

## Florida Horticulture for Health Network – [Resource Hub](#)

### CATEGORY: LANDSCAPES FOR HEALTH: SCHOOL GARDENS

## School Gardens

School gardens in North America received more than \$11 million in grants supporting 670,000 youth in 2024 (Kids Gardening, 2024). The number of school gardens continue to grow in number due to the diverse benefits they offer. While many are food gardens, school gardens have different designs with a variety of purposes. School gardens can be used to provide access to nature, as enabling accessible green space on school grounds, and as therapeutic, recreational, and community gardens used by students, staff, parents, community members, and volunteers.

Newer initiatives tied to school gardens include garden to cafeteria programs, food procurement programs from local growers, programs combining physical activity with nutrition literacy, as well as integration of academic curriculum, services related to social and emotional wellbeing, food security, equity and inclusion, and environmental stewardship. Social emotional learning (SEL) in school gardens is becoming more prevalent (Lohr et al., 2022; Pollin & Retzlaff-Furst, 2021).

This resource provides extensive listing of links to organizations and programs that offer a variety of resources, manuals, webinars and networking forums for school gardens. Topics include installing a school garden, curriculum connections, greenhouse management, grant opportunities and plant-themed programming.

**Related resources may be found in category Populations – child/youth/college student section; category Landscapes for health – sensory gardens, restorative gardens; category Plant Food, Nutrition and Food Security Initiatives – all sections.**

### Key Organizations

[Campus Rx](#)

[Children & Nature Network](#)

Florida Extension, Florida School Gardens, [Florida Agriculture in the Classroom](#)

[Green Schoolyards America](#)

[Junior Master Gardener Program](#)

[Kids Gardening Community](#)

[Life Lab](#)

[National Farm to School Network](#)

[National School Garden Support Organization Network](#)

[National Schoolyard Forest System](#)

[School Garden Network](#) of Sonoma County CA

[The Edible Schoolyard Project](#)

[The Slow Food USA School Garden Network](#)

[USDA: The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program](#)

[Whole Kids Foundation](#)

### Books, journals & epublications on school gardens

Cere, K., & Brown, A\_P. (2025). *The everyday school garden: A simple guide to help start your teaching journey in the garden*. Mountain and Joy Publishing.

- Christopher, K.R. (2019). *The school garden curriculum: An integrated k-8 guide for discovering science, ecology, and whole-systems thinking*. New Society Publishers.
- Corbin, L., Foster, S., Gasparetto, A. et al. (2025). *School food programs in Canada - Food literacy education guide*. University of Saskatchewan.
- Earl, L., & Thomson, P. (2021). *Why garden in schools?* Routledge.
- Fisher-Maltese, C., & Pavenko, A. (2025). *The garden at school: Discovering plants, pollinators, and bluebirds – A heartwarming STEM picture book for elementary classrooms*. Carley Fisher-Maltese.
- Gamson Danks, S. (2021). *Asphalt to ecosystems design ideas for schoolyard transformation*.
- Hathaway, S., Giordano, L. et al. (2026). *Nature school: In the garden: Lessons and activities to cultivate children's connections to the natural world*. Quarry Books.
- Hunter, D., Gee, E., & Olsen Lauridsen, N. (2020). *Growing for the future: A new book on school gardens*. Routledge.
- Hunter, D., Monville-Oro, E., Burgos, B. et al. (Eds.). (2020). *Agrobiodiversity, school gardens and healthy diets*. Routledge.
- James, C. (2015). *The garden classroom: Hands-on activities in math, science, literacy, and art*. Roost Books.
- Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* [Winter 2022-2023: Justice and equity approaches to college and university student food \(In\) security.](#)
- [Junior Master Gardener curricula](#)
- Marturano, A. (2025). *Growing up gardening: Gateways to gardening with children*. Self-published.
- Sands, R., & Summer, W. (2017). *Growing sustainable children: A garden teacher's guide*. Lindisfame Books.
- Slow Foods USA. (2015). [Clean school garden curriculum for grades K+up.](#)
- Wagenfeld, A. (2025). [Youth sensory gardening manual](#). American Horticultural Society.

