



MAKING SCHOOL A BIT MORE COOL!

www.woodlandwakeup.org

Woodland Wakeup is a Community Interest Company based in North Ayrshire which aims to 're-wild' childhood and reconnect kids with nature.

UK children are statistically some of the unhappiest in the world and most spend less time outdoors each day than a prison inmate.



There is a direct correlation between socio-economic disadvantage and disconnection from nature.

COOPED-UP KIDS: OUR SAD REALITY

Unstructured, free play outdoors in nature should be regarded as superfood for the developing brain but many children are no longer going 'out to play', especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Meanwhile, as digital natives in a digital world, many kids are displaying signs of screen-addictions and only have aspirations to be online gamers and YouTube content-creators.

All this is having a devastating impact on young people's mental, physical and emotional health and they need our help.



"The pupils have been very animated and positive about their experience. We would love to use your services again..."
(Head teacher)

"This opportunity has helped Brian to consider others' contributions when participating in group activities."
(Class teacher)

"This has helped to...
...develop Nathan's self-esteem and allow him to see how he is able to accomplish many things."
...develop Charlie's confidence."
(Class teacher)



"I prefer to play indoors as that's where the electrical sockets are."
(11 year-old)



We feel that as the last generation to have enjoyed a wild and free childhood before smartphones and the internet, we are responsible for educating young people about the magic of nature before it could be lost forever...

"Children are one third of our population and all of our future." (GIRFEC)

WHO WE ARE

We have been providing exciting Forest School / nature adventure sessions in local green spaces: getting kids off their screens and out to explore the wonderful, awe-inspiring natural world.

Parents have observed huge improvements in their children's physical, mental and emotional health in just a few weeks and school leaders have observed improvements in their pupils...

So we are thrilled to announce that we have now started expanding our school services!

We have many years of experience teaching in Scotland and internationally, so we really understand the varying and often complex needs of schools, learners and communities. We can work with small or class-sized groups of children in your school grounds or a local green space and tailor sessions to meet your school's requirements...



"...there's always lots of things to do... and someone there if you ask for help.
I didn't know how to whittle or tie knots and now I do."
(Wild thing: age 11)



"...We take care of nature. I used to kill bugs, but I don't do that anymore."
(Nurture pupil)

ADDRESSING NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER

It could be argued that huge numbers of young people nowadays are displaying signs of 'Nature Deficit Disorder' (NDD), a term to describe the human cost of separation from nature, coined by Richard Louv in his book 'Last Child in the Woods'.

Educators may have observed increasing levels of NDD over the past few years. We know we certainly have.

SYMPTOMS OF NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER CAN INCLUDE:

- ★ Poor concentration / lack of focus
- ★ Mental health issues inc. anxiety & depression
- ★ Reduced sensory awareness
- ★ Decreased emotional & physical resilience
- ★ Reduced ability to safely calculate risk
- ★ Attention disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) & Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- ★ Aggression & inability to self-regulate emotions



Children thrive in the outdoors. Time spent in nature reverses symptoms of NDD and children that were previously 'lacking' in particular areas begin to flourish.

This is particularly significant for children in and around North Ayrshire and Inverclyde, local authorities with some of the worst child-poverty statistics in Europe. Gaining a nature connection could help them develop life skills to make positive choice in their lives and break the cycle of poverty.

PROJECT IDEAS

NATURE ADVENTURE / FOREST SCHOOL SESSIONS

Our nature adventure sessions are as child-led as possible and can include activities such as flora and fauna exploration, nature art and crafts, den building, safe tool-work and fire building, rope apparatus and tree swings (depending on local area!), hammock time, a little bit of mindfulness, some collaborative philosophical inquiry and lots of nature play and adventures.



NATURE FOR NURTURE

The natural world can provide a caring and protective role, and children that have experienced hardships in their lives can especially benefit from this. We can support existing nurture groups to get outside for kids to experience the magical healing power of nature. Or, we can work with small groups of children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties who do not receive specific 'nurture' provision but they (or school staff) require support to meet their needs.



