Youth Gardens

Youth gardens can help enrich youth with hands-on education in a variety of life sciences while developing leadership and team-building skills.

Age Appropriateness:

5-8, 9-12, 13 and up

Key Topics:

Biology,

Health,

Nutrition

Skills Developed:

Researching,

Experimentation,

Teamwork,

Problem-Solving

Materials:

Gardening beds, soil, seeds, seeds, plants, vegetables, fruits, flowers, etc.

Gardening tools—hoes, rakes, shovels, hand tools, etc.

Action Time:

1 hour per week

Resources:

The National Gardening Association Guide to Kids Gardening by L. Ocone and E. Pranis

www.kidsgardening.com

OBJECTIVES

- Create an outdoor space for youth to gain hands-on environmental education.
- Students will learn about and promote sustainable and organic gardening practices.

Discussion

Begin research on which plants will grow best in your area and climate. What types of plants should we grow in our garden? What type of garden should we create? (butterfly, pizza, herb, medicinal, native, historic, flower, kitchen table, etc.) Have the youth select the types of plants that they will grow and identify a location for your garden.

Next, students should design the garden within the designated space. Have them develop a maintenance plan. Follow a planning process similar to the steps you are taking in building a playground. Fundraising may be necessary, but many plants can be grown easily from seed indoors. Remember, gardens take a lot of work, but offer a world of rewards!

Action

- Prepare the site for your garden by clearing debris.
- Plant selected seeds or seedlings according to the results of your research.
- Immediately implement the maintenance plan and watch your garden grow!

Reflection

After your garden is underway, have a celebration with your first crops. This is a great opportunity to learn more about how fruits and vegetables get from a farm to a store to our kitchen table!