### **Research & articles on school gardens**

Recently published selected research & articles:

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- Aragón, L., & Manzano, BE. (2025). Can school gardens contribute to resilient communities from a scientific and eco-social perspective in early childhood education? *Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education*.
- Atmodiwirjo, P., Ghaziani, R., Wungpatcharapon, S. et al. (2025). Nature-related features and children's well-being in post-disaster school design. *International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment*, 16(1).
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- Bates, CR., Bohnert, AM., & Gerstein, DE. (2018). Green schoolyards in low-income urban neighborhoods: Natural spaces for positive youth development outcomes. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9.
- Bikomeye, JC., Balza, J., & Beyer, KM. (2021). The impact of schoolyard greening on physical activity and socioemotional health: A systematic review of experimental studies. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.*, 18(2).
- Bishop, C., Beale, J., & Bruce-Low, S. (2023). The autistic experience of exercising within nature-based environments: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *Physical Activity and Health*, 7(1).

- Cañón-Vargas, AM., Melo-Mora, SP., & Sosa, E. (2025). School gardens as a research setting for early childhood children to strengthen their environmental awareness and scientific skills. *Discover Education*, 4(1).
- Carroll, D., Plume, LM., & Redvers, N. (2025). Food access interventions in American Indian and Alaska Native communities: A scoping review. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 14(1).
- Chan, CL., Tan, PY., & Gong, YY. (2022). Evaluating the impacts of school garden-based programmes on diet and nutrition-related knowledge, attitudes and practices among the school children: A systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1).
- Clevenger, KA., McKee, KL., Harris, T., & Pfeiffer, KA. (2025). Schoolyard-redesign strategies and outcomes in children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Kinesiology Review*, 14(4).
- Cohen, E. (2025). Nutrition and sustainable development goal 10: Reduced inequalities. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 12.
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- Day, K., Tsupros, MM., & Schober, DJ. (2022). To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow: A case study of a Chicago community-based organization focused on health education through school gardens. *J Prev Interv Community.*, 50(1).
- Deniz, UH., & Kalburan, NC. (2024). Preschool educators' opinions and practices on school gardening. *Urban Education*, 59(9).
- Dring, CC., Lee, SY., & Rideout, CA. (2020). Public school teachers' perceptions of what promotes or hinders their use of outdoor learning spaces. *Learning Environments Research*, 23(3).
- Dutta, D., & Chandrasekharan, S. (2025). "We never even touched plants this way": School gardens as an embodied context for motivating environmental actions. *Environmental Education Research*, 31(2).
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- Fischer, LK., Brinkmeyer, D., Karle, SJ. et al. (2019). Biodiverse edible schools: Linking healthy food, school gardens and local urban biodiversity. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 40.
- Fleming, L., & Sterling, S. (2024). Students, school gardens and mental health. *Digging In*, 10(3).
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- Greenschoolyards.org. (2024). [Experiencing nature supports social-emotional health and well-being](#).
- Grimes, KE. (2021). The Wild Earth Preschool. *AHTA Magazine*, 49(1).
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- Hoover, A, Vandyousefi, S., Martin, B. et al. (2021). Barriers, strategies, and resources to thriving school gardens. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 53(7).
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### Examples of school gardens

Atlantic Highlands Elementary School outdoor garden.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGoPtkNFybk>

*BicycleSPACE DC School Garden Tour* introduces several school gardens, promoting community connectiveness, and different models of school gardens.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3cYcNASsJU>

*Campus Rx* is a coalition of 100 colleges and universities working to advance student and campus health through inclusive, nature-based teaching, research and outreach, using networking, newsletters, program guides, and student projects to highlight the importance of connecting with nature.

<https://www.campusnature.com/>

*Congress Park School* in Brookfield IL used Rappaport Funding to create butterfly beds in support of their dual language program themes of cross-cultural understanding and geography of America.

