

# WORLD OF WORK

**Website to Visit:**  
<http://www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com/>

## Gardening – A New Family Hobby and More!

It's always so exciting to receive the garden catalogs in January, and inevitably it comes on a very warm January day. I'm sure the garden companies plan that. I look through it, mark all the items I want to buy, and set the catalog down. Then moody Mother Nature tosses us a wintery blast. Being a little discouraged I go through the catalog and erase some of the items I want to buy. The sun comes out and once again my gardening bug comes back. But it's Nebraska, so again the temperatures drop and the snow flies. Well by now my gardening bug has waned and I throw the catalog away.

Instead of throwing that catalog away, let's begin a new family hobby. My experience is that kids take to gardening in different ways depending on their ages, temperaments and, yes, even gender. Of course, children develop at different rates and a trowelful of guidance can go a long way.

Most adults who garden began this hobby as children. And more than one old-timer has sworn off gardening because he hated it as a kid. Here's the secret to the difference.

If you want your child to love gardening, the best things you can do, in order of importance, are the following.

1. Show them how much you love gardening just by reveling in your own garden every day.

2. Surround them with great gardens. That doesn't mean a show place. It may mean a messy, riotously colored cottage garden; decorative little getaway; or profuse potsful. (Remember that everything is bigger through kids' eyes.)

3. Give them good gardening experiences. These will be great memories in years to come.



Kids have so much competing for their attention: television, computers, sports, and a bazillion "planned" activities from library hours to birthday parties, from sleepovers to sports — at as young an age as the fifth grade. So gardening has to stand on its own. Rooting cuttings in water doesn't cut it. But what does?

Experts disagree on whether to include gardening among children's required chores or to take advantage of their interest on planting and harvest days and do the work yourself the other 120 days.

I'm somewhere in the middle. I'd never say, "an hour of weeding and you can go swimming." But I'd enlist kids of all ages to weed as much as their capabilities and attention span will allow. Then I'd finish the job alone. Some kids love being the super hero who wrestles burdock's three-foot taproot out of the ground and onto the heap.

The balance is to teach respect and enjoyment of the family gardens and make sure there's a

garden a kid can call his or her own. Here dirt and water are the stuff of magic, and surprises lurk between rows. Anyone can succeed under the sun. "I did it myself" is a powerful thing.

- Recognize that kids' gardening priorities are different, well, practically opposite of adults'.
- Let kids choose what to plant. Offer guidance and make sure there will be some success.
- Relax your standards. Crooked rows or weeds as pets are fine.
- Transplanting is fun, even if your child plays with plants the way they move action figures or Barbies about.
- Leave room for good old-fashioned digging. Holes are a highly popular landscape feature. Look for worms. Add water, and frogs appear.
- Model the message that some insects are beneficial, and even destructive bugs are highly interesting.
- Do behind-the-scenes maintenance of kids' gardens, keeping them edged and weeded. Don't expect kids to do all the watering and pest patrol.
- You decide: when it comes to impending doom (no pumpkins appeared on vines; the daisy is uprooted and sunning on the deck) do you add a pumpkin from the farm stand? Replace the daisy? Some parents use loss as a lesson; others smooth things over for success.
- Remember: One of the best things you ever grow may be a gardener.

## **Balancing Work and Family**

**B** – Brother, I'm working a lot

**A** – All day long I listen to my boss

**L** – Leaving early is questionable, maybe for not

**A** – All day long I feel such a loss

**N** – Needing time for family, that's all I got

**C** – Changing money for time is at quite a cost

**I** – I'd talk to the boss, I'll give it a shot

**N** – Nothing seems to work I'm at such a loss

**G** – Get going, work it out, move that pace to a trot

**W** – Worry no more

**O** – Organize and schedule

**R** – Reschedule, reschedule; oh that I'll adore

**K** – Keep the balance, we will now score

**A** – Action and experience will cause us less stress

**N** – Never put your family under major duress

**D** – Doing family time together, traditions ageless

**F** – Family support is necessary – undermining, always take heed

**A** – Adjust your expectations, that is no crime

**M** – Me time is valuable, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

**I** – Increase your outlook – being positive is prime

**L** – Look for shortcuts, success and succeed

**Y** – Yes, it's important to balance work, family, and time