

SPRING 2022



# NEWSLETTER

## GARDENING WITH KIDS

### Education-Skills Development Benefits

Gardening with children is an excellent way to teach about the life cycle process of plants. Gardening also teaches children skills like:

- Responsibility that comes with caring for a plant.
- Understanding of cause and effect- if the plant isn't watered, it will die.
- Self- confidence from achieving goals.
- Instills cooperation, teamwork and encourages creativity.
- Willingness to try different vegetables they have grown themselves.

### Physical and Mental Health Benefits

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers gardening a moderate-intensity exercise that uses every major muscle group. Children working in a garden are outside and physically active – doing something fun and productive. Spending time gardening reduces the amount of time staring at a screen, improves eye-hand coordination, and increases finger flexions. Some studies have suggested that time spent in nature is beneficial to children who have ADHD.

Being outside in a garden helps children use all 5 senses – sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste. If needed, adaptations can be made for children with disabilities so all children can enjoy the experience.

### Gardening Safety

Make sure kids stay safe and have fun while gardening.

1. Know about allergies, including food and insect, and have a first aid kit.
2. Students should wear shoes to protect their feet from cuts and stings.
3. Sunscreen should be worn while gardening. Hats could also be considered.
4. Everyone must wash their hands before and after working in the garden.
5. Instruct children on safe way to use and handle garden tools.

6. Have enough adult supervision.
7. Do not eat unwashed fresh produce while working in the garden.
8. Exposure to the sap, leaves, and stems of some plants may cause mild skin irritation.

### Resources

[Alabama Cooperative Extension System \(ACES\)](#) - has a lot of information on gardening specific to Alabama.

Several farming related apps from ACES that can be downloaded to a smart phone are:

[SOW Planting Calendar](#) - This app is designed to suggest the optimum time to plant each crop in a home garden. Simply choose a location and start planting. Clicking on the photo of a crop will provide more information.



*Gardening, continued from first page*

[Farming Basics](#) - The Farming Basics app from Alabama Extension is a gateway of information for small and beginning farmers. The user-friendly app includes:

- Horticultural crop descriptions.
- Information about major insect pests and diseases with pictures for identification.
- General management tactics.
- A fertilizer and irrigation calculator.

[Kids Gardening](#) is a website that supports educators and families with grant funding, original educational resources, and community to get more kids learning through the garden.

[Farm to School Grants](#) - Several grants are available for projects that integrate agriculture into curriculum areas during the school year.

### Recipes with Crops:

Complete this activity with kids to enjoy the harvest from the garden. Take time to talk about the benefits of eating the rainbow.

### Materials:

- At least one vegetable representing the colors red, orange/yellow, green, blue/purple, and white
- Kabob skewers
- Italian dressing (or marinade combination of your choice)

### Instructions:

1. Collect a variety of fresh vegetables in rainbow colors. Some examples are:  
**Red** - beets, red potatoes  
**Yellow/Orange** - carrots, sweet potatoes, squash  
**Green** - broccoli, zucchini, Brussels sprouts  
**Blue/Purple** - purple cabbage, purple onion, purple potatoes  
**White** - turnips, potatoes, cauliflower, white onion
2. Clean all vegetables in running water
3. Cut vegetables into bite sized pieces and skewer them onto kabobs
4. Place kabobs in a dish and brush with the dressing
5. Roast in oven or grill
6. Enjoy your harvest!



## JOIN THE 100 MILES CHALLENGE IN 2022

### BE ACTIVE

Being active is good for your body and mind! Adults need at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise each day, and children need at least 60 minutes. Regular physical activity helps children with academic performance, brain health, fitness, and overall long-term health. The benefits for adults are also numerous and leads to lower risk of heart disease, type II diabetes, cancer, and other chronic conditions. It also increases energy and helps to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. The problem is too few Americans get the recommended amount of physical activity. Only 1 in 4 adults and 1 in 6 high school students fully meet physical activity guidelines for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities.

The good news is regardless of your age or current activity level, you can kick-start a healthier active lifestyle at any time and begin to experience immediate benefits. The 100 Alabama Miles Challenge was created to make it easy to get active. This is a statewide program that challenges all Alabamians to walk, run, hike, bike, swim, paddle, ride or roll 100 miles each year or about two miles each week.

### GO EXPLORE ALABAMA

The 100 Alabama Miles Challenge encourages Alabamians to get outside and enjoy physical activity at our state's beautiful parks, nature preserves, and rivers that are waiting to be explored and discovered while getting your miles. Spending time in nature can improve all kinds of different physical and mental health conditions, in addition to the benefits of being physically active. The Challenge provides flexibility and allows you to participate by engaging in physical activity anywhere, even in your neighborhood, at school, or at a gym. Look for local places to get out in nature to help log your miles.

### CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Having the support of a buddy and/or a good support system can help you better achieve your goal of logging 100 miles in the Challenge.

Consider participating with others in your neighborhood, school, church, or place of work. Your afterschool site or school can create teams to compete with others who are also taking the challenge.



### JOIN THE CHALLENGE

To sign up and participate or to create teams, go to: [100alabamamiles.org](https://100alabamamiles.org). Participants will earn electronic badges for milestones they reach and places they visit as they log their miles of activity. Join the Challenge today to Be Active, Explore Alabama, and Connect with Others as you kick-start your active lifestyle!



