

Gardening: Back To Basics With Children



Children need to experience **simple pleasures**. It is good for children to have fun without being in a room full of toys. It is even better when they have fun with their parents.

Children naturally love “adventures.” They are good at using their imaginations. *“Imagination” skills are not used while watching television.* Being outside in the fresh air and sunshine is healthy for a child’s mind and body. *Children do not get fresh air and sunshine while playing video games.*

Gardening allows parents and children to spend time together **outdoors**. They see plants and flowers, find bugs, and chase butterflies. They can even eat the vegetables that they planted.

Planting a garden is easy and cheap.

- * Find a gardening book at the local library. The Chatham Library in Illinois suggests:

The Ugly Vegetables by Grace Lin,

Planting A Rainbow by Lois Ehlert,
Ready, Set, Grow: A Guide to Gardening With Children by Suzanne Frutig Bales.

- * Start small. Use window boxes or pots. Cut off the tops and clean bleach and milk containers. Use them as planters.
- * Choose a small patch of ground in the backyard and let the kids dig.
- * Find some “child-sized” tools for digging and planting. Plastic spoons and sand shovels will work well when planting in pots.
- * Let the child help choose and grow a variety of plants. Flowers come in many different shapes and colors – zinnias, marigolds and petunias. Children will like eating small cherry or grape tomatoes and green beans.
- * Plant a sunflower and watch it grow taller than the child ... and the parent.



Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. , 7 days a week.