

A Garden for Every Child

Gardening is good for kids: it is a proven stress reliever, it helps clear the head, it is an excellent source of fresh food and it can serve as a great form of exercise. However, as you already learned time and time again in your parenting career, lecturing your child about the benefits of gardening is unlikely to result in an overall-wearing, shovel-wielding farmer of tomorrow.

Just like adults, kids' interests are wonderfully diverse; what appeals to one child will be seen as totally boring by another. You might be a parent of a young person who loves to garden, or perhaps junior hasn't yet discovered his green thumb. While gardening isn't the trendiest hobby today, it is actually a truly broad hobby with elements that can appeal to almost anyone - even kids. If you'd like to nudge your youngster towards the soil, try to encourage his interest by selling a feature of gardening that suits him best.

- Do you have a book worm in your home? She might enjoy agriculture themed books or studying the variety in a seed catalogue.
- A hands-on kid might enjoy helping to build a raised flower bed.
- With endless possibilities for creativity, a garden can offer a creative child a chance to be expressive.
- A child with a competitive spirit might be convinced to get digging if challenged to grow the biggest pumpkin, tallest sunflower or most bountiful potato hill.



Engaging your child in gardening, whether it be for a few small pots on the front step or several acres of land, has powerful physical and mental health benefits. Use your imagination and think of ways to make gardening meaningful to your child. If you are successful in recruiting them into the soil, the reward is huge and can last a lifetime.

Health Hazards of Hookah

We all know that smoking a cigarette or a cigar comes with health risks but what about products like hookah, which is often viewed as being a safer alternative?

Traditional hookah is a mix of tobacco, glycerin and/or honey. While hookah is sometimes tobacco-free, testing shows that even products labeled tobacco-free may have tobacco and therefore nicotine in them. Nicotine is a very addictive drug. Once exposed to nicotine, it can be hard for people to stop using without having unpleasant symptoms.

Anytime a product is burned, harmful chemicals are released. Smoke from hookah has been linked to diseases that are usually seen when you smoke cigarettes such as cancer, heart disease, lung disease and complications in pregnancy. Burning hookah, including hookah that is tobacco-free, still creates cancer-causing chemicals. That means that people who are around the hookah smoke, including those who work in hookah bars, are at risk of the health problems seen from being exposed to second-hand smoke.

A lot of people believe that hookah is safer than using other tobacco related products because of the water in the base of the pipe. Again, research tells us that this isn't true. The water does not act as a filter. In fact, the World Health Organization found that a hookah user may inhale as much smoke in a 1-hour session as someone who inhaled 100 or more cigarettes!

Another concern is about sharing the mouthpiece and germs. Diseases like herpes and other communicable diseases can also be spread because people are sharing the same mouthpiece.

As with anything that poses a health risk, talking to kids and teens about hookah is important. For more information and support visit: www.albertaquits.ca