

Courtney Brown is a year 7 Student at Baldivis Primary School. She is the 2009 Baldivis Children's Forest Ambassador.

How does the forest make you feel?

When I'm in the forest I feel whole. My heart fills. I feel pure.

I feel free. I'm ready for a challenge. I'm ready for anything.

The forest is such a big project to be part of it really makes you feel like you can really make a difference. When you plant a tree or listen to the Noongar Elders of the area, you know this is a special place. A place your part of.

What is great about the forest?

What I love most about being in the forest is knowing that everybody you're with, including yourself, is making a contribution to a brighter future.

What do you do in the forest?

In the forest my peers and I learn about Noongar culture, soils, insects and macroinvertebrates, native and introduced animals and much more.

We plant trees and build mia mias. We listen as Noongar Elders tell us stories of the past and Dreamtime stories and so much more.

We teach kids and adults about conservation.

Who else goes to the forest?

Over 3000 students from Kindergarten to year twelve, from multiple schools in the area, go to the forest. Adults are also very involved.

Why should kids get involved in the environment/similar projects?

Kids are 20% of our population, but 100% of our future.

With Global Warming our generation needs to learn the skills to tackle Global Warming.

One of the major jobs of a teacher is to prepare their students for jobs that haven't been invented yet. The forest does this and so does other environmental project, organisation, etc.

Anything else you would like to add.

The forest doesn't just give you the opportunity to learn but to teach.

Just last October 29 students and 8 parents and teachers to Canberra to attend an environmental conference, the MDBA International River Health Conference, organised by 'Kids Teaching Kids', who regularly organise such conferences.

The forest gave my peers and I this wonderful opportunity, which lead us to meeting Deputy Prime Minister and head of the Department of Education and

Training Ms Julia Gillard, previous minister for environment Mr Peter Garrett and the Hon Gary Gray AO Member for Brand. We gave them petitions on behalf of the Baldivis Children's Forest and like projects.

The forest often allows my peers and I to perform and present at conferences, not just kid conferences but also adult conferences. We've performed at places such as the Sheraton Hotel; Perth, The State Library of WA, Canberra, Bibra Lake Wetland Centre, the Rockingham City Council and many more.

The forest is an ongoing project; it doesn't just end when you finish school.

The Baldivis Children's Forest isn't just a project; it's a part of our lives.

The forest doesn't just give you the opportunity to learn, but to also teach.

The forest is our place.

By Courtney Brown.