

100 Women Who Care  
Guelph, ON

### **HELP OUR CHILDREN WITH 'NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER'**

There has never been a more urgent time in my lifetime when the need for children to connect with nature has been so dire. The current pandemic has really amplified this problem. This is why I am asking for your consideration in donating to the GUELPH LAKE NATURE CENTRE which has served over 600,000 school-aged children since 1982 in only a single family house. THE SNAKE PIT WAS IN THE DINING ROOM WHEN MY 3 DAUGHTERS FELL IN LOVE WITH THE OUTDOORS!

Nature deficit disorder (N.D.D) is a term coined by Richard Louv as a description for the cost of alienation from nature. An urgent growing problem that many of us in health care knew was growing and much more acute since Covid 19.

Urbanization, indoor activity and social tech changes have accelerated the human disconnect from the natural world. Expanded body of scientific evidence suggest that N.D.D contributes to diminished use of our senses, attention difficulties, obesity, higher rates of physical and mental illness and violence.

Research also suggests that N.D.D weakens ecological literacy and stewardship of the natural world. Epidemics of inactivity and lack of independent play are co-factors.

Scientific studies have also proven that N.D.D can be reversed with community based nature programs close to urban centres, like the Guelph Lake Nature Center.

The new centre will provide a purpose-built space for kids to learn and it will offer our entire community a new environmental hub for active living and nature programs.

The centre will have the following;

- 4 learning areas which can expand to serve larger groups,
- multi-purpose space for park visitors and community groups to gather
- a room to care for resident animals
- Indoor/outdoor learning space for people of all ages – with a great view of Guelph Lake

Please help us with this urgent children's health matter. Developing a strong connection to the natural world will not only make children healthier physically and mentally, these kids are the future stewards of our world.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca Whitney, D.C