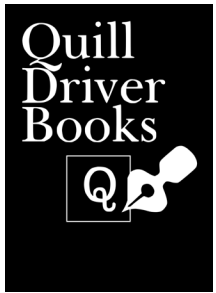


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New parenting book *Finding Ecohappiness* prescribes nature-based fun to improve mental health and mood in children (and parents!)

“A gift to parents looking to improve the mental health and happiness of their children and themselves.”

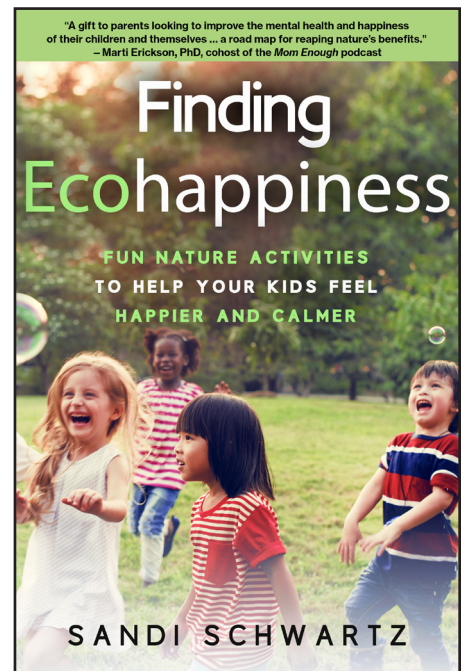
— Marti Erickson, PhD, cohost of the *Mom Enough* podcast

In our always-on, pressure-cooker culture, children are at special risk for mental health threats. From too much screen time, to navigating social media, to obsessing over grades and extracurricular activity overload, children face enormous stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every year one in five American children — 15 million kids — are diagnosed with a mental, emotional or behavioral disorder.

Fortunately, a powerful therapy to protect childhood mental health exists right outside everyone’s door, argues environmental journalist Sandi Schwartz in her new book *Finding Ecohappiness: Fun Nature Activities to Help Your Kids Feel Happier and Calmer* (Quill Driver Books, publication date March 22, 2022).

Written from one parent to another in an easy, nontechnical style, *Finding Ecohappiness* clearly explains the science of how nature improves mental health, while giving parents practical tools to help their children manage depression, anxiety, stress and mood.

Human beings evolved to live in nature, not indoors staring at screens. We all have a powerful instinct to experience nature, and everyone is prone to anxiety and depression when deprived of the natural stimuli of plants,



animals and green landscapes. Reconnecting with nature soothes anxiety, calms the mind and promotes feelings of joy that Schwartz calls *ecohappiness*.

Nature deprivation is particularly harmful to children and their developing young minds. Children naturally want to play outdoors. Too many children today shuttle from school to extracurricular activities to screen time without the outdoor time most adults took for granted during their own childhoods. We're not just subjecting our children to unnatural levels of stress while they're at a vulnerable age — we're also taking away the time with nature that can help them manage stress.

Finding Ecohappiness guides parents in simple, practical ways they can help their children develop regular habits of reconnecting with nature to reduce stress and boost mood. These activities are simple, fun for children and easily accessible to all families, regardless of their location or socioeconomic status. *Finding Ecohappiness* lays out an easy-to-follow plan for incorporating principles such as awe and gratitude, mindfulness, creative arts, outdoor play and adventure, volunteering, food and animals into your children's daily routine, helping them thrive and live a happy, balanced life. Each chapter also includes additional resources for further exploration.

Engaging activities highlighted in *Finding Ecohappiness* range from hiking and bike rides to visiting nature centers and science museums to volunteering outdoors to embarking on ecotourism adventures. Schwartz introduces readers to unique nature relaxation activities like cow cuddling, animal yoga, forest bathing, float therapy and earthing. But daily ecohappiness can be refreshingly simple — even something as easy as creating a backyard garden can improve your children's mental health. Nature isn't just for kids, either — doing these activities with your children will tremendously improve your own well-being, too.

A must-read for all families, *Finding Ecohappiness* will help protect children from feeling stressed and overwhelmed; manage children's issues with stress, anxiety and mood; and improve family togetherness.

Book Details:

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About Sandi Schwartz

Author of *Finding Ecohappiness*



Sandi Schwartz is a journalist specializing in parenting, wellness, and the environment. She has written for *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, *Scary Mommy* and *Very Well Family*, among other publications. She founded the Ecohappiness Project to help families build a nature habit to feel happier and calmer by exploring positive psychology tools through engagement with nature. Previously, she held communications positions at the United States Environmental Protection Agency and National Academy of Sciences. Schwartz has a Masters in Government (Environmental focus) from Johns Hopkins University and a Specialization Certificate in Foundations of Positive Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. She is an active member in environmental and writing organizations, including Children & Nature Network, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Sierra Club and more. Schwartz splits time between Florida and New Jersey with her husband and two children. Schwartz's website is www.ecohappinessproject.com.



For more information on *Finding Ecohappiness*
(Quill Driver Books, March 22, 2022),
or to arrange an interview with author **Sandi Schwartz**,
please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books,
Jaguar@LindenPub.com, (800) 345-4447.

Advance Praise for *Finding Ecohappiness*

“*Finding Ecohappiness* opens our eyes to the healing, transformative and healthy influences nature has ready for us. Bring this into your life, read it carefully, the secrets to our happiness are all around us.”

