

Human Vitality

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Teach Your Kids

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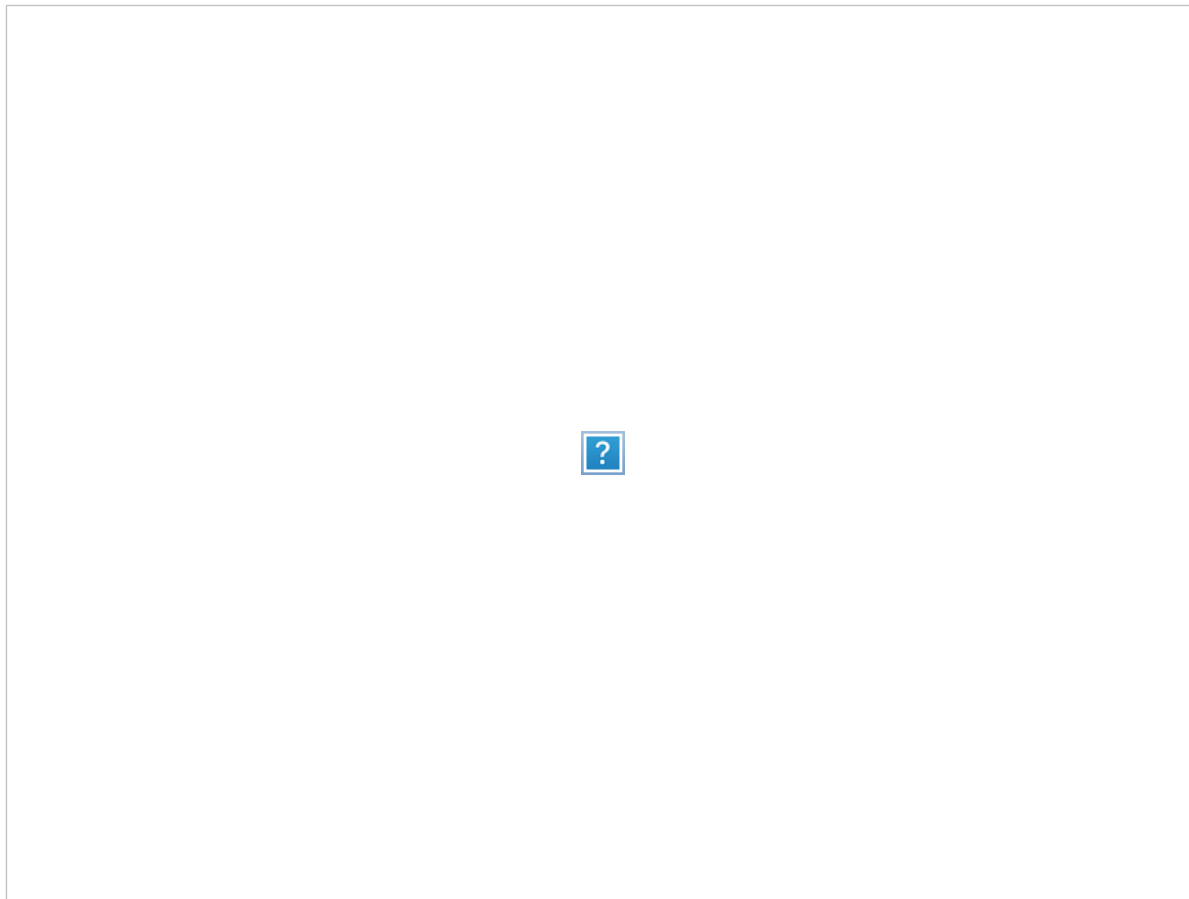


