

# Tree Planting

*Trees serve an important role in the health of people and communities. While they require a strong commitment to care for, trees can greatly enhance a playspace.*

## **Age Appropriateness:**

9-12, 13 and up

## **Key Topics:**

Ecology,

Pollution,

Health,

Trees

## **Skills:**

Researching,

Critical-Thinking

## **Materials:**

Trees and/or tree saplings, shovels, soil, watering hose

## **Action Time:**

2 hours+

## **Resources:**

[A Tree is Something Wonderful](#) by: Elizabeth K. Cooper

[www.ptl.org](http://www.ptl.org)

[www.actrees.org](http://www.actrees.org)

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Identify what types of trees would work well around their playspace.
- Develop a deeper understand of the importance of trees in the local ecology.
- Create a maintenance plan to ensure the trees are cared for.



## **Discussion**

Have youth identify the benefits of trees (including emotional, environmental, health, etc.) and have them match those benefits with the needs on your playground site. Consider the needs of your playground site. Think about such elements as shade, soil retention, drainage help, aesthetics, noise reduction, pollution absorption, and so on. Teach the youth the difference between native trees/plants and exotic/introduced trees. Have youth identify trees found in your climate zone/region. Consider inviting an Urban Forester or somebody from your city's parks or transportation department that might regularly deal with tree-planting. Once the types of trees and location for planting has been selected (preferably with the help of an expert), have youth draft a maintenance plan to ensure the trees will take root and last for years to come.

## **Action**

- Working with a local nursery, tree-planting group, or government agency, arrange for trees to be delivered to your site to be planted on your Day of Service. Have the expert provide guidance for how to properly plant them.
- Plant trees in holes three times the size of the tree's root ball.
- Create a berm of soil or organic material around the tree to help retain water.
- Give your trees a health watering (5 minutes or more) and begin following the maintenance plan to ensure that the trees are cared for and regularly watered for up to five years.

## **Reflection**

How are your trees doing? Where else in the community could you do another tree planting? Where can you explore the many varieties of trees in your region? There are many service learning activities related to trees on the internet to follow with.