PLAYGROUND PAMPER

If you feel that your playground needs a bit of oomph, then this is the project for you! We can help to gather loose parts from your school community and then, with groups of children, we can create different play zones. This project has proved itself to be particularly valuable in enhancing the confidence of children taking part and boosting collaboration skills as their team creates wonderful new spaces for their peers to enjoy.



SUPER SOIL SCIENCE

What is actually going on in the ground underneath our feet? What are the little superheroes in the soil that help things to grow? Can we create our own soil to grow things for our school community?

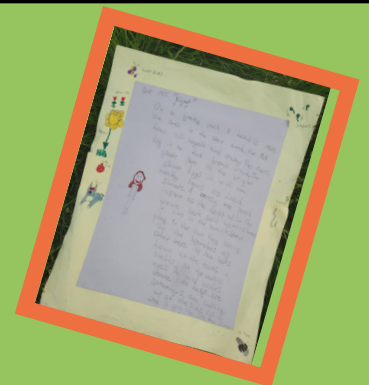
In this project we can get the kids undertaking experiments to explore the soil. We can get them creating a school composting area in order to utilise food waste to create lovely new soil. And if you so choose they can create wormeries to explore the vital role that these tiny creatures play.



WORDY WIZARDS / NUMERACY NINJAS / STEM SUPERHEROES

Scottish Forestry recently stated that "...increasing the use of outdoor learning... will support cognitive and social development in primary schoolchildren, and help close the attainment gap in Scottish education."

We couldn't agree more! We love getting kids outside to spark their imaginations and creativity, to explore vocabulary, write amazing stories, or see STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) in action. If Numeracy, Literacy or Science in your school could use a spark of nature's magic, get in touch!



STAFF TRAINING

Would you like to increase staff team's confidence to get learners outside, gain inspiration to enhance Numeracy / Literacy / H&W / STEM using nature, or could they perhaps benefit from developing their own nature-connection?

We can work with school staff in twilight sessions or in-service day events. Or we can facilitate our nature adventure / Forest School sessions for staff to come and enjoy while learning some of the strategies and activities we use to engage children with the natural world.



BENEFITS OF REGULAR NATURE TIME



"It calms me down in a happy way."
(Wild thing: age 7)



ENHANCED:

- ★ physical, mental and emotional resilience
- ★ cognitive functioning, creativity and problem solving
- ★ cooperation, teamwork, communication and conflict resolution skills
- ★ ability to calculate risk
- ★ overall physical health, strength and agility, fine/gross motor skills and spatial/sensory awareness

- ★ overall mental health and wellbeing, quality of life, self-esteem, confidence, sense of self, independence and happiness
- ★ attention, focus, self-discipline sense of place, awareness and appreciation of the natural world and curiosity about its flora and fauna

REDUCED:

- ★ stress, anxiety and aggression



WE CAN HELP YOU TO:

- ★ Innovate your Pupil Equity Fund or Attainment Challenge funding
- ★ Enhance educational attainment and address poverty-related inequality
- ★ Establish early-intervention strategies for children with SEBD requiring CAMHS or other external services
- ★ Achieve outdoor learning School Improvement Plan targets
- ★ Expand nurture group provision to develop the resilience of vulnerable children
- ★ Jazz up your outdoor spaces / develop play areas
- ★ Boost the confidence / self-esteem of targeted children
- ★ Explore a new approach to engage 'hard to reach' pupils
- ★ Enhance your STEM programme

- ★ Promote environmental stewardship and sustainable development
- ★ Achieve school and pupil accolades, such as the John Muir Award, Primary School Environmental Award & many more
- ★ Boost your community's nature-connection to improve mental, physical and emotional health: a 'preventative healthcare solution' for all



"I want to do Woodland Wakeup forever!"
(Wild thing: age 8)

"I enjoyed a wild & free childhood on the west coast of Scotland and I am sad that most children today don't have the freedom to grow up with the magic of nature. Let's change that!"



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Registered Company No. 606929