



School Gardens

What is a School Garden?

School gardens are a powerful means of instilling lifelong environmental and nutritional literacy in children. The garden engages students by providing a dynamic environment in which to observe, discover, experiment, nurture, and learn. It is a living laboratory where lessons are drawn from real-life experiences rather than textbook examples, allowing students to become active participants in the learning process.



With kids believing food comes from boxes, cans, or wrapped in plastic, and is found only in supermarkets - and given the fact that our children are facing a health crisis - we need to go back to the start.

We need to connect food with the earth. We need to connect health, mood and behavior with food. We need to connect learning with food. School gardens are a big part of the solution!

Ten Reasons Why School Gardens are an Excellent Idea

1. Magic happens when a child harvests a vegetable he or she has planted and nurtured. The child will want to eat it! It will increase interest and improve attitudes towards eating fruits and vegetables.
2. Students will learn where food really comes from - a carrot grows in the ground, a green bean on a vine and Brussels sprouts on a stalk!
3. School gardens foster an increased awareness of environmental issues. They will learn to respect and care for the soil, where our food comes from.
4. They will get to share their bounty with their classmates. Eating with their peers is one of the most important motivators for children to try new foods.
5. It gives children an opportunity to be outside and away from computer screens and, at the same time, significantly increase science achievement scores.

6. They improve self esteem, behavior, social skills and interpersonal relationships as well as help develop life skills including working with groups.
7. Research by Columbia Teachers College shows that hands-on gardening and cooking programs are the two things that are actually effective in behavior change; they get kids to eat more vegetables.
8. The gardens are beautiful spaces that connect students to their school and help them develop a sense of pride and ownership, which in turn improves attitudes towards school and discourages vandalism.
9. They provide opportunities for community involvement including neighbors, volunteers, parents, and local businesses.
10. School gardens promote good nutrition and exercise. The health of our kids and the health of our planet are fundamentally connected.

When investigating the benefits of school gardens, it's helpful to divide them into four categories: academic achievement, a healthy lifestyle, environmental stewardship, and community and social development.

About Teich Garden Systems LLC

This company designs and installs state-of-the-art animal-resistant outdoor sustainable garden systems for gardeners of all ages. They have just posted a great School Garden Guide (PDF). Go to their website www.teichgardensystems.com to download their guide or call them at 888-622-5822 for more information.

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