

# Early Childhood WELLNESS

A Program of Child Care Aware® of Kansas

## April: National Garden Month

We all know that “April showers bring May flowers,” but did you know that April is recognized as National Garden Month? As the weather shifts, now is the perfect time to consider how you can create a garden. What a great excuse to get outside and get your hands dirty!

### Guide to Container Gardening

Even the smallest area can boast a crop of vegetables or a garden of flowers in containers. Planter boxes, wooden barrels, hanging baskets and large flowerpots are just some of the containers that can be used. Consider the following guidelines when choosing your container:

- Avoid containers with narrow openings.
- Cheap plastic pots may deteriorate in UV sunlight and terracotta pots dry out rapidly. Glazed ceramic pots are excellent choices but require several drainage holes.
- Wooden containers are susceptible to rot. Redwood and cedar are relatively rot resistant and can be used without staining or

painting. One advantage of wooden containers is that they can be built to sizes and shapes that suit the location.

- Use containers between 15 and 120 quarts capacity. Small pots restrict the root area and dry out very quickly. The size and number of plants to be grown will determine the size of the container used. Deep rooted vegetables require deep pots.
- Make sure your pot has adequate drainage. Holes should be 1/2 inch across. Line the base of the pot with newspaper to prevent soil loss.
- Set containers on bricks or blocks to allow free drainage.
- Line hanging baskets with sphagnum moss for water retention. Keep baskets away from afternoon sun.
- If you choose clay pots, remember that clay is porous and water is lost from the sides of the container. Plants in clay pots should be monitored closely for loss of moisture.
- Since potting mixes drain water rapidly, fertilizer will be washed out of the container as you water. Lighter mixes will require more frequent fertilizing than heavier mixes. It's a good idea to use a dilute liquid fertilizer with every other watering. Liquid fish emulsion or liquid seaweed are great plant boosters.
- Check the labels on the products in your garden center to be sure that they contain a complete, balanced solution that includes trace elements.

Read more: Guide to Container Gardening | Garden Guides - [www.gardenguides.com/685-guide-container-gardening.html](http://www.gardenguides.com/685-guide-container-gardening.html)  
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April 2015



### SUPER STRETCH YOGA APP

Move, play and breathe as Super Stretch introduces you to his friends and their yoga poses.

Features:

- 12 yoga poses for all skill levels
- Breathing breaks
- Inspiring music

Cost – free; download at iTunes

Review: <http://bridgingapps.org/app/?id=456113661>



### TAKING STEPS TO HEALTHY SUCCESS

Follow these simple behaviors to a healthy you!

**Week 1:** Pack your lunch and avoid fast food

**Week 2:** Aim for 10,000 steps per day.

**Week 3:** Avoid added salt.

**Week 4:** Strive to include strength-based and aerobic activity to reach your physical activity goals.

## LOOKING FOR *WHAT* AND *WHEN* TO PLANT?

### Spring planting: April

Beet  
Broccoli  
Brussels Sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Cilantro  
Collards  
Kale  
Lettuce  
Mustard  
Onion  
Parsley  
Peas, Snap  
Potato  
Radish  
Spinach  
Turnip

### Summer planting: May

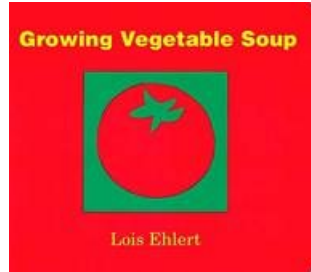
Beans (Bush and Pole)  
Corn  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Cantaloupe  
Okra  
Peas, Southern  
Peppers  
Pumpkin  
Squash, Summer  
Sunflower  
Sweet Potato  
Tomato  
Watermelon

Source: Kansas City Community Gardens

**“Clip and Save”  
Makes it easy to clip out  
and save this healthy recipe  
before recycling your  
newsletter.**



## GROWING VEGETABLE SOUP



Having trouble getting your child to eat veggies? Then this is the book for you! “Growing Vegetable Soup” is a child’s impressive first lesson in gardening, vegetable varieties, harvesting, cooking preparation, following a recipe, and nourishment.

Lois Ehlert’s elementary, labeled paintings in wildly vivid colors add to the magic. Her straight-forward directions make it all seem very easy. Your child will want to read it again and again to watch the garden grow before their eyes. Of course a recipe for vegetable soup is included at the end.

“Growing Vegetable Soup” will nourish your child’s artistic eye, mind and body. See if you can stir interest in gardening or cooking activities.

Source: [http://www.superkidsnutrition.com/bc\\_growingvegetable/](http://www.superkidsnutrition.com/bc_growingvegetable/)

### ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOME CREATIVE ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE BOOK?

Check out one provider’s creative ideas: <http://paulaspreschoolandkindergarten.blogspot.com/2014/10/growing-vegetable-soup-brits-storytime.html>



### Healthy Eats

### Vegetable Pasta Salad

#### Ingredients

1 c. cooked orzo pasta	1 c. chopped fresh spinach
1 c. chopped, lightly steamed asparagus	1/2 c. chopped yellow summer squash
1/2 c. chopped carrots	1/4 c. Low-fat vinaigrette salad dressing
1/2 c. sliced green onion	1/4 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. grated parmesan cheese	

#### Directions

1. Combine the pasta, asparagus, carrots, green onions, spinach, squash, dressing, and salt in a large bowl.
2. Toss to coat with the salad dressing and parmesan cheese.

Serves 4

Source: National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health

Early Childhood Wellness, a Program of Child Care Aware® of Kansas

[www.ks.childcareaware.org](http://www.ks.childcareaware.org)

1-855-750-3343

Funding for this project was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Kansas Health Foundation, and United Methodist Health Ministry Fund. Child Care Aware® of Kansas is a subawardee to Nemours, who is currently funded by the CDC under a five-year Cooperative Agreement (1U58DP004102) to support states in launching ECE learning collaboratives focused on obesity prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the U.S. Government.