



CHILDREN IN BALANCE

SCHOOL GARDENING PROGRAMS

Gardening as part of your school community? All over the country, schools are starting on site garden programs where the students are the ones who get their hands dirty with soil! Here's how to get involved with teaching children about planting food and flowers, the environment, discipline, and fun in nature!

Why Should We Start?

- Support an active lifestyle
- Increase the aesthetic appeal of the school community
- Provides students with an introduction to food systems and where food comes from
- Encourage environmental responsibility at a young age
- Instills a sense of responsibility and pride in accomplishment within the student body
- Starts a horticultural education; learn about different plants, trees, foods, and flowers
- Enhance the science curriculum by providing hands on interactions with ecological principles

What Do I Need To Think About?

- Access to an area of open space/land
- Acquisition of materials: seeds, gardening supplies, water
- Soil: are there contamination issues or environmental hazards?
- Participants: who will take part? Who will maintain it over summer vacation?
- Chaperones
- Buy-In: getting support from the school administration
- Optional garden accessories (i.e. garden gnomes, wind chimes, water fountain, etc...)

Where Do I Go for More Information?

- <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/publications/getting-started.html> The Center for Ecoliteracy publishes Getting Started: A Guide for Creating School Gardens As Outdoor classrooms, available at no cost to teachers. Email: info@ecoliteracy.org
- www.edibleschoolyard.org The website for this landmark school gardening program in Berkeley California features information about the rationale, logistics, and resources available for school gardening.
- www.Kidsgardening.org Site of the National Gardening Association. Includes gardening tips, ideas about greenhouses, suggested curriculum connections, growing tips and suggested materials.
- <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarten/Child/school/sgintro.htm> More ideas about school garden philosophies.
- <http://www.csgn.org/research.php> School garden resource site that features links such as the value of garden-based learning, supplies and funding, garden maintenance, etc...

Created by the Children in Balance initiative at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University