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Repair Cafe encourages shift away from throw-away culture

Victoria organizer Michelle Mulder hopes participants can learn some practical skills

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Michelle Mulder launches Victoria's first Repair Cafe, a worldwide initiative that encourage people to repair their broken things. (Repair Cafe Victoria/Facebook)

If you have a busted bike, a broken-down appliance or a torn sweater that you have no idea how to fix, rather than tossing the items, a new pop-up workshop in Victoria is suggesting you come and learn how to fix them.

On Saturday, author Michelle Mulder will launch the city's first [Repair Cafe, a worldwide initiative started in Amsterdam in 2009](#) to encourage people to repair their broken things and learn some practical skills while enjoying a cup of coffee or tea.

Mulder — who writes books for children — came upon the Repair Cafe movement while researching a book about garbage. She believes the event will bring people together and empower them to be less wasteful.

"It's true that YouTube and the Internet are fantastic resources, but what I like about the Repair Cafe is the community aspect, the idea of a bunch of people repairing things together and maybe if one person doesn't necessarily know how to fix it, they'll be able to ask the volunteer next to them and working together, we can fix all sorts of things," she said in an interview with *On The Island*.

Volunteers with tools who know how to mend clothes or fix appliances and even guitars will be on hand on Saturday. Those who come with broken items need to sign a waiver before they connect with the volunteer best suited for their need.

A Repair Cafe already exists in Nanaimo. The one in Victoria will take place on Saturday at 9:30 a.m. at the Central Library.