*Curley K-8 School*, Boston MA uses raised garden beds to support life science curriculum for pre-K – second grade with lessons on seeds, vermiculture, plant cycles and pollinators. They received funding from AHS Julia Rappaport Growing Gardeners Funding.

<https://ahsgardening.org/julia-rappaport-growing-gardeners-fund/>

*Garden Grants* for schools, nonprofits and communities to address food insecurity including Growing Spaces in-kind grants - links to garden grants are included (Captain Planet Foundation, Herb Society of America, National Head Start Assoc, Big Green Real Food Grow Here).

<https://growingspaces.com/gardening-grants/>

*Hershey School's Sensory Garden* engages students including trauma informed theory.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvlsbp98KSI>

*Junior Master Gardener Learn, Grow, Eat & Go* program is an interdisciplinary program with academic focus, gardening, nutrient-dense food experiences and physical activity.

<https://jmgkids.us/lgeg/>

*Kids Making Student Gardens* in Santa Monica video highlights this initiative.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Agqphbmh7No>

*Mala'ai Middle School's Hawaiian Culinary Garden* is a one-acre ecosystem classroom with native, endemic edibles and craft crops, part of Hawai'i Island School Garden Network.

<https://malaai.org/>

*Million Orchid Project* at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FL) has partnered with 100 schools to conserve and grow orchids in classrooms, schoolyards, and parks. A massive science project focused on native orchids educates, informs, promotes citizen science.

<https://fairchildgarden.org/science-and-education/science/million-orchid-project/>

*Ne'ata'q Food Forest* is a pilot program of *Cafeteria to Compost* program (Nourish Nova Scotia) at Lunenburg NS Bluenose Academy.

<https://foodforestatbluenose.ca/>

*Plant a Seed* campaign invites school garden educators and individuals to bring biodiversity, flavor and history into their gardens; Slow Food USA identifies endangered and biodiverse seeds.

<https://slowfoodusa.org/plant-a-seed/>

*Rosa Parks Elementary School's* green schoolyard video demonstrates turning asphalt into green space – turning nature into classrooms, integrating education into gardens, outdoor time and recess.

<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/inspiring-precedents>

*Schoolyard Habitat Program*, delivered by School Garden Network in CA, supports Sonoma County schools in creating garden-based learning ecosystems, providing technical consultations, plants, curriculum and teacher training.

<https://www.schoolgardens.org/schoolyard-habitat>

*Sixty (60) School Gardens across Sarasota County FL* collaborates with University of Florida Extension staff and master gardeners sharing resources, curriculum, grant information; also seen in other American counties and Extension services.

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasota/gardening-and-landscaping/gardens/school-gardens/>

*Southern Boone Learning Garden* in Ashland Missouri has a variety of programs for students pre-k -4<sup>th</sup> grade, with direction from the Southern Boone County School District.

<https://www.sblearninggarden.org/lessonplans>

*St Martin de Porres* school garden in Moseley, Birmingham, UK.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Zc\\_pjCC26o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Zc_pjCC26o)

*The Ecology School* (with multiple videos focused on nature, compost and more) are available on its youtube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheEcologySchool/videos>

*The Slow Food USA School Garden Network* connects youth to their food via school gardens and resources including curricula, Spanish language materials, garden to cafeteria toolkit and school garden guide.

<https://slowfoodusa.org/school-gardens/>

*Three Sisters Garden* lesson plan for youth, from Kids Gardening, includes materials list, background information, planting tips for the garden, with connections to nutrition, science, literature, social studies and Indigenous cultural information.

<https://kidsgardening.org/resources/lesson-plans-three-sisters-garden/>

*Urban Roots, UK* uses gardening, cooking, creative natural art and conservation tasks, working closely with primary and secondary schools and plant nurseries to support outdoor learning on school grounds and local greenspaces.

<https://www.urbanroots.org.uk/children-young-people-1>

### **Videos, webinars & websites on school gardens**

*Asphalt Jungle – Living Schoolyards* Podship Earth: Episode 13.

<https://www.podshipearth.com/podcast>

Big Green resource database.

