

## KIDZCOMMUNITY WEEKLY UPDATES & ACTIVITIES

I don't know about you, but with the weather being so warm with bright blue skies, the outdoors have been calling me. But with state "stay-at-home" orders and physical distancing required while out in public, outside activity can be challenging.

We know that our bodies need sunlight, fresh air, and even dirt. Yes, dirt! There is something about digging in that rich, brown stuff that actually boosts our mood. In fact, excessive use of technology and digital gadgets has reduced the amount of time we spend outdoors, resulting in what is now referred to as "nature deficit."

We also know that young children learn through hands-on, sensory experiences. They need to see, touch, hear, smell, and taste things to fully understand them. And the outdoors is teeming with amazing, multi-sensory opportunities that create optimum learning.

So, to help you and your child benefit from all nature has to offer, this coming weeks activities focus on getting you outside. No matter what or where your living arrangement is, you can bring these activities to life. If you don't have space or a yard to garden, try a windowsill or deck version. Be creative, think outside the box, and have fun!



## Gardening Tips with Toddlers & Preschoolers

- Know your stuff – Do you have enough sun-light in your yard, porch or windowsill; which seeds grow in which season; what’s simple and fast to grow to get you started; soil should be soft enough for your toddler to manipulate.
- Relax – Young children are in it for the sensory experience, not the end result. They’ll pull that first sprouted green, they’ll dig where you’ve just planted seeds. **BUT**, if you give them another space to dig and get messy, you can also begin to teach them “caring for” small and natural things in your “garden” space.
- Keep it simple – Again, children are in it for the sensory experience, and they gain much developmentally from simply digging in dirt (small and large motor skills for pre-writing, emotional wellness- remember dirt and sunshine actually boosts mood, and sensory can be relaxing; cause and effect, and problem solving are boosting cognitive skills). Having access to a garden (or windowsill planter) and tasting what’s been grown is the goal (even if they’ve been “just” digging).
- Have a “can do” garden – children can dig, plant seeds, water, and help in many hands-on ways. If they lose interest, it’s ok.
- Eat what you grow – Model for children. They’ve never tried a radish? Grow some; it’s the best way to interest children in new veggies!
- Have fun – Remember, the end product (yummy and healthy veggies) is just a small piece of the entire sensory process for your child.



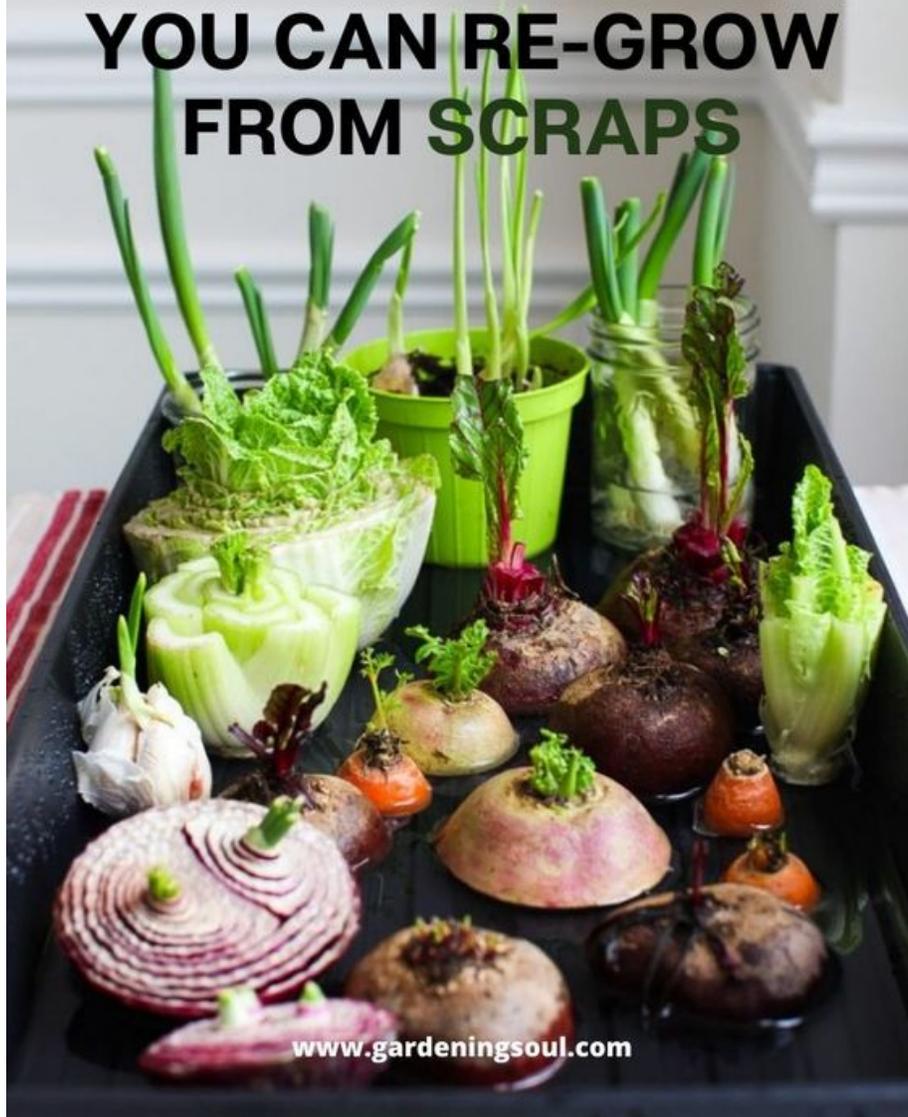
(J Lukenbill in her NAEYC article “7 Tips for Vegetable gardening with Your Toddler”)