—**Elisha Goldstein, PhD**, author of *Uncovering Happiness*

“From float therapy and meditation gardens to tree hugging and forest bathing, Schwartz makes a strong case that anybody can find happiness, peace and joy in nature—and she will show you exactly how!”

—**Linda Åkeson McGurk**, journalist, blogger, and author of *There’s No Such Thing as Bad Weather*

“What a gift this book is to parents looking to improve the mental health and happiness of their children and themselves! Drawing on the growing body of research on the healing power of nature, and packed with practical activities around mindfulness, awe, nature play, interaction with animals, eating well, and nature-based volunteering, Sandi Schwartz provides a road-map for reaping nature’s benefits and healing the planet at the same time.”

—**Marti Erickson, PhD**, developmental psychologist and cohost of the *Mom Enough* podcast

“Sandi Schwartz offers us a rich and practical guide to finding connection between ourselves and the natural world. The practices described in this book will help you and the ones you love step through the real doorways to the world outside and through the barriers in our minds to a relationship with nature that heals and sustains.”

—**John Muir Laws**, scientist, artist, award-winning educator, and author of several books including *The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling*

“Now more than ever, we could all benefit from greater connection to the healing powers of nature. In *Finding Ecohappiness*, Sandi Schwartz does an amazing job of bringing together engaging stories, cutting-edge research, and practical tips on how to tap into the therapeutic benefits of the natural world. A timely and essential book!”

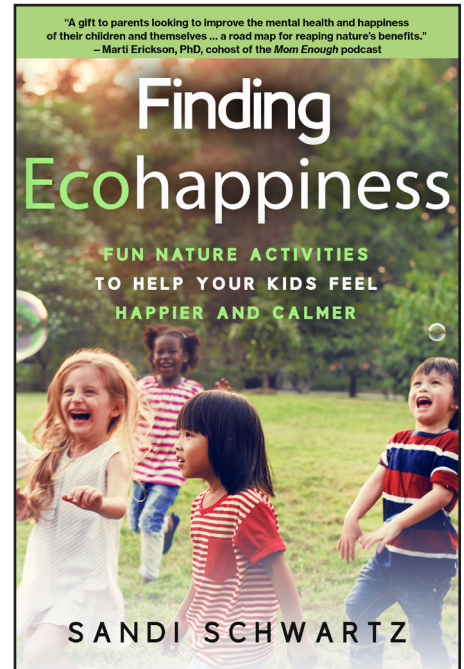
—**Jonah Paquette, PsyD**, author of *Awestruck: How Embracing Wonder Can Make You Happier, Healthier, and More Connected*

“I highly recommend this book to any family interested in accessing the many benefits of the natural world. Sandi Schwartz’s writing style is enjoyable and easy to read while also providing a thorough introduction to how nature is so good for people. She guides the reader through the extensive research and theory in a way that is informative and accessible. The tips and activities are practical and simple to adopt, while also being assured to help any child or family gain the full health and happiness benefits nature provides.”

—**Dennis Kiley**, founder, EcoPsychology Initiative

“*Finding Ecohappiness* is a welcome and needed addition for every home and classroom. This book is thoughtfully and carefully crafted. It is a comprehensive and practical guide that advises and shapes opportunities to incorporate nature into families’ lives in ways that will make sense for each individual family. Tools and tips are shared throughout, and the checklists and resources at the end of each chapter are ready made for busy parents, teachers, and caregivers. Bravo!”

—**Harriet Shugarman**, award-winning author of *How to Talk to Your Kids About Climate Change*



“*Finding Ecohappiness* lays out the case that nature and our families’ emotional states are intimately intertwined. Through personal experiences, expert interviews, and social science research, Sandi Schwartz provides a comprehensive, accessible guide to using the natural environment to boost your family’s mental health. She provides practical examples and activities that root the ideas in real life. If you struggle with anxiety or just want to find a bit more ecohappiness, you should definitely check out this book!”

—**Shannon Brescher Shea**, author of *Growing Sustainable Together*

“This book is filled with important activities that children and families need right now. Sandi Schwartz explains that not only do we possess the abilities to overcome our stress, anxieties, and other challenges, but we can do it by tapping into the power of nature. *Finding Ecohappiness* was written from the heart and presents proven knowledge of what works to transform our lives. This book is a huge inspiration and an essential tool in our arsenal that we will utilize again and again!”

—**Giselle Shardlow**, Kids Yoga Stories

“If there is one thing the world needs right now, it is a heavy dose of ‘ecohappiness,’ which can only be found when we look up from our devices and step outside. Sandi Schwartz understands something that many of us have forgotten: the abundant gifts of the natural world are the keys to physical and emotional health. With compelling scientific research, concise storytelling and actionable tips, *Finding Ecohappiness* will help families harness the awesome power of nature to stay connected, reduce stress and increase happiness.”

—**Natalie Silverstein, MPH**, author of *Simple Acts: The Busy Family’s Guide to Giving Back*

“My daughter is an environmentalist who also has been diagnosed with anxiety. *Finding Ecohappiness* provided a wealth of science-backed information and activities that have helped her. She loved the guided relaxation along with many other activities. All types of families can benefit from trying the various suggested activities and resources that are accessible to anyone.”

—**Cheryl Maguire, MSCP**, journalist



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