<https://biggreen.org/thegreenhouse/>

*Building School Culture in school gardens* solution session examines a different facet of what school gardens can provide.

<https://www.sgsonetwork.org/webinars/>

*Changing the Nature of Education- School Gardens.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmmkEc6GcXw>

Children and Nature Network website offers a variety of resources including a resource library, youth leadership development, parent ideas like *Families Together* newsletter, nature adventure cards, schoolyard programs and events, and webinars.

<https://www.childrenandnature.org/resource-hub/resources/>

*Cultivating Resiliency in Youth with Deep Nature Connections* video.

<https://youtu.be/ppWSeB8EEKY>

*Equity & Inclusion in Garden Settings* has a list of topics and resources with this theme.

<https://www.sgsonetwork.org/promising-practices/>

Florida Farm to School (F2S) website includes *School Garden Guide*, training, virtual farm field trips, conference and grant information.

<https://farmtoschoolfl.com/academy/school-gardens/>

For School Gardens website from the Delaware Urban Farm & Food Coalition, offers resources for school gardens and other urban farm settings.

<https://www.deuffc.org/resource-hub>

[Garden Layout](#) – creating an accessible, interesting and effective outdoor learning space with a focus on the design elements; accessibility, shade options and sourcing materials. On-line resource links to *School Garden Guide*, *Greenhouse Manual*, *Convert-a-Bench*, *Green Schoolyards Covid Outdoor Learning Initiative*.

*Grow to Learn Florida School Garden Guide* from University of Florida Family Nutrition Program also offers school garden leadership training, consultations and technical assistance, networking opportunities and free resources.

<https://familynutritionprogram.org/improve-community-health/#>

[Growing Minds Farm to School Program: Middle & High School](#) resources like curricula *FoodSpan* from Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, interdisciplinary curriculum from Kentucky Farm 2 School, books *The American Way of Eating: Undercover at Walmart...* *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World*, *French Fires and the Food System: A Year-Round Curriculum Connecting Youth with Farming and Food* available through this website.

*Kids Garden Community* offers many resources for child and youth gardening including Sustainability via Active Garden Education (SAGE), *The Easy Peasy Guidebook for Place-Based Outdoor Learning*, S.O.W.: Food Gardening with Justice in Mind, Greenhouse Manual, Exploring Hydroponics, and many more.

<https://community.kidsgardening.org/resources/resource-library>

*Kids Gardening* website provides resources for educators and parents based on garden-based learning, hands-on activities with info on grants, contests, webinars, curriculum, and interactive discussion sessions.

<https://kidsgardening.org/for-educators/#>

*Leader's Guide Garden to Plate: Food Safety for School and Community Gardens*, developed by Kansas State University and University of Missouri Extension Food Safety Specialist Londa Kwadike, provides information, lesson ideas, and resources for covering this topic with students.

<https://extension.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/Pub/pdf/hesguide/foodnut/no1315.pdf>

Lesson plans on flowers, bees and other horticultural issues are available online, free from the site *Know It All* and *South Carolina ETV Commission*.

<https://www.knowitall.org/collections/environmental-awareness/national-plant-flower-day#:~:text=Celebrated%20on%20March%2012%2C%20National,%2C%20religion%2C%20traditions%20and%20inspiration>

*Life Lab Organization* offers resources for school gardens with a mission of cultivating children's love of learning, healthy food and nature through garden-based education, offers webinars, garden guides, and school podcasts.

<https://www.lifelab.org/partner-schools>

*National Children & Youth Garden Symposium* annual event is hosted by the *American Horticultural Society*, with a variety of field trips and presentations from leaders in the field of school gardens and youth gardening.

<https://ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/youth-gardening/ncygs/>

*National Farm to School Network* website has numerous resources in English and Spanish, related to its mandate of providing information, advocacy and networking for communities working to bring local food sourcing and food into the school systems.

<https://www.farmtoschool.org/resources>

*National Outdoor Learning Library*, part of *Greenschoolyards.org* has resources: living schoolyards and climate resilience, health benefits, teaching, school gardens, enriching play and social spaces.

