



As They Grow

Early Learning News for Families of Young Children

UW Extension
Learning for life

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— Play is a Child's Work —

Gardening with Your Preschooler

Gardening with your preschooler can be great fun. You move mulch. You pull a few weeds. You blow the fuzz off dandelions. If your child wants to plant last night's dessert – watermelon seeds, you do that.

Find a sunny location for your garden. Plants like a sunny spot that receives at least six hours of sunlight.



If your site is too shady, consider using containers that can be moved or placed where there is plenty of sun.

Prepare your soil for planting.

Remove all the turf and weeds prior to planting. Depending on the size of a new bed, this may take more than a day to accomplish.

Before planting any seeds or plants, loosen the soil with a spade or tiller. You only need to till the top 6-8 inches. When planting seeds, follow directions on the seed packs. Make sure to water seeds or plants thoroughly and keep the garden weeded after planting.

Tips for making gardening fun for your preschooler:

- ☺ Give your child his/her own space to garden. A very small area will do. Everything looks bigger to a child.
- ☺ Let kids choose what to plant. Make sure there are some sure-success plants among their picks.
- ☺ Relax your standards. Crooked rows or weeds as pets are fine.
- ☺ If your child would rather play in the dirt or look at bugs, it's okay. Follow your child's interest.
- ☺ Look for the "teachable" moment. If you find a butterfly or praying mantis, explore and learn together.
- ☺ Use kid-size tools. Spoons work well for small hands.
- ☺ Visit the garden with your preschooler everyday so you won't miss its rewards: opening flowers, first sprout, buzz of honeybees, whir of hummingbirds, etc.
- ☺ Remember: One of the best things you ever grow may be a gardener.

Safety — A garden is not "childproof." Never leave your preschooler unattended. Teach your child's what safe and what's not. Always be watchful. Use caution with water. Always supervise children around water!

Keep Your Child Active

Physical activity. . .

- ▶ helps children build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- ▶ builds lean muscle
- ▶ helps decrease body fat
- ▶ helps prevent and reduce high blood pressure
- ▶ may enhance self-esteem and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety
- ▶ may increase a child's capacity for learning as it helps teach them about their world.

Your expectations and encouragement influence your child. Experts say that parents who are active themselves and who support and encourage their children to be active have a positive influence on their children's physical activity level.

You show that physical activity is important when you are involved. Play catch, take a walk, push the swing, twirl with a hula hoop, go skating, or ride bikes together. Do it often!

Encourage your child's physical activity:

- ◇ Promote daily physical activity (walking, running, biking, dancing, playing activities with a ball, playing games, such as "Simon Says," etc.).
- ◇ Play with your child before watching television. Gradually extend your active playtime and decrease television time.
- ◇ Include indoor activities with soft equipment that can be used in small spaces (playing tag or hide-and-seek, tossing a nerf ball, or crawling through an obstacle course).
- ◇ Use child care providers who promote physical activity and have the space and equipment for it.
- ◇ Provide appropriate safety equipment, such as helmets during physical activity.
- ◇ Match the activity to your child, not the child to the activity.
- ◇ Children under 6 need to develop motor skills. For this reason they may not be ready for organized sports.
- ◇ Make it fun!



Yogurt Popsicles

Makes 8 small popsicles. Nutrition Information - 57 calories, 1 gram of fat per popsicle

Ingredients:

- √ 6 Tablespoons (½ of 6 ounce can frozen orange juice concentrate.
- √ 2 cups plain low-fat yogurt
- √ 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

Directions:

- Mix all ingredients together.
- Pour into 8 small paper cups.
- Place a popsicle stick in each cup.
- Set in freezer.
- Serve when frozen hard.
- To eat, peel off paper cup.

Variations:

- Use grape juice concentrate instead of orange juice.

UW-Extension, Racine/Kenosha Nutrition Education Program, 1220 Mound Ave, Racine, WI 53404, (262) 635-6824.

UW-Extension Workshops for Parents/Caregivers

- ◇ **Special Needs Resource Session** —**Meg Steimle**, Outreach Specialist, SE Regional Center, Children’s Hospital of WI
Wednesday, July 30, 6-8 PM — **Ives Grove Office Complex**, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant
Services available from the Southeast Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) will be discussed. Learn how to promote continuity of care for children with special needs. Parents and those interested in issues related to young children with special needs may register by calling **262 886-8460 by July 23**. To receive **Registry Barcodes or verification of attendance, a \$5 check or money order** to Racine County UW-Extension, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant, WI 53177 must be received by mail or in person on or before the registration deadline of **July 23**. See flyer for detailed information or contact, Barbara Stoffel-Emde, 262-833-8732.
- ◇ **Thriving with Your ‘Spirited’ Child**—**Barbara Stoffel-Emde**, UW-Ext. Family & Community Educator
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 6-9 PM— **Ives Grove Office Complex**, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant.
Learn strategies and techniques to “thrive” with a child in your life that is more intense, emotional, persistent, active, moody, loud, anxious, frustrated or a perfectionist. Parents, grandparents, and those interested in issues related to young children may register by calling **262 886-8460 by June 23**. To receive **Registry Barcodes or verification of attendance, a \$5 check or money order** to Racine County UW-Ext., 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant, WI 53177 must be received by mail or in person on or before the registration deadline of **Aug. 13**. See flyer for detailed information or contact, Barbara Stoffel-Emde, 262-833-8732.

Racine County UW-Extension - Family Living Programs, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant, WI 53177
Website: <http://racine.uwex.edu> Phone: **262-886-8460**

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References: LeFebvre, Joan. (2005). Parenting the Preschooler, February. LeFebvre, Joan. (2006). Parenting the Preschooler., May. www.kidsgardening.org



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