

Make a plan for gardening next spring with your kids

October 31 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



Are you still having a hard time getting your kids to eat their fruits and

vegetables? Studies, including one in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, show that a successful solution is to grow your own.

Kids get excited as they watch a garden produce and are more motivated to eat what they had a hand in growing. Gardening is also a great way to get in extra exercise and reap the benefits of time spent outdoors in fresh air and sunshine.

Whether you have a small patio bucket or can allocate square footage in your backyard, start your planning well before spring. Use [online resources](#) like Chicago Botanic (chicagobotanic.org) in the North, and Georgia Organics (georgiaorganics.org) in the Southeast to determine your climate zone and the right planting times.

To get kids interested, the Arizona Farm Bureau suggests looking through colorful seed catalogs with them and letting them help pick out the choices. On the other hand, you don't need to fill them in on every last prep detail unless they want to know.

To avoid having them feel overwhelmed by the new activity, be sure to keep their responsibilities age appropriate. Older children can be more involved from the planning and design of the garden to harvesting, and even preserving some of the foods. Younger children can help with planting seeds, pulling weeds and watering. Little ones will enjoy their tasks more with gloves and tools sized for small hands. You might also give your kids a sense of ownership with a [gardening](#) space all their own within mom and dad's larger plot.

More information: For more ideas, check out KidsGardening.org.

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