

# Children's Activities in the "Stadt- u. Kreisverband Fulda der Kleingärtner e.V." (Regional & Urban Association)

To help children to love and enjoy gardens, the leisure garden can be transformed into a children's garden.

When children discover their own experiences in the garden, it becomes a place for fun, happiness and observing nature, but also a place for learning an environmentally friendly approach.

**The Stadt- und Kreisverband Fulda has been aiming for years to respond to this demand**

## **Garden children – A children's garden**

"Be your own gardener". This is the motto of a campaign which the allotment gardeners launched during the summer with the help of the German Youth Department, in order to occupy the children who cannot leave for holidays.

The association is supplying a free garden, and three members from the allotment garden association offered to help the children, as very few of them have previously worked in a garden.

Small but very enthusiastic groups thus set to work.

After having prepared the hotbeds, the children planted seeds and sweet pepper and tomato plants were introduced.

Another group cleaned up the redcurrant bushes.

Picking the redcurrants and other fruit is a great treat for the children, and it gives them a special satisfaction if they are the fruits of their own labor.

During the holidays, the children met up once a week, and the number of "little gardeners" remained constant throughout. Their harvest took place in the last week of the holidays, and the radishes and tomatoes from their own garden, together with bread and butter, were truly delicious.

The children were also eager to learn about the history and evolution of allotment gardens, and they discovered many things :

- Hard work (Before the harvest, you have to sow, plant and care for the crops)
- Surprise (The comparison between the seeds and plants)
- Responsibility (Regularly looking after the plants)
- Patience (Waiting for the plant to start to grow)
- Paying attention (Even to the smallest of animals)
- Imagination (Planning out the beds)
- Respect (For plants and animals)
- Team work (It's easier when you work together)

These are experiences which are becoming more and more important in our technological, hands-on world.

Passing on our enthusiasm for gardening to children as early as possible is undoubtedly the best way to ensure the long-term survival of allotment and leisure gardens.

Remember how we started in the 19th century? So it is definitely not foolish to count on our young people today as well.



Children at work in the garden during the holidays  
Accompanying persons: Michael, the allotment gardeners Luise Seidl et Elfriede Schneider  
Photo : Sven Schneider



The children who worked during the holidays in the garden are proud of their work.  
Adults from left to right : the allotment gardeners Luise Seidl and Elfriede Schneider, the president Heinrich Müller,  
Photo : Sven Schneide

## DIY Activities Still Provide Fun For Children

Let's take the example of the DIY activities organized every year at the "Château Fasanerie" during the beautiful garden festival,( "Fürstliches Gartenfest"), and during the regional festival of the Fulda Conservation Centre .

These activities appeal to creativity, diversity, spontaneity and imagination.

What sort of things can we make?

- Children can recreate their dream garden or an aromatic herb garden in empty fruit crates (various materials are at their disposal:
  - compost, gravel, sand, bark or seeds).
  - They can make dolls with aromatic herbs (stick the pots together on the ground, then fill the uppermost pot with watercress). See photo below.

This shows that growing aromatic herbs is not only possible in garden beds, but also in portable mediums. This way children can learn about the most significant species of herbs, as well as their use.

- Nest boxes (pre-fabricated parts screwed together), or
- Branches arranged and woven together to create nests (follow the assembly advice for in shrubs and hedges).

In this way children learn to appreciate the measures taken for the protection of birds, and also the relationship which exists between bird life and the cultivation of a garden.

- A "Touch Box" with objects from nature hidden inside. The children can only use their hands to discover what is inside the box.

- A "Garden Quiz". To answer the different questions, they will need careful observation, a bit of maths and also the help of adults.

Prizes are given for the best answers.

Contribution from  
Elfriede Schneider

President of the "Stadt- und Kreisverbandes Fulda der Kleingärtner e.V." Association