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Tips for Parents: Growing Your Own Veggies

Our Friends · Saturday, October 26th, 2024

More and more parents across the UK are turning to growing their own veggies as a fun activity to do with their kids. Not only does it get children outdoors and engaged with nature, but it teaches them valuable skills and encourages healthy eating habits. In addition, it can even save you money on your grocery bills!

If you're thinking about starting your own patch of veggies, here are some useful tips to get you started.

Choosing the Right Location for Your Veggies

When choosing where to locate your veggie garden, you'll want somewhere that gets at least 6 hours of sunlight per day. A sheltered spot is ideal to protect your plants from strong winds. If space is limited, opt for planters, window boxes or hanging baskets. Having the veggies close to your kitchen makes harvesting and watering easier too.

Preparing the Soil

Good soil preparation is key for healthy plant growth. Remove any weeds, rocks or debris from your selected patch. Adding compost or manure will enrich the soil with nutrients. You can also work in fertiliser to give your veggies an extra boost. Make sure the soil is loose for planting and has decent drainage.

Deciding What to Grow

Consider which veggies your family likes to eat and choose a selection of easy crops to start with. Favourites like tomatoes, carrots, peppers and courgettes are great options. Lettuce, radishes and spring onions grow quickly, satisfying impatient little ones. Be guided by the time of year and growing conditions in your area. If you have foster children from [Fosterplus](#) staying with you, ask them what veggies they like and encourage them to get involved in the process of picking things to grow.

Planting and Caring Techniques

Follow the planting instructions on seed packets for spacing, depth and care. With supervision, allow children to get hands-on with sowing seeds and watering. Make labels so they can watch the plants grow. Weed and mulch around plants to suppress competition. Provide supports for

climbing varieties. Check for pests and diseases. Teach kids to gently harvest veggies when ready.

Making it Fun for Kids

Get kids excited by letting them decorate garden markers and their own gardening tools. **Create mini scarecrows together** to protect the patch. Try vertical gardening in colourful containers they can paint. Plant a dedicated section just for their favourite veggies to look after. Take before and after photos of your garden. Make it a reward to pick something for a family meal.

Enjoying the Fruits of Your Labour

After all the planting, watering and patience required, finally being able to pick and eat crunchy homegrown carrots, sweet tomatoes or peas straight from the pod is an amazing feeling. Get children and foster children involved in preparing meals with the veggies they helped grow for a valuable learning experience. Share any bountiful harvests with friends, family and neighbours too.

Starting a veggie garden is a fulfilling activity that teaches children about nature, food origins and responsibility. Follow these tips to make your family's vegetable growing experience engaging and rewarding. The hands-on lessons in science, nutrition and eco-awareness will stick with kids for life.

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