

Flatirons Elementary School Garden to Table Program School Support Network Tool Kit

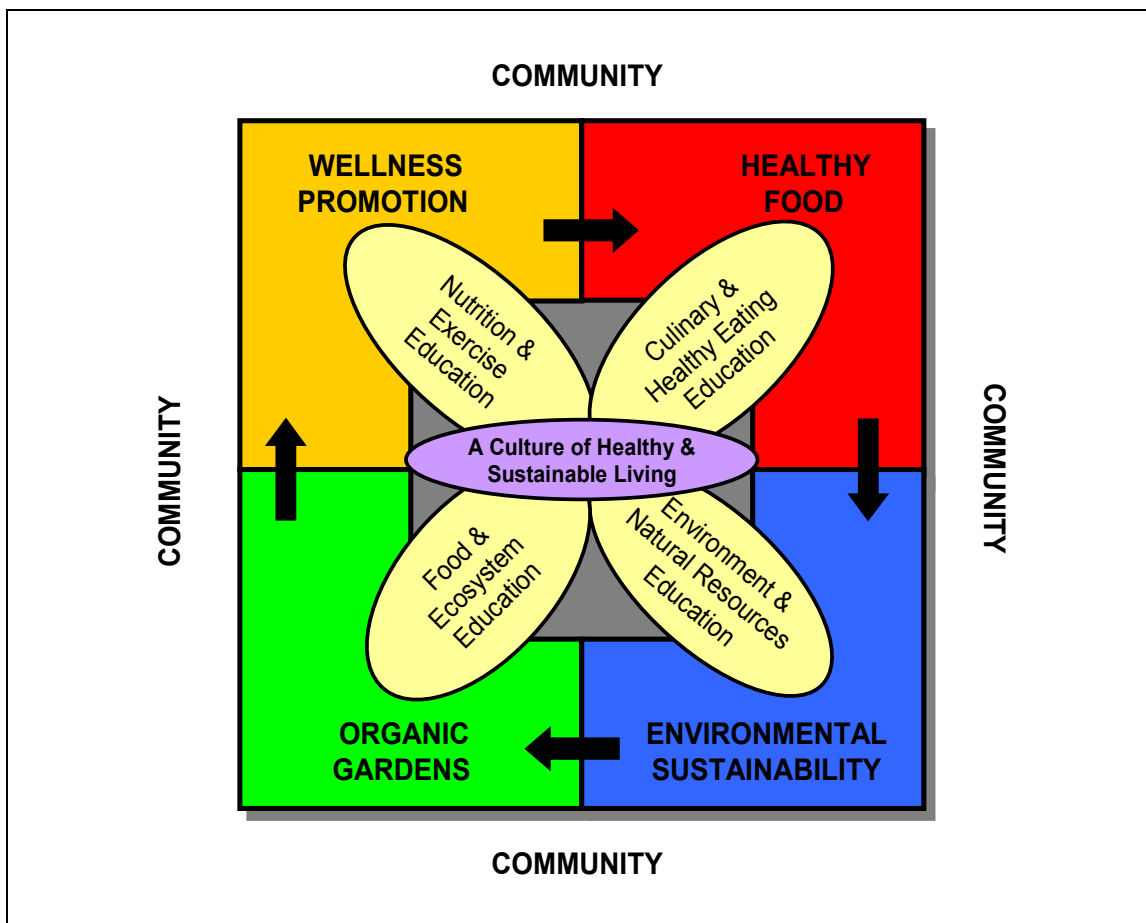
Introduction

One of the easiest ways for children to become healthy adults and avoid preventable diseases is to cultivate lifestyle habits from childhood that promote health. As parents, we are hindered in helping our children develop healthy eating habits, because of the huge amount of advertising that targets children, promoting foods of minimal nutritional value, foods that fuel childhood obesity and contribute to escalating rates of diseases. Another issue we face is that the industrialization of the food system has disconnected our children from establishing personal experiences and relationships with the food they eat – prevented them from learning where food comes from, how it's grown, and what dietary choices they can make for personal and planetary health.

Garden to Table Program

The Garden to Table is an elementary school program that uses food to illustrate the interconnectedness between humans and nature, and how healthy and sustainable lifestyle choices can impact personal and planetary well-being. The Garden to Table program is aimed at enriching education and inspiring students to adopt healthy and sustainable lifestyles. The theme based program allows teachers to integrate lessons with core curriculum and provide students with hands on learning opportunities to connect to the food they put in their bodies and the environment that supports its growth.

Garden to Table Components



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1. Organic Vegetable Gardens:

Provide students with opportunities to learn about healthy fresh fruits and vegetables, and the ecosystems necessary for growing food.

