

WILD OATS GARDENING WITH KIDS AWARD WINNERS Evaluation Summary – 2007



The National Gardening Association surveys grant recipients to capture quantitative and qualitative data on the impact of these programs. The following is a summary of results from winners of the 2007 grant cycle.

Grant package:

- one 4' x 8' raised bed kit
- organic and heirloom seeds and plants
- curriculum and activity package
- cooking demonstration/class
- field trip to the participating Wild Oats Market or Capers

Number of applicants: 54

Number of recipients: 10

Number of evaluation respondents: 8*

Following is a summary of the highlights from those responses.

Number of participants in Wild Oats award-winning programs:

Age 2-5 (preschool-K).....	181
Ages 6-8 (grades 1-3).....	353
Ages 9-11 (grades 4-6).....	310
Ages 12-13 (grades 7-8).....	150
Ages 14-18 (grades 9-12).....	3
Adults (18+)	40
Total participants	1,037

Demographic information:

European American.....	36%
Latino	34%
African American	24%
Asian.....	6%
Male.....	65%
Female.....	35%
Eligible for free or reduced lunch program	52%

Hours per week a participant was involved in gardening activities:

Average	5 hours/week
Range	1 to 20 hours/week

Months of the year respondents conducted gardening programs:

Average.....	5 months/year
Range.....	3 to 12 months/year

Program continuation:

Respondents indicating they plan to continue their program next year	88%
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Type of audience participating in programs:

In-school	71%
After-school.....	43%
Community Gardener	43%
Special Needs	29%
Summer Program/Camp	29%
Intergenerational	29%
Preschool/Headstart	14%

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“Many of our children live in low-income apartment complexes. They have no access to lawns and gardens and tend to have very limited knowledge of gardening when they enter the program. After participating in the school gardening program they