

Garden Education from the Salmon Center

Nutrition in the Garden Activity

Ages 6+



Overview: Spring has finally arrived! As the warmer weather settles in, lots of us are beginning to think about planning our summer gardens for ourselves and our families. This may have been an individual task in the past, but this year why not have your kiddos help you out? Since many parents are seeking a way to keep their kids' minds active during this time, this activity guide includes tips on how to integrate nutrition education into garden planning.

Note: If you do not have access to a garden, don't worry! This activity will work just as well by planning an "imaginary garden."

Materials:

- Seeds/seed packets/plant starts
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- Paper
- The Plants We Eat Chart (included)
- Eat the Rainbow Chart (included)

Start the Activity:

1. Begin by pulling out a large piece of paper. Roughly sketch your garden area and introduce to your student that you will be building a garden together.
2. Lay out seeds/packets/plant starts that you will be using in your garden. Identify the different types of crops with your student. As you decide where each plant should go, encourage your student to draw it on the paper.
3. Introduce nutrition topics:
 - a. **Plant Parts:** Discuss with your student that the fruits and vegetables we eat come from different parts of the plant (A tomato is a fruit; celery is a stem; carrot

is a root; spinach is a leaf; broccoli is a flower; a bean is a seed). As you place different crops in areas of the garden, ask your student to guess what part of the plant this fruit or vegetable comes from.

- b. **Eating the Rainbow:** Discuss with your student the importance of eating the rainbow to get all the nutrients we need. Different colored fruits and vegetables have different health benefits for our bodies. Each color has different phytonutrients. Phytonutrients are chemicals produced by plants that protect them from germs, insects, and the sun. These chemicals also provide significant health benefits to humans too. Reference the chart and have students identify what each colored vegetable does for our body.
4. Once the garden has been planned, emphasize to your student the importance of variety in the garden (different parts of the plant/different colors) so that they can have variety in their diets.

RED
To improve heart & blood health & support joints

ORANGE
To prevent cancer & promote collagen growth

YELLOW
Helps your heart, vision digestion & immune system

GREEN
Powerful detoxers, fight free radicals, improve immune system

BLUE/PURPLE
Improve mineral absorption, powerful anti-oxidants

WHITE
Activate our natural killer cells & reduce cancer risk

ROOTS	STEMS	FRUITS	FLOWERS	SEEDS	LEAVES
Beet Onion Carrot Parsnip Potato Radish Rutabaga Sweet Potato Turnip	Celery Rhubarb Asparagus Leek	Berries Pear Melon Tomato Eggplant Squash Cucumber Peppers	Cauliflower Broccoli Chamomile Dandelion Calendula	Beans Peas Corn	Kale Lettuce Parsley Spinach Swiss Chard Basil Mint

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