



American Heart Association®

Teaching Gardens®

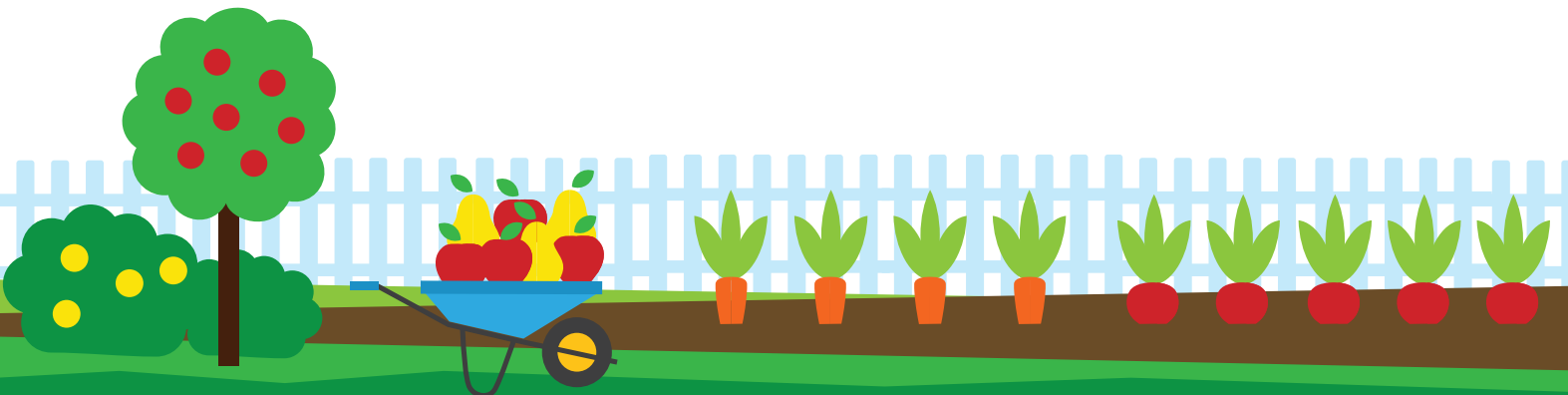
Promote a Healthy Eating Environment with a School Wellness Policy

Teaching Gardens aim to promote healthy eating habits by students of all ages. One way your school or program can help is by establishing a wellness policy that will include your goals and plans for improving nutrition. Use the wellness policy to guide you toward increasing the number of fruits and vegetables served at your school or program. You may wish to use these as prompts for your planning:



Serving and Promoting Seasonal, Regional Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

- Establish a team (teachers, food service, parents, etc.) to work on promotion and marketing.
- Market and promote fresh fruits and vegetables to students and parents.
- Improve logistics of prepping and serving fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Serve more seasonal, regional fruits and vegetables.
- Create a special day when the garden has abundant produce and invite parents and community members to see the bounty.
- Other: _____



Promote a Healthy Eating Environment with a School Wellness Policy, *continued*

Nutrition Education

- Incorporate nutrition education into classroom lessons.
- Organize class tours of the school kitchen and garden space.
- Make better use of nutrition education materials.
- Provide K-12 students with nutrition education that may include experiential, interactive and/or hands-on lessons that teach the skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Make nutrition education a part of classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and electives.
- Promote consistent nutrition education messages in the classroom, cafeteria, school, home and community.
- Include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, and culturally relevant activities. Examples include contests, taste tests, farm visits and school gardening.
- Link with school meal programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services.
- Provide development opportunities for all school staff and volunteers. Include safe food handling, nutrition education and a primer about seasonal fruits and vegetables.
- Teach media literacy emphasizing food marketing that includes training for teachers and other staff.
- Conduct nutrition education activities such as gardening, cooking or health fairs that involve parents, students and the community.
- Other: _____

Educating in Your Teaching Garden

- Set up a garden committee that includes parents, teachers and other volunteers.
- Contact local businesses and organizations for donations, resources and support.
- Develop a schedule of activities for classes to work in the garden each week.
- Establish a salad bar day that uses produce from the garden.
- Organize a garden-related “ritual,” e.g., a fall corn harvest or a monthly farmers market.
- Other: _____

School Wellness Policy Checklist

Use this checklist to evaluate your school wellness policy. Feel free to add sections or delete those that aren't pertinent to your school. Then develop a rating system to evaluate each item. *For example: N for needs work; G for good (still needs some work); E for excellent.*

Checklist Includes:

- Breakfast program
- Nutrition education as part of health education
- Policies or guidelines about foods served at parties and celebrations
- Policies or guidelines about foods served or sold at fundraisers
- Policies or guidelines about using food as a reward
- Policies or guidelines about the sale of food at after-school events and activities
- Policies or guidelines about the type of food sold in vending machines