Shop all pretty in pastels



Plant a Garden Your Kids will Love to Grow

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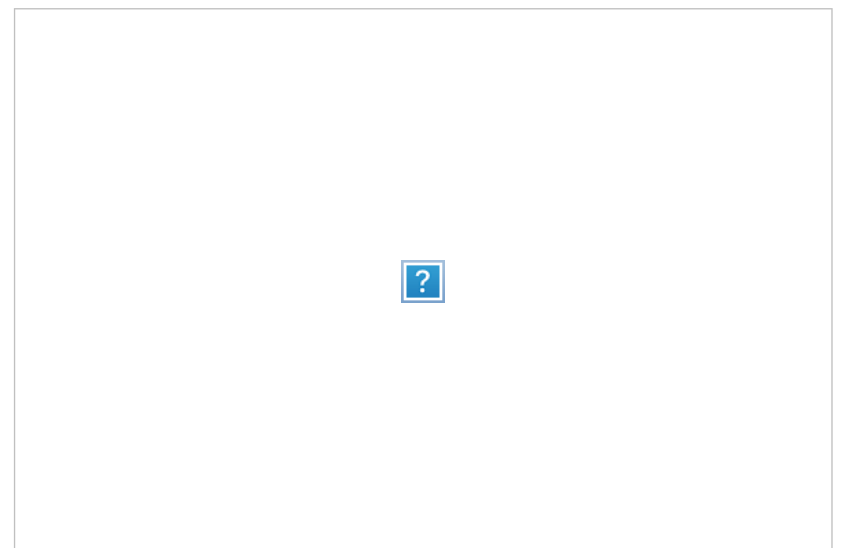
Getting children interested in plants and bulbs is a good way to teach them to love nature. Creating a project on plants for kids will also help develop a nurturing side in them. Planting with kids can be a make or break experience. If you choose the wrong plant, you run into the danger of disappointing your children with a plant that doesn't grow properly or boring them with a plant that takes too long to grow. This guide to tackling [home gardening projects](#) with your kids will not only be good for the planet, it'll give the whole family a fun way to enjoy the outdoors together. That's the kind of win-win eco home project Hearts loves.

Quick Facts: Kids' Inactivity and the Health Consequences

- **31% of Americans have home gardens:** Vegetable gardens are enjoying renewed popularity, partly courtesy of the recession.^[i] In fact, about 31% or 36 million US households had vegetable gardens by 2008.^[ii] Yet kids spend more time indoors playing video games than outdoors.
- **91% of children are video gamers, not gardeners:** ^[iii] 66% of US households with kids aged 6 to 12 own a Nintendo DS or a Sony PlayStation.^[iv] Up to 38% of kids on Facebook are under the minimum age of 13.^[v]
- **3x rate of childhood obesity in 30 years:** Video games and social media keep kids inactive which can contribute to increased risk of obesity and diabetes. Today, more than 33% of all kids and adolescents are overweight or obese, due in part to an inactive lifestyle.^[vi]
- **33% of kids will develop diabetes:** Studies predict that one in every three children born will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.^[vii]

Take Action: Planting Tips That Will Get Kids Interested in Gardening

1. **Start with easy-growing plants and bulbs:** That includes plants that sprout quickly, are easy to grow, and have large seeds that are easy to handle. In no time, they will bloom or produce new vegetables that your children will certainly love to eat, knowing that they had a hand in growing it. Check out our guide to [which plants to plant](#), [list of easy-to-grow plants](#). As your kid's interest grows, you can also move on to fruits and crops. Here's a list of the [top 10 crops for children](#) that you can use as a guide.
2. **Add some flowers:** The different colors and fragrant smells of the flowers add extra motivation for kids. Although this won't encourage them to start eating more vegetables, planting flowers with kids will help pique their interest while they are still getting into the hobby of planting and gardening. Likewise, when your child is just beginning to develop an interest, choose plants that blossom quickly. Here's Thompson and Morgan's list of the [top 10 easy-to-grow flower plants and seeds for beginners](#).
3. **Get the school involved:** The best way to instill a consistent interest in vegetables among kids is to make gardening part of their school experience. Children learn best when both the school and the home are involved in the teaching. [HealthierGeneration.org](#) offers a toolkit on [How to Start A School Garden](#) to help teachers and school administrators use a garden to make planting for kids more interesting. Learn more about [how school gardens benefit kids](#) at [FarmtoSchool.org](#).



Dig Deeper: Connection Between Produce & Kids Diabetes

- Find out more about the growing obesity and diabetes epidemic impacting American kids in [One in Three Kids Will Develop Diabetes](#).
- See how fruits and vegetables reduce the risk of diabetes and obesity in [Dietary Intake of Fruit and Vegetables and Risk of Diabetes Mellitus and Cardiovascular Diseases](#).

Images by [John Morgan](#) and [Sheryl Westleigh](#)

[vii] *One in Three Kids Will Develop Diabetes*. (2003, June 16). Retrieved from WebMD Health News: <http://diabetes.webmd.com/news/20030616/one-in-three-kids-will-develop-diabetes>

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