

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN SCHOOL GARDENS

REMEMBER THAT MANY CHILDREN MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN IN A GARDEN

They may not know the basic garden etiquette, they may be scared of some things like bugs and bees, they may not be used to patiently observing things- they will need your help to learn about all the aspects of a garden and how to behave safely and respectfully.

YOUNG CHILDREN ARE HAPPY TO PUTTER AND HAVE SHORT ATTENTION SPANS

Keep lessons short and simple for little ones. They will be happy to dig, plant seeds, paint rocks and water. Make it fun and let them enjoy discovering nature.

FOLLOW THE CHILDREN'S LEAD TO SEE WHAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN

If they find an inchworm use that as an opportunity to teach about measurement. If they seem fascinated with how fast a bean seed germinates, it would be a great time to talk about parts of a plant. Create art in the garden, dance; sing songs...senses are heightened out in nature!

OLDER CHILDREN IN GRADES 3-5 NEED TO FEEL NECESSARY

They are beginning to feel a sense of environmental responsibility. This coincides with them being at an age where they are strong enough to do real work. Focus their attention on solving real problems and achieving something tangible. Give them the opportunity to create their own goals and vision so they truly feel ownership of it. Jump in and help where needed. You'll see their self-esteem, decision-making capabilities and teamwork skills soar.