## Fun Home Window Gardens

- When you make a trip to the grocery store, see if there are some seeds and a small bag of soil
  - You can also use seeds from fruits you have on hand (those these may take longer), or grow veggie tops (carrots, celery, radishes), then plant in soil later.
  - Repurpose water, soda or juice bottles and grow yourself something beautiful or edible
- <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/children/grow-carrot-tops.htm>

# 20 VEGETABLES YOU CAN RE-GROW FROM SCRAPS



<https://gardeningsoul.com/20-vegetables-you-can-re-grow-from-scraps/>



Here is a simple, but extremely effective science project to do with your children:  
Growing Romaine Lettuce from Kitchen Scraps.

The process is pretty simple, and ultimately, you can transplant these “new” plants to your garden.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOW TO GROW ROMAINE LETTUCE FROM SCRAPS

BY: Betsy Finn – Betsy is a photographer, outdoors enthusiast, and mother.  
<https://theeducatorsspinonit.com/growing-romaine-lettuce-from-kitchen/>

1. \*ADULTS\*, cut romaine lettuce core off, leaving about 2 inches.



2. Break a toothpick into thirds, and insert into bottom of core, forming a tripod.



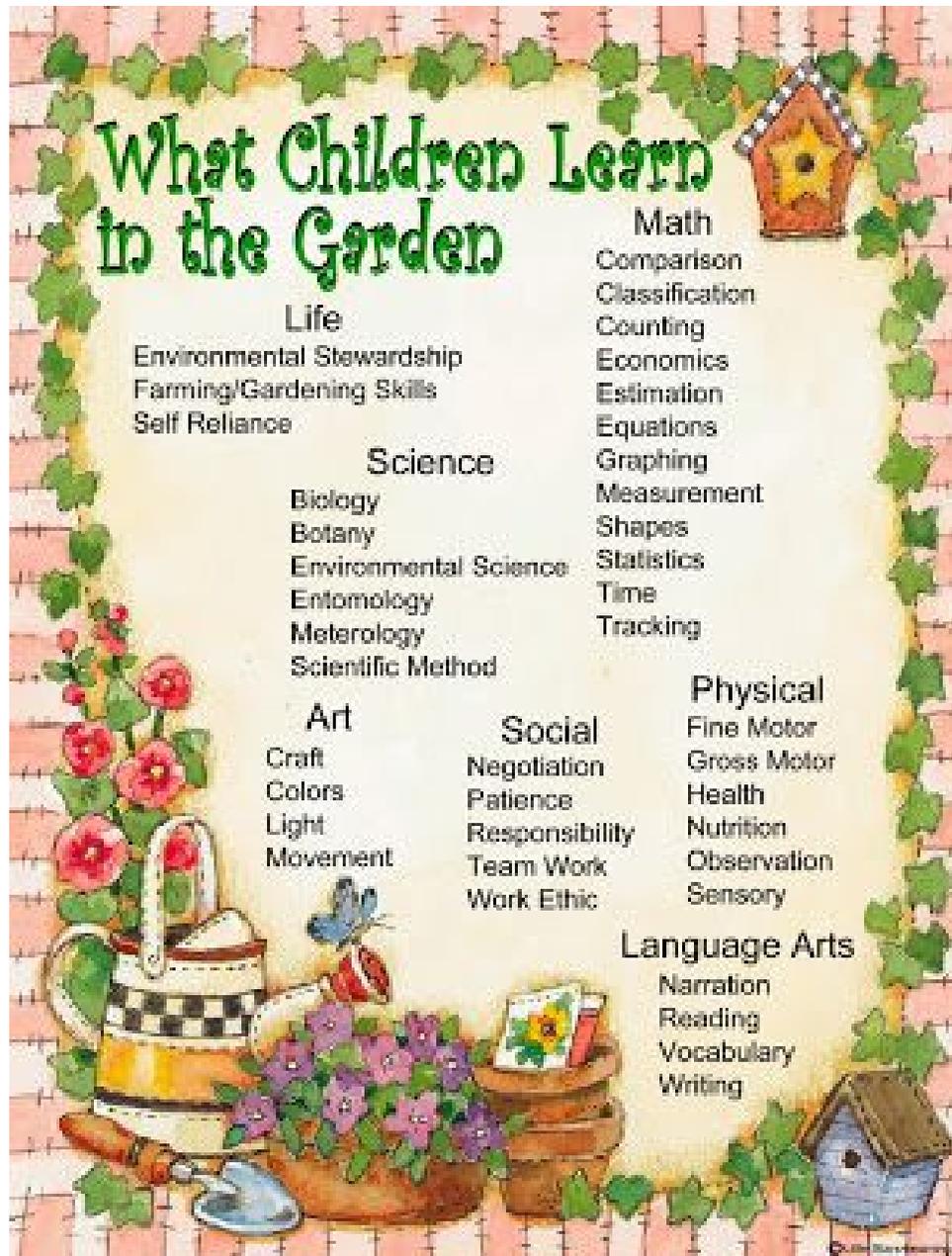
3. Place core into jar or container (if it won't fit, you can break off some outside stems).