# CELEBRATE A WORLD OF FLAVORS!

For National Nutrition Month, and throughout the year, let's celebrate and enjoy flavors from around the world. Every culture has a taste of its own and introducing yourself to new foods can help nourish your body while developing an appreciation for diverse flavors!

Eating a variety of nutritious foods is key to having a healthy eating plan. What better way to do that than trying new recipes from various cultures or using familiar ingredients in a new way? Typically, the foods we like to eat are a result of our family's history, traditions, and culture. Keep your family recipes intact but embrace new ways to enjoy them by simply adding new flavor. Start small - experiment with adding new spices and herbs or switching out one ingredient for something unique. For example, use red pepper flakes for an Asian or Mediterranean twist or add a sprinkle of curry powder for a hint of Indian flavor and a little lime juice can liven up any dish for a taste of the Caribbean.

For recipes to explore new flavors, visit <https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-meal-planning/recipe-collection>.

Did you know that certain spices have health benefits? It's true! Just one more reason to get adventurous and try new flavors from around the world. Read here for more information: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/5-spices-with-healthy-benefits>.

Visit <https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month> for more information on National Nutrition Month and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

## WHAT IS AN HERB?

What is an herb?

"If you can cook with it; garnish a salad with it; soothe a burn or a scratch with it; make a tea from it; soak in the tub with it; perfume our sheets with it; kill a bug with it; make a potpourri, sachet, wreath or something else good-smelling with it; weave, dye, or spin something with it; scour pots or wash with it; worm your pet with it; formulate oils and lotions to beautify your body with it; cast a spell with it; or make a big mess involving a glue gun, wheat stalks, and raffia with it - it's an herb."

*Rob Proctor & David Mache  
Herbs in the Garden*

We limit ourselves too much by primarily using salt and pepper to season food. There is a world of flavor in so many different herbs and spices that can zest up our food and not have adverse effects on health or blood pressure. You can always buy herbs at the store, but it can be easy to have fresh ones available for cooking. If you don't have room to plant herbs in your yard, they can be grown in containers. The fresh herbs can be dried to use later.



### Herb/Food Combinations

Ideas to help combine fresh herbs with foods:

<b>Basil</b>	snip in with tomatoes; terrific in fresh pesto; other possibilities include pasta sauce, peas, zucchini
<b>Chives</b>	dips, potatoes, tomatoes
<b>Cilantro</b>	Mexican, Asian and Caribbean cooking; salsas, tomatoes
<b>Dill</b>	carrots, cottage cheese, fish, green beans, potatoes, tomatoes
<b>Mint</b>	carrots, fruit salads, parsley, peas, tabouli, tea
<b>Oregano</b>	peppers, tomatoes, Italian foods
<b>Parsley</b>	curly leaf is most common, but the flat-leaf or Italian parsley more strongly flavored and preferred for cooking; naturals for parsley include potato salad, tabouli
<b>Rosemary</b>	chicken, fish, lamb, pork, roasted potatoes, soups, stews, tomatoes
<b>Sage</b>	poultry seasoning, stuffing
<b>Tarragon</b>	chicken, eggs, fish
<b>Thyme</b>	eggs, lima beans, potatoes, poultry, summer squash, tomatoes
<b>Winter Savory</b>	dried bean dishes, stews

*\*As a general rule of thumb, 1 Tablespoon of fresh herbs is equal to 1 teaspoon of dried.*

**Healthy Wellness Initiative**  
**Alabama Department of Public Health**  
**The RSA Tower**  
201 Monroe Street, Suite 1010  
Montgomery, AL 36130



# NEWS AND EVENTS

## **ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 21ST CCLC GRANTEES**

eGAP Training for All - Tuesday, March 15, 2022, 10:00 - 11:00 AM. <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/81449864475>

## **THE WORLD GAMES BIRMINGHAM, JULY 7-17, 2022**

The World Games 2022 Live Healthy, Play Global Toolkit consists of a variety of downloadable digital educational assets. The activities can be incorporated into physical education, art, music, social and emotional learning, sportsmanship, civics, social studies, language arts, math, and science. <https://twg2022.com/education-toolkit>

## **MAY IS NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH**

An annual observance, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is a time to highlight the importance of staying active through sports and other fitness activities. For ideas, go to: <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/celebrate-national-physical-fitness-sports-month>

## **TRUMAN PIERCE INSTITUTE**

Training calendar: <https://www.alabama21cclc.org/quality-standards-project>

## **BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF ALABAMA BE HEALTHY SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM**

Blue Cross will make available \$250,000 and award grants up to \$10,000 to 25 schools across the state that enroll students in grades K through eighth. Applications can now be completed on the Blue Cross website at <http://www.alabamablue.com/schoolgrant>. The deadline to apply is **Friday, April 8, 2022**.

## **DAIRY DELICIOUS MEALS IN MARCH**

Celebrate March with current favorite and future favorite flavors. [Dairy Alliance](#).

## **ALABAMA COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CONTROL COALITION (ACCCC)**

The ACCCC accepts applications yearly for the Shade Structure Grant Program. More information will be released about the grant requirements the last week of March, 2022. The grant will be released on **April 1, 2022** and applications accepted till **June 30, 2022**.