

## Junior Hiker Badge for Children

Get your child hooked on hiking! Inspire your child to complete a three-kilometre seasonal hike and celebrate with a beautiful badge. Discover the joy and benefits of walking in the woodlands, meadows and shorelines of the Bruce Trail. Share your favourite places on the Trail or take your child on mapped or guided Bruce Trail Club hikes. Four distinct badges are available for a small fee, one for each season. Once your child has completed a hike in each season, a FREE Junior Hiker Badge is awarded. All hikes do not need to be completed in the same year. For details go to the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club web site

[www.iroquoia.ca](http://www.iroquoia.ca)



Why connect children to nature?

- ***To provide children with an opportunity to learn to love and enjoy the woodlands***

“Exploring new spaces gives us a sense of our place in the world fires up our senses and helps us develop muscle strength, coordination, flexibility, balance, gross and fine motor skills, and self-confidence.”

Budziak, Kim (2017) Science Says: Getting Kids Outdoors is a Game Changer MEC Blog post December 2017 <http://www.mec.ca>

- ***To provide children with an opportunity to benefit from walking in the woods – physiologically and psychologically***

Beresford-Kroeger provides many examples of the psychological and physiological benefits from woodlands. For example studies found children who walk in pine forests are better able to focus on learning and appear calmer. Research has identified specific biochemicals produced and released by trees that may positively impact “the central nervous system of the human body and regulatory mechanism of the brain”.

Beresford-Kroeger, Diana (2013) *The Sweetness of a Simple Life: Tips for a Healthier, Happier and Kinder Living Glossed from the Wisdom and Science of Nature*. Random House Canada.

- ***To create an opportunity for these young citizens to develop a commitment to protect their woodlands.***

Wyles et al, in a research survey discovered respondents recalled “greater connectedness to nature and restoration following visits to rural and coastal locations, compared with urban green spaces”.

Wyles, K.J. et al (2017). “Are some natural environments more psychologically beneficial than others? The importance of type and quality on connectedness to nature and psychological restoration.” *Environment and Behavior* DOI

[Http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0013916517738312](http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0013916517738312)