2. Wellness Promotion:

Gardening and fresh food from the school garden provides opportunities to teach students about the nutritional needs of their bodies and role exercise plays in personal wellness.

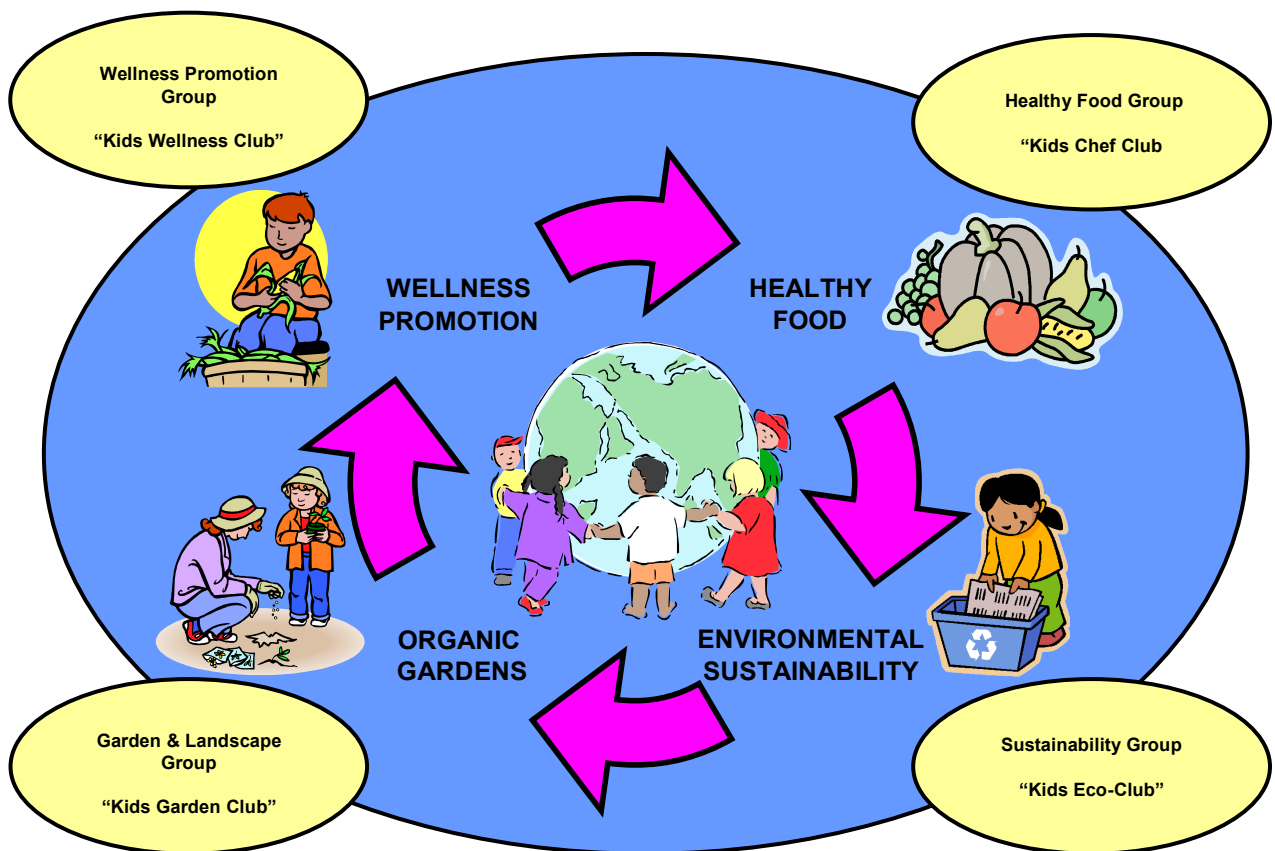
3. Healthy School Food

Healthy school food provides students with opportunities to learn about meal preparation and to practice making healthy food choices.

4. Environmental Sustainability

Programs such as Ecocycle's Green Star Schools provide opportunities to teach students about conserving natural resources and being stewards for the environment.

The Garden to Table Support Network



The Garden to Table program is dependent upon the Boulder Community, School District, and School Community for its implementation and support. There are four levels of support

1. **Community Support**- from individuals, businesses and non-profits
2. **School Support**- from all levels from within Boulder Valley School District.
3. **Parent Support**- from all families members
4. **Student Support**- from students and their peers.

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Providing students with academic enrichment opportunities that inspire them to adopt lifestyles that lead to personal and planetary well-being involves resources, planning, coordination and time from the people that make up the School Support Network. Careful selection of the various group leaders is crucial, and should consider the existing committees and activities operating within the school.

