

## How Gardening Can Help Kids Learn And Grow



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Gardening is a wonderful activity for adults who want to get some exercise, spend time outdoors, and grow their own healthy food, but it can also be a great way for kids to learn and bond with parents and grandparents. Some of the biggest benefits that come with working in a garden-- physical and mental health, stress relief, and exercise--all apply to young children, but with the added benefits of science, math, and social skills.

Tending a garden can also be a great way to teach children empathy and responsibility. Learning how to take care of another living thing can be a wonderful lesson that sticks with your child for decades. Not only that, growing edible things can help your child learn how to eat healthier and how to care about the welfare of others; when you find yourself with an abundance of vegetables, consider donating them to a food bank or shelter so that others can benefit from your harvest.

Here are a few of the best ways your child can learn and grow from gardening.

### **It improves brain function**

Gardening is a calming, relaxing activity, and studies have shown that it can improve memory and brain function--so much, in fact, that it can actually prevent Alzheimer's disease in seniors by up to 50%. Working in a garden can also help reduce stress and anxiety, which can in turn help with depression and even [addiction](#).

Working in the garden can even help kids with school, as tending to plants is [pure science](#). Talk to your child about why plants need sun and water to grow, how to keep them healthy, and how to use math to measure the rows or count seeds.

### **It helps them get healthy**

Gardening is wonderful exercise, and if it gets the kids outside working in the dirt rather than sitting in the house looking at a screen, all the better! Not only does the work itself promote a [healthier body](#), but when you harvest all those fruits and veggies, your child can take advantage of them at the dinner table. Also, spending time in the sun can up your child's vitamin D intake, which can help boost their immune system.

### **It can promote critical thinking**

These days, it can be difficult to unplug your kids from the television, computer, smartphone, or tablet. Getting outside in the sunshine, working toward a common goal, sharing the workload with others, and forming social skills can help your child perform better at school and can even assist in better grades. Gardening involves measuring, planning, and preparing, all of which are parts of critical thinking.

### **It can help them learn responsibility**

It's all too easy to do as many things for our kids as possible, but it's important to take a step back sometimes and let them figure things out on their own. Learning how to be [responsible](#) is one of the biggest challenges a child faces, so it's important to allow them to take control of their own section of the garden and tend it themselves. Not only will your child figure out quickly that it takes hard work to make something grow, he'll be able to enjoy the reward in the form of a healthy snack later on.

With all the many [benefits](#) that gardening can provide, it's no wonder that more and more people are beginning to use it as a teaching experience for their children. Talk to your child about his ideal foods or plants to grow and create a plan, whether it involves the entire family or just the two of you. The garden just might become your new favorite place to be.

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