4. Fill with enough water to cover the lettuce core by about a half inch.
5. Place in windowsill.
6. Water the romaine lettuce as needed (replacing completely if water turns colored).



Once roots form, transplant into your garden (or into potting soil). Wait for your Romaine lettuce to grow large enough to eat!



**Above all they learn...**

**APPRECIATION FOR NATURE  
 of which, they are a part.**

<https://littlestarslearning.blogspot.com/2013/09/what-children-learn-in-garden.html>



# When I Play Outside

## I am learning about

Absorption Adaption Action Arranging **Animals**  
Autonomy Balance Belonging Calculating Caring  
*Cause and Effect* **Change** community *Creative Thinking*  
Culture Chemical reaction **CONSTRUCTION** *Calm*  
**Co-operation** Creatures **CLASSIFICATION** Conservation  
**Communication** Confidence **Connection** Conversation  
Depth DISTANCE Density Experimentation Evaporation  
**Friction** **Friendship** Force **Gravity** Height Inertia  
Invention **Identification** **Insects**  
Light Initiative *Language* Listening Literacy Independence  
Investigation *Manipulation* **Myself** Measurement Mass  
Movement Matching **NATURE** Negotiation *Nurturing*  
**Numeracy** **OBSERVATION** Ordering Patterning  
**Physics** Planning Problem solving  
Plants Questioning *Reaction* Risk *Responsibility*  
Resilience **Regulation** Representation Suspension  
*Size* Shape Seasons *Senses* Scientific Method  
Temperature Team work Texture Volume **Vibration**  
Weight Weather Speed Space **Collaboration**

...and much, much more!

[www.letthechildrenplay.net.au](http://www.letthechildrenplay.net.au)





## Supplies

- Mud
- [Ice cube tray](#)
- [Kid-sized gardening tools](#)

Pack the mud tightly into the ice cube trays to form bricks.



Once the mud is nice and packed into the ice cube trays, let them sit in the sun and “bake” for a couple hours. It is important for the mud to dry to have strong bricks.

Let dry for two hours, dump the bricks and start building!

<https://playteachrepeat.com/engineering-with-mud-bricks/>

# CARING CONNECTIONS: Strengthening Relationships by Practicing Kindness, Being Grateful, and Spending Quality Time With Those We LOVE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Do something helpful for a family member or friend.</p> 	<p>Connect with a relative to say hello and chat.</p> 	<p>Count your blessings: List the kind things others have done for you.</p> 	<p>Create and then share a card or a piece of art with someone you love.</p> 	<p>Go outside and find one thing that reminds you of someone. Share what you find and your why.</p>	<p>Create a cell phone / device parking lot so you can enjoy device-free moments together each day.</p>	<p>Find a deck of cards and play a game like Crazy Eights, Spoons or Go Fish.</p> 
<p>Find a joke that you love and share it with 2 other people in person, by phone, or virtually.</p>	<p>Work together to plan a 3-course meal. Write down / draw each part of the meal to share as the menu for the evening.</p>	<p>Go outside and find materials to create a centerpiece for others to enjoy!</p> 	<p>Name 3 things you are grateful for. Draw a picture or write a list of these things and then post in a prominent place.</p>	<p>Work to create 5 "happy cards" for seniors that are in a local nursing home. Drop them off for them to enjoy.</p>	<p>While washing your hands look at yourself in the mirror and tell yourself one thing you like about YOU!</p>	<p>Do one act of kindness to make life easier for someone.</p> 
<p>Thank 3 people you are grateful to and tell them why.</p> 	<p>Smile at the people you are with to brighten their day.</p> 	<p>Learn one new thing today and share what you learned with someone.</p> 	<p>Choose a favorite song(s) and enjoy a spontaneous dance party.</p> 	<p>Get a deck or two of cards and build a home. Talk about what makes a home safe and what connects us to others.</p>	<p>Go outside and enjoy a game of "Red Light, Green Light." Be sure to run, walk, slide, jump and enjoy other creative ways to move.</p>	<p>Design and create a musical instrument. Enjoy a sharing concert.</p> 
<p>Ask someone to do what you LOVE to do today.</p> 	<p>Send a message or letter to someone you cannot be with today.</p> 	<p>Find a favorite book and read it or share it with someone.</p> 	<p>Enjoy a scavenger hunt with someone. Both write lists of 5 things the other person will look for, switch lists and then GO!</p>	<p>Notice 5 things that are beautiful within your world. Share your ideas with someone.</p> 	<p>Learn how to play hopscotch and then PLAY!</p> 	<p>Thank someone and tell them how they make a difference for you.</p> 

