

FitFUTURE

Strategies for
Better Living.

Gardening with Children Cultivates More Than Food



by Jennifer Kerr, MS, RD, CDN

Most young children don't mind getting dirty! They are often fascinated by worms and bugs and they love to use a hose to water plants, grass (anything really!). Children love planting seeds, watching them grow and harvesting from their very own garden.

Gardening is a wonderful family activity for many reasons.

By cultivating your children's curiosity about gardening, you will:

- Foster in them a love of nature.
- Help them find a deeper relationship with their food.
- Enjoy spending valuable time together as a family
- Discover that children are more likely to healthy foods that they have helped to plant and grow!

A garden does not have to be elaborate. Just keep it simple and small. Measuring out a "yardstick" garden keeps the size easily manageable for children. If you live in an apartment or lack outdoor space, gardening in pots and containers can be just as enjoyable and productive.

Your garden options are endless. Whatever you choose, make sure to include the children in the garden-planning process.

Some popular garden items include:

Vegetables:

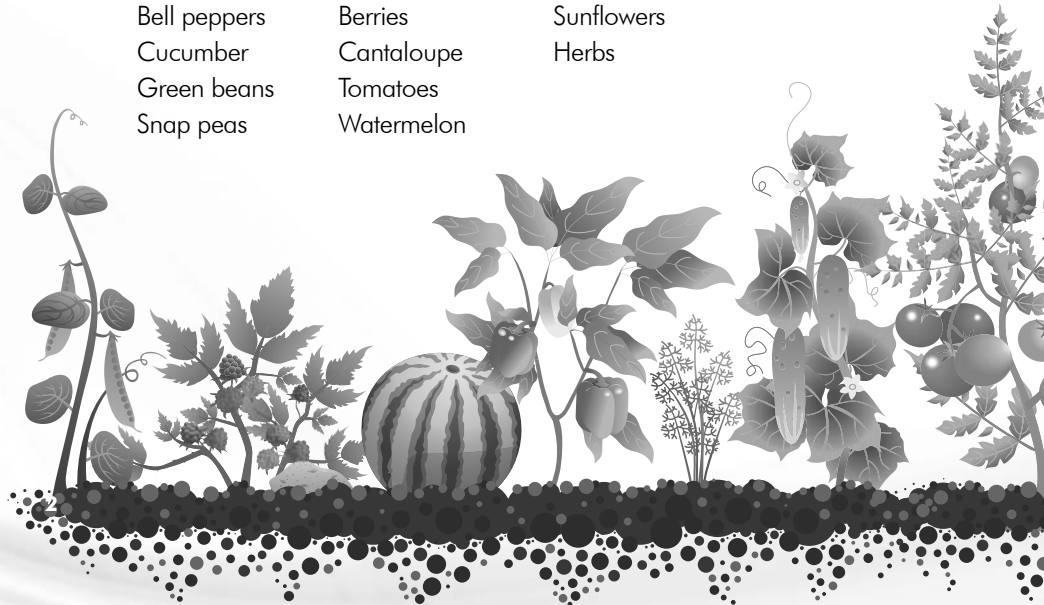
Bell peppers
Cucumber
Green beans
Snap peas

Fruit:

Berries
Cantaloupe
Tomatoes
Watermelon

Others:

Sunflowers
Herbs



Resources:

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/>
http://eartheasy.com/grow_gardening_children.htm
<http://www.hcs.ohio-state.edu/mg/pdf/youth.pdf>
<http://www.gardeningideas.org/types/vegetable-gardening.html>