<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/library>

*National Schoolyard Forest System* initiative seeks to create schoolyard forests to directly shade and protect students from extreme heat related to climate change. A resource library has been started in support of this work with lectures and videos.

<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/schoolyard-forest-system>

<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/schoolyard-forest-design-lecture-series/>

*Native Wisdom: Growing Techniques of Indigenous Peoples* resource on Kids Gardening website acknowledges appreciation and gratitude for the North American Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples, and their historical plant and growing techniques like terracing, canals, flood-cropping and no-till growing, with resources appropriate for youth education and hands-on activities.

<https://kidsgardening.org/resources/digging-deeper-native-wisdom/>

Nourish Nova Scotia has free online resources including school garden resource guide, a list of curriculum and education links, funding sources, practical garden supports with current links to these organizations.

<https://nourishns.ca/resource/school-garden-resource-guide/>

[https://nourishns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-School-Garden-Resource-Guide\\_-NNS.pdf](https://nourishns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-School-Garden-Resource-Guide_-NNS.pdf)

Online course: *Celebrating Cultural Inclusion in the School Garden* from Kids Gardening, with curriculum, lesson plans, growing guides, worksheets for K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade are available.

<https://kidsgardening.getlearnworlds.com/course/celebratingculture>

*School Food Service and School Gardens* case studies re program funding, staffing, and policies.

<https://www.sgsonetwork.org/webinars/>

*School Garden Forum* (2022) from Florida Horticulture for Health Network raises topics where these settings can promote health and education.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khgyNZEIDlc>

*School Garden Network* of Sonoma County CA, with more than 160 schools, is focused on garden-based education, growing healthy students, families, schools and communities using farm-to-school, schoolyard habitat, summer garden camp programming, extensive resources/manuals, teacher training, curriculum, grow kits, and more.

<https://www.schoolgardens.org/>

*School Garden Resource Guide* from Whole Foods Market Foundation is downloadable, providing lots of resources as well as grant information, Garden to Cafeteria Toolkit, Salad Bars at Schools link, and child nutrition facts.

<https://www.wholefoodsmarketfoundation.org/school-garden-resource-guide>

*Schoolyard Activity Guides* website from greenschoolyards.org offers free activity guides in multiple languages.

<https://www.greenschoolyards.org/guides>

*Eco-Schools U.S.* from National Wildlife Federation features a certification program for elementary through secondary schools that support and nurture environmental learning.

<https://www.nwf.org/eco-schools-us>

*Seed your Future* organization seeks to inspire and educate students about horticulture careers, with career exploration, scholarships, summer camps, green career week, and DIY plant videos.

<https://www.seedyourfuture.org/students>

THAD (*Therapeutic Horticulture Activity Database*) offers TH activities across populations and settings including school gardens ([plan/plant & eat the rainbow](#), [field trip to community garden](#), [kitchen waste – regrow avocado seeds](#), [insect hotel](#), [hydroponic gardening](#), [teenagers field guide](#), [transplanting herbs to outdoor garden](#)).

<https://hos.ifas.ufl.edu/therapeutic-horticulture-activities-database/>

The Environmental Media Association *EMA School Garden Program* lists schools in California and Mississippi that are participating, with descriptions and photos.

<https://www.green4ema.org/ema-school-garden-program>

*USDA: The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program* has numerous resources for school gardens including a monthly e-newsletter, farm to school planning kits, fact sheets, and grants.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-to-school>

*Virtual School Garden Support Drop-ins* from *Nourish Nova Scotia* non-profit is a themed monthly Zoom drop-in session for educators and faculty working in school gardens. Recordings of previous drop-ins are available.

<https://nourishns.ca/grow-eat-learn/>

#### **Related organizations**

[Big Green](#)

[Slow Food USA – School Garden Network](#)

[University of Florida IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program](#)

[Wisconsin School Garden Network](#)

Written & compiled by Lesley Fleming, Jessica Sullivan Nov 2021; revised by Lesley Fleming & Joanna Brown in 2024 and 2026.