# ORAL HEALTH

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

## You Can Promote Good Oral Health By:

- Knowing how to make sure you and your family have healthy mouths and teeth
- Helping your children learn good mouth and teeth habits

### Why Is It Important?

*When Children Have a Healthy Mouth, They:*

- Can speak clearly
- Can eat healthy foods
- Feel good about themselves

*Having a Healthy Mouth Also Means:*

- Healthy growth and development
- Being able to focus and learn
- A pain-free mouth
- Lower dental care costs for your family



## Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

- Brush your child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- If your child is younger than 3 years, brush with a smear of fluoride toothpaste.
- If your child is age 3 to 6 years, brush with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Young children will want to brush their own teeth, but they need help until their hand skills are better. Brush children's teeth or help children brush their teeth until they are about 7 or 8 years old.
- Be a role model for oral health! Brush your teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day (in the morning and at bedtime) and floss once a day.
- Serve healthy meals and snacks like fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk and milk products, whole-grain products, meat, fish, chicken, eggs, and beans.
- Limit the number of snacks your child has in a day.
- Do not give your child food for rewards.
- Take your child to the dentist for a check up by her first birthday and keep taking her.
- If your child has not gone to the dentist take him.
- Ask your dentist what you can do to keep your mouth and your child's mouth healthy.
- Make sure to go to the dentist as often as your dentist would like you to go.
- Let your child care, Early Head Start, or Head Start program know if you need help or have questions about oral health.



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood  
National Centers  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness



**BRUSH YOUR  
CHILD'S  
TEETH TWICE  
A DAY**

**DO IT FOR 2  
MINUTES**

**USE A PEA-  
SIZED  
AMOUNT OF  
TOOTHPASTE**





## Seasonal Produce

(Available in Spring)

Greens: Arugula, lettuce, microgreens, sprouts, spinach, chard, collard greens, dandelion greens, herbs, kale

Roots: Beets, carrots, garlic, onions, potatoes, rutabaga, radishes, turnips

Vegetables: Broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkins, scallions, winter squash

Citrus: Grapefruit, kiwi, kumquats, lemons, mandarins (Lee), oranges, tangelo

Other: Eggs, flowers, honey, popcorn

## Farmers Markets

**\*\*Please observe social distancing and wear your masks. The markets have full procedures posted to visit market and purchase food during this time.**

- **Placer County**
  - **Old Town Auburn Market**-Saturday's 8am-12pm
  - **Roseville Fountains** (Whole Foods parking lot)-Tuesday's 8:30-1pm
- **Nevada County**
  - **Truckee (10500 Brockway Rd)**- Tuesdays 8am-1pm (May-Oct )  
\*may be moving, location not confirmed
  - **Grass Valley (Raley's Pine Creek Center)**- Tuesdays 8am-1pm (May 5-Sept 29)
  - **Grass Valley (K-Mart / McKnight Crossing parking lot)**- Saturdays, 8am-12pm (May 2-Nov 21)
  - **Nevada City (Union Street)**- every Saturday in May 9am-noon, June -Nov 8:30am-1pm



Pearson Family Orchard selling at Nevada City Farmer's Market

# STRESS

## Take a Breath

**B**elly breathing or deep breathing exercises are a proven way to reduce stress. Try this technique standing or seated in a chair:

1. Place your arms and hands at your side, relaxed.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Focus on your belly, the lower part of the stomach. Imagine a small balloon inside.
4. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose, imagine the balloon inflating. Hold a few seconds.
5. Slowly exhale through your mouth, imagining the balloon gently deflating. Blow out of your mouth as if you were blowing out a candle.
6. Repeat at least three times.

**TIP:** Place a hand over your belly to feel it go up and down, and make sure you're not breathing with your chest.

You can do this in your classroom, at home, on the bus, in the car — anywhere!

