

Family and Community Health “Connections” In Taylor County

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Celebrate Every Kid Healthy Week

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Every Kid Healthy Week: What is it?

Every Kid Healthy™ Week is an annual celebration of school health and wellness achievements. It takes place during the last full week of April – each day shines a spotlight on the actions schools and families are taking to improve the health and wellness of their kids. We also highlight the link between nutrition, physical activity, mental health and learning – because healthy kids are better prepared to learn and thrive!



Take action during Every Kid Healthy Week.

Anyone (students, parents/caregivers/families, educators, school administrators, community members, businesses) can take action during Every Kid Healthy Week by following the Every Kid Healthy Week daily themes or building your own activities based on your needs or

schedule. [Get daily activity ideas here.](#)

Action for Healthy Kids was created to build strong communities where all children have the nourishing foods they need to learn and thrive, the age-appropriate physical activity they need to be happy, healthy, and ready for learning. Together, we can help kids and families thrive



Source:

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/get-involved/every-kid-healthy-week/>



April Gardening Guidelines

Source: Central Texas Master Gardeners Gardening Guide



As the weather turns warmer, many people start getting their garden ready. The following recommendations from the Central Texas Master Gardeners will help get your garden ready for top productivity.

- ◇ Work 3” to 4” of organic materials into beds.
- ◇ Deadhead flowering annuals and perennials to extend the blooming period.
- ◇ Fertilize container plants with each watering, using a weak solution of any balanced fertilizer, such as 20-20-20.
- ◇ Plant warm season annuals. Before planting, soak plants in a solution of a root stimulant, gently loosen the roots if badly entangled, and water often until established. Wait 2 to 4 weeks to plant hot weather annuals.
- ◇ Plant beans, tomatoes, squash, peppers, cucumbers, melons, and corn one or two weeks after the average date of last killing freeze, usually mid to late April for Central Texas.
- ◇ Apply high nitrogen fertilizer to shrubs and vines.
- ◇ Apply bait for fire ants
- ◇ Refresh mulch as needed in all beds.

The complete Garden Guide can be purchased from the Central Texas Master Gardeners, contact, centexmga@gmail.com.



8 HEALTH BENEFITS OF GARDENING

Planting flowers and vegetables can reap bountiful bouquets and delicious harvests for your dining table. But did you know gardening also can do wonders for your well-being? Here are eight surprising health benefits of gardening.

1. Gardening can build self-esteem.

Maybe you don't think you were born with a green thumb, but after tilling, planting, nurturing and harvesting plants, you might see a slightly different person in the mirror: a person who can grow things and is a little more in tune with the earth.

It always feels good to accomplish new tasks, and if you can grow a garden, what can't you do?

2. Gardening is good for your heart.

All that digging, planting and weeding burns calories and strengthens your heart.

"There are physical benefits from doing the manual labor of gardening," says UNC Health internal medicine physician [Robert Hutchins, MD, MPH](#). "It's hard work to garden, and it provides some cardiovascular benefit."

3. Gardening reduces stress.

Gardening can help [reduce symptoms](#) of depression and anxiety.

"Gardening gives you a chance to focus on something and put your mind to work with a goal and a task in mind," Dr. Hutchins says, "which is helpful especially now with [so much illness and death and talk of death](#), just to see things growing and things thriving."

4. Gardening can make you happy.

Getting dirt under your nails while digging in the ground can [make you pretty happy](#). In fact, [inhaling M. vaccae](#), a healthy bacteria that lives in soil, can increase levels of serotonin and reduce anxiety.

5. Gardening can improve your hand strength.

All that digging, planting and pulling does more than produce plants. Gardening also will increase your hand strength. What a great way to keep your hands and fingers as strong as possible for as long as possible.

6. Gardening is good for the whole family.

Gardening can be a solo activity or an opportunity for bonding with your family and friends. The happiness and stress relief that gardening provides is a great thing to share with loved ones. Also, gardening has special benefits for kids. Early exposure to dirt has been [linked to numerous health benefits](#), from reducing allergies to autoimmune diseases.

7. Gardening can give you a boost of vitamin D.

A healthy dose of vitamin D increases your calcium levels, which benefits your bones and immune system. Exposure to sunlight [helped older adults](#) achieve adequate amounts of vitamin D. Just don't forget your sunscreen.

Source: UNC Health Talk, [Robert Hutchins](#), MD, MPH
Internal Medicine Doctor



Corn and Bell Pepper Salad



INGREDIENTS:

Dressing:

1/4c. Olive oil	1/4 c. diced red onion
1/4 c. white wine vinegar	1/4 c. cilantro, chopped
1/4 tsp. black pepper	1/4 tsp. smoked paprika

Salad

4 c. Corn (frozen or off the cob)	1c. Cherry tomatoes, sliced
1 green bell pepper, diced	Zest of 1 lemon
1/2 avocado, diced	Juice of 1 lemon
1/3 c. green onion, diced	

Instructions:

1. Wash hands and clean preparation area.
2. Combine all dressing ingredients into a bowl and mix. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl combine other salad ingredients.
4. Pour mixed dressing over salad and mix well.
5. Serve immediately.

Source: <https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/recipe/corn-and-bell-pepper-salad/>

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 1 cup (168g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	170
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 10mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 24g	9%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 16mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 416mg	8%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

National Volunteer Month is celebrated in April 2024 in the United States. The month celebrates the impact volunteers have on our lives and encourages active volunteerism in generations to come.

THANK YOU to all the wonderful volunteers that make our programs and activities possible with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Taylor County. We appreciate you very much and couldn't do it without you.

Kim Miles

County Extension Agent—Family & Community Health
1982 Lytle Way, Abilene, TX. 79602
325-672-6048 (phone)
325-672-9148 (fax)
kamiles@ag.tamu.edu
taylor.agrilife.org

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Family & Community Health “Connections” is provided by these

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Family and Community Health Agents:

Courtney Parrott, Brown County

Vacant, Burnet County

Milissa Wright, Concho Valley

Chanie Schaffner, Coleman County

Kelli Maberry, Jones County

Karen DeZarn, Lampasas County

Whitney Whitworth, Llano County

Jessica Holbrook, Mason County

Carrie Ross, McCulloch County

Staci Winders, Nolan County

Kandice Everitt, Runnels County

McKinley Armstrong, San Saba County

Kim Miles, Taylor County

Courtney Redman, Tom Green County

Lorena Iverson, BLT Regional Project Specialist

Stacy Drury, D7 Regional FCH Program Leader