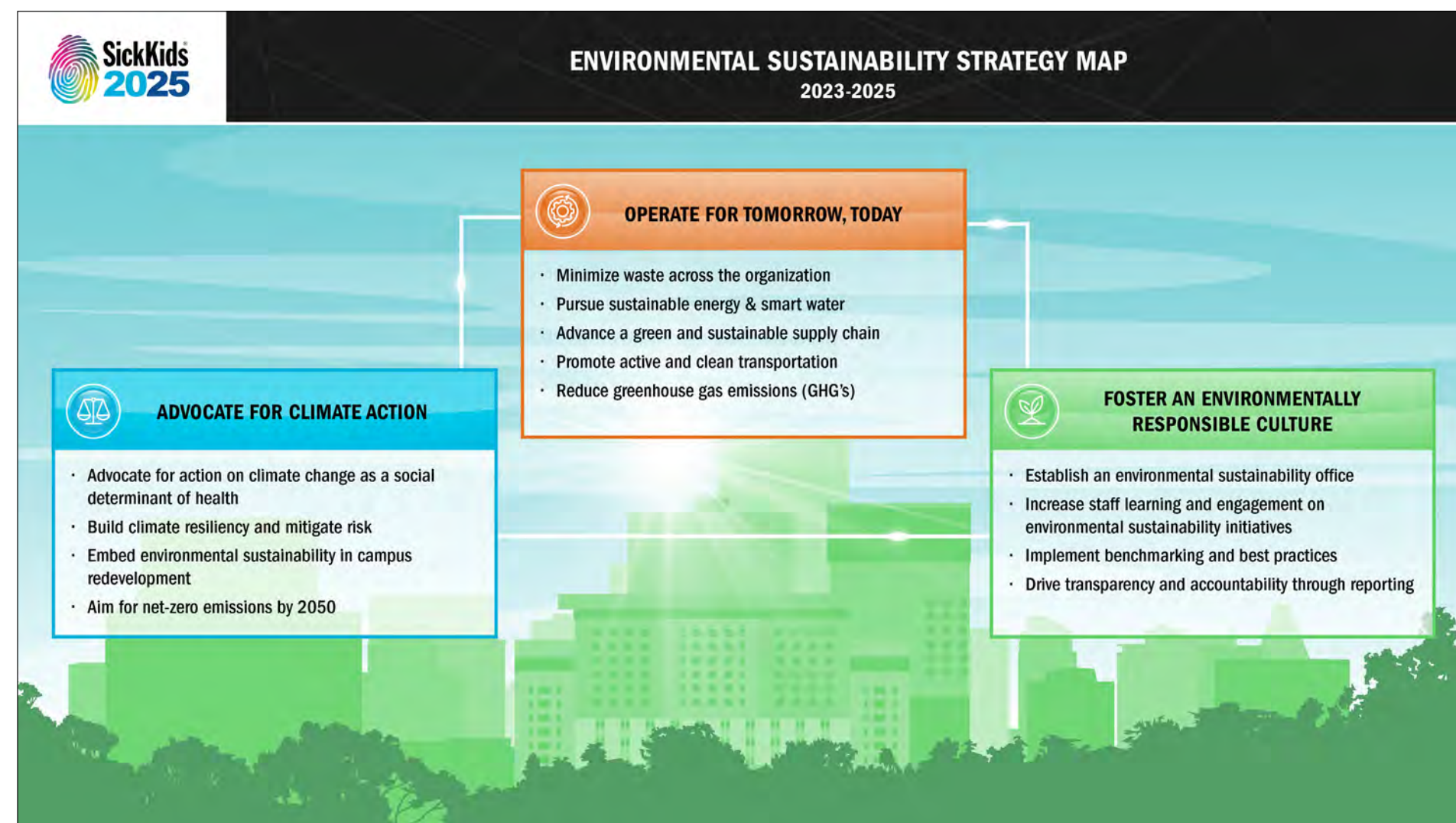
**Drive accountability through transparency and reporting.**

- Sustainability reporting and benchmarking.
- Establish sustainability governance structures.
- Establish departmental accountability for environmental performance.

## Why are we fostering an environmentally responsible culture?

For long-term success, we must continue to establish environmental sustainability as a core pillar of our organizational culture. When sustainability is ingrained in everything we do, it is easier to make decisions with positive impacts for both the planet and people.

# A LOOK BACK ON THE 2022-2025 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY



2022-2025 Environmental Sustainability Strategy set ambitious Key Performance Indicators to achieve by 2040:

- To Advocate for Climate Action, Sustainability Office actioned plans to decrease Green House Gas (GHG) intensity.
- To Operate for Tomorrow, Today, the Sustainability Office actioned plans to reduce energy use intensity (EUI); and water use intensity (WUI); and increase waste diversion.

This [report](#) highlights key achievements, initiatives, and outcomes delivered under the 2022-2025 Strategy.

# REFERENCES FOR SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT DATA

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