The groups that make up the School Support Network interface with each other, along with students, school staff and community supporters. The people within each group are responsible for generating ideas, solving problems, coordinating, communicating and implementing group responsibilities in a timely manner. The School Support Network is as follows:

1. Organic Gardens



Organic Garden (Landscape) Group: This group is responsible for the school vegetable gardens and learning landscapes. The group interfaces with community supporters (farmers, Master Gardeners, landscapers etc), teachers and students. The group organizes garden and landscape activities (planting, harvesting etc) and assists teachers with outdoor lessons. If you enjoy gardening and landscapes- this is your group!

Kids Garden Club: This group is for students have a strong interest in nature and gardening. Students work with their peers on topics related to the garden; ie weeding, worm farms, compost, insects and bugs.

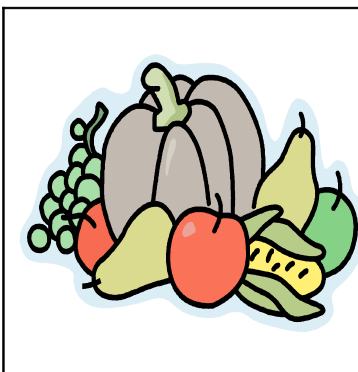
2. Wellness Promotion



Wellness Promotion Group: This group is responsible for school wellness promotion activities with students, families and staff at the school. The group interfaces with community supporters (nutritionists, sports people), teachers, and staff wellness coordinators. The group organizes Wellness Activities (Walk to School, Bike to School etc), Wellness Nights and assists teachers with class wellness lessons. If you are interested in fitness, nutrition and health- this is your group!

Kids Wellness Group This group is for students who have a strong interest in sports, fitness and health. Students work with their peers on wellness related activities; and are responsible for getting other students involved in physical exercise.

3. Healthy Food




Healthy Food Group: This group is responsible for healthy food activities at school. The group will interface with community supporters (ie chefs etc), teachers and students. The group organizes activities that support healthy eating (ie School Snack Policies, Harvest Bar installation and school garden meals) and assists teachers with class culinary lessons. If you have an interest in food and cooking- this is the group for you

Kids Chef Group: This group is for students who have a strong interest in food and cooking. Students work with their peers on culinary related activities, ie getting other students involved in making healthy food choices, preparing meals and dining etiquette (table manners etc)

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4. Sustainability

	Environmental Sustainability Group: This group is responsible for environmental sustainability activities at the school. The group interfaces with community supporters (Ecocycle etc), teachers and students. The group organizes activities that support environmental sustainability (ie Zero Waste, Solar Energy projects, school worm bins etc) and assists teachers with environmental sustainability lessons. If you are interested in nature, environmental issues, and sustainability – this is the group for you.
	Eco Kids Group: This group is for students who have a strong interest in nature and protecting the environment. Students work with their peers on activities related to sustainable living; ie solar energy, zero waste and composting.

5. Other Group Roles

- **Communications Coordinator:** Clear effective communication is vital for the success of the Garden to Table program. The Communications Coordinator is responsible for interfacing with the School Development Coordinator, School Principal, Teacher Curriculum Leader, Parent Curriculum Coordinator, Group Leaders (ie Garden Group etc) and wider school community. The Communication coordinator sends and receives information about the program to the various Group Leaders, and ensures that program news (stories, photo's etc) are included into SIT/PTO agendas, websites, Friday folders etc. If you are great organizer, communicator or publicist - this is your group!
- **Parent Curriculum Coordinator:** Sometimes teachers have great ideas for enriching student learning by integrating healthy and sustainable living information into their classes, but lack the time or resources necessary to plan and procure the supplies needed for the lesson. The Parent Curriculum Coordinator is point person for the Teacher Curriculum Leader and for any teachers to go to with their lesson ideas and needs. The Parent Curriculum Coordinator can then reach out to the various Group Leaders and Community Supporters to help procure the resources and assistance needed to implement the lesson ideas. If you are a great organizer, have an interest in academic learning and student achievement- this is the position for you.
- **Teacher Curriculum Leader:** This teacher is responsible for communicating and inspiring other teachers to integrate the Garden to Table program into their lesson plans. This person is a point person for other teachers, and interfaces closely with the Principal, Communications Coordinator and Parent Curriculum Coordinator.

6. Program Personnel

- **School Development Coordinators:** Are community leaders from the foundation, who interface with the wider community (farmers, chefs etc) and the Garden to Table Schools. The School Development Coordinator provides management expertise, builds community-school relations and procures community support for the school's Garden to Table program. The role of the School Development Coordinator is to act as a skilled facilitator, guiding the School Support Network in the creation and successful implementation of a unique Garden to Table program. A Garden to Table program that meets the needs of the whole school community and results in a school culture where children live healthy and sustainable lifestyles.