

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN ABOUT THE VIRUS AND GARDENING

We live in an unusually dangerous time, when the well-being and life itself of everyone are in peril, most urgently from a raging viral pandemic that threatens everyone on earth, but also from problems of nutrition and lifestyles that endanger the health and happiness of so many of us, most preciously our children.

At the Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center, we have been consumed by the threat to our small community, most urgently by the refusal or hesitance of so many to get vaccinated against the Covid-19 virus that is so deadly to so many and that can permanently undermine the health of others. Although many people have a fear of needles or doubt the necessity of medicine, we must sometimes consider others rather than ourselves. When deciding whether or not to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine, we must consider our grandparents, parents, and other elderly people who may be suffering from serious medical conditions. And we must consider the children around us who could be affected by the virus that we pass on. We must see that the children are vaccinated when they become eligible for the limited supplies of the vaccines.

How can we ensure that people—adults as well as children—are also maintaining a healthy diet and eating the proper foods? This brings us to BGACDC's gardening program. Gardening is a stress reliever as well as a supplier of healthy foods. It is a way to save time and money and eliminate the need to stand in long lines to buy groceries. For many years, BGACDC has maintained its own vegetable garden. Every year, the BFT restaurant at BGACDC prepares meals with the vegetables grown in the garden. Food prices are rising and every time you go to the grocery store, items are more expensive than the week before.



It has always been BGACDC'S mission to give back to the community. By showing our youth how to grow their own food, we are fostering an environment where the youth can help others. They will be able to share food products from the garden with their neighbors, or others who may not be able to visit the store, or simply desire a tomato or another healthy food item.

A recent article reflected that the COVID-19 pandemic has strained global food systems and processes, affecting both food supply and demand. Could raising more gardens be part of the answer?

There are many different kinds of gardens: Raised Gardens, Indoor Gardens (ideal for growing herbs, fruits, vegetables and flowers all year round), Community Gardens and Container Gardens. Victory Gardens, also known as War Gardens, were used as defense mechanisms during World War I and II; the gardens were planted at private residences around the United States. As a result of the War Gardens, many food-processing companies were forced to close because their employees were too sick to come to work or too scared of getting sick.

A garden is a good way to keep your heart healthy, reducing the risk of a heart attack or chronic heart disease. Think about the life you want for yourself and the steps you'll need to take to go after it! If you're considering growing a garden, start planning and make it happen!