

Gardening is a fun learning experience for the whole family

Tips for teaching children fun and safe gardening techniques

(NAPS)—Gardening is one of the best legacies parents can give their children. It helps create a love of the earth and joy in seeing things grow, and it provides an outlet away from the increasingly complicated and technological world. According to Dr. Francis Wardle, director of education for Children's World Learning Centers, gardening also is a great way for children to learn all

sorts of scientific concepts, such as:

- Vegetables don't grow in supermarkets.
- Sun, wind, water and cold affect plants.
- Plants follow a growth cycle from seed to plant to flower to fruit to seed.
- How to distinguish between weeds and vegetables.
- How to distinguish between different vegetables by observing their leaves.
- The effects of insects and diseases on plants, and what can be done to protect the vegetables.
- Pride and satisfaction in creating, maintaining and harvesting a garden.
- How to work together.
- A good feeling for working outside with nature.

When gardening with your family, keep in mind:

- Children make mistakes. They may pull out a plant instead of a weed or pick a zucchini before it's ready. Being prepared for these incidents helps avoid conflict.

•Be sure to emphasize the fun, discovery and sense of accomplishment, not the responsibility and hard work. That will come later. If a child is bored, cold, tired or ready for something else, don't fight it.

•Remember, what appeals to adults about gardening might not impress children. Try to support your child's enthusiasm for big worms, red roots, funny-shaped leaves and "plants that look like rabbits."

For anyone gardening with their children, there also are a few safety tips that should be observed:

- Never use gardening machinery around young children.
- If chemical insecticides or fertilizers are used, follow directions carefully and keep your child out of the garden until it is safe.
- Young children put almost everything in their mouths, so, carefully watch the younger ones.

With more than 20 years in education, Dr. Wardle's background includes a doctorate in education with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction, and a master's degree in cultural foundations of education.

Children's World Learning Centers is a leading provider of quality infant, toddler, preschool, pre-kindergarten and school-age learning programs in the United States.



The family that gardens together grows together.

action tool, with its short 15-inch handle and dual-duty tool head, is excellent for planting bulbs and small plants. According to its producer, V & B Manufacturing Company, it's designed to replace the digging, clawing and shoveling motions required by existing garden hand tools.

The "hammer action" means the tool head does most of the work. Thanks to its hammer-like swing, you can break up hard soil for easier digging and planting while sparing your arm and wrist.

The tool features a sharp pick at one end which can be quickly flipped over to the uniquely shaped planter end for quickly scooping out dirt and preparing the planting hole.

Other User-Friendly Features Include:

- Computer-assisted balancing.
- Corrosion-resistant toolhead.
- Rectangular-fitted handle to prevent loosening and twisting on impact.

The Mini-Planter is available at local lawn and garden centers.

Free Catalog

You can also find it in a free catalog available from V & B Manufacturing Corporation, P.O. Box 268, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476;

or on the company Web site at: <http://www.hammer.net.com/dirt.htm>. The toll-free number is 1-800-443-1987.

New tool makes planting easier

(NAPS)—The hammer, possibly the oldest tool known to humans, is now making an appearance in the garden.

A new garden tool lets you use an easy, hammer-like swing to pulverize and clear soil to get it ready for planting. Its principle: to save you energy by letting the tool head do the work.

Called a Mini-Planter™, this hammer-

What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?




—Henry David Thoreau

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