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How to Connect More with Nature

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think



Urban communities are losing their connection with nature. Writer Richard Louv caused a stir when he called this phenomenon 'Nature Deficit Disorder'.

His book *Last Child in the Woods* directly linked the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rises in obesity, attention disorders and depression.

But rather than just sounding the alarm, Richard Louv also offered practical solutions and simple ways to heal the broken bond. With others, he founded the Children & Nature Network to encourage and support people and organisations working to reconnect children with nature. The National Trust have also carried out similar research in this area, here in the UK.

weblink



RICHARD LOUV'S
LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS
www.richardlouv.com/books/last-child

do



Be creative outside

Build shelters, draw, paint, make sculptures from stones and wood. Write poetry inspired by what you experience. Revisit and revamp some of the traditional childhood games. Even Wired magazine loves them!

WIRED'S GUIDE TO SIMPLE
OUTDOOR PLAY
www.wired.com/2009/08/simpleoutdoorplay



Volunteer to work on a nature reserve

That way, you will be helping a good cause and boosting your health – all at the same time. It's a win-win situation. Consider A Rocha UK's nature reserve Foxearth, which could become one of the country's foremost dragonfly and damselfly reserves. The 11-acre site could also become a place where those of faith and those who are seeking can come and experience God's peace.

Do some gardening to connect with the Creator

Humanity's first job was to be gardeners. Many people are rediscovering the joys of a garden or allotment. Home-grown food tastes better, has travelled less and contains fewer pesticides. Gardens can be oases of beauty and peace.

Get out more

Researchers have found that children who spent from five to ten hours a week outdoors have a stronger sense of self-fulfilment and purpose than those who don't. Findings from Michigan State University claim children who regularly play outside have a deeper appreciation for beauty, are more creative and have more active imaginations. A National Trust report also found UK children are losing contact with nature at a 'dramatic' rate.

Go wild!

RSPB run an online initiative called Discover and enjoy nature. This special part of their website is packed with activities to help give nature a home. The charity wants such effort to be as fun as possible, so it has compiled lots of ideas for wild things to do and see.

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A ROCHA UK'S VOLUNTEERING

arocha.org.uk/foxearth

A ROCHA UK'S LIVING LIGHTLY

arocha.org.uk/our-activities/living-lightly-take-action/garden-2

ARTICLE ON LIFESTYLE STUDY

www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2620499/The-secret-happy-clever-children-Swap-technology-fresh-air-outdoorsy-lifestyle-says-new-study.html

BBC ARTICLE ON NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER

www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-17495032

RSPB'S DISCOVER AND ENJOY NATURE

www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature



Welcome wildlife into your backyard

Have you tried 'wildlife gardening'? Gardeners' World magazine have put together a whole range of projects you can do. Encourage birds, animals and pollinating insects to visit your garden, with the help of their wildlife-themed projects and practical videos.

Attract butterflies to your garden

Butterflies are attractive insects and they give added interest to gardens when they visit flowers to feed on nectar. A few species have caterpillars that are garden pests, but most do not cause any damage in gardens.

Experience nature often – through all the senses

Go for a walk with the dog, do some gardening, feed your fish, swim in lakes or the ocean, go beach combing, make nature themed art, smell the rain. Even in the city you can do these things.

Watch and wonder

Filmmaker David Bond was worried. His kids' waking hours were dominated by a cacophony of marketing. Screen dependence threatened to turn them into zombies. So he decided to get back to nature. The journey started in 2010 with movie-makers Green Lions exploring a film approach to 'nature deficit disorder' in kids. A collaboration formed with the National Trust who were also researching the issue. *Project Wild Thing* emerged. Watch it with your church, small group, family and friends.

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GARDENERS' WORLD WILDLIFE PROJECTS

www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/projects/wildlife-gardening

ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR GARDEN

www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=649

CONNECT TO NATURE

www.humanatureconnect.com/2013/09/10/connecting-to-nature-what-does-this-mean-and-how-do-you-do-it

WATCH PROJECT WILD THING

www.thewildnetwork.com/film