

With Thanks to Arbutus Middle School

From: Lindsay Coulter, Pulling Together Lead Steward volunteer with Saanich (and a *dedicated mother of two, writer, naturalist, community catalyst, soul activist, mentor, and equine enthusiast*).

It's been a pleasure to take your children into Haro Woods over the past couple years.

I know youth are stressed, anxious, experiencing stronger emotions and suffering from the burden of being so interconnected. Unfortunately, our minds shrink when we're under stress and stress squashes our natural kindness and desire for connectivity. As a culture we're habitually distracted with internet and screen time fills our waking hours *and* even defines leisure time.

I feel great privilege to share my love for Haro Woods with Arbutus Middle School students because nature is important to acknowledge. It reminds us of our lasting connection to the living world *and* each other. Removing English Ivy from our local park is an example of sane, local action. Students are part of my team to make beauty where ugliness has set in. We all can restore a world dying and in disrepair.

Their experiences in nature will promote a deep sense of well-being and may even put them in touch with spirit. We all need to be affected by our world and find more time to nurture wonder, find magic, seek beauty and experience more awe.

Luckily, being in nature takes you out of yourself and can help stop our profound disconnection with the Earth, oneself and one another. Please ask them to take you for a stroll through the arbutus, yew, big leaf maple and Douglas fir trees where they have been working!

Read more I've written for youth and families:

[Taking care of yourself to care for the living world](#) (pg.20)

[Staying afloat in the social media shark tank](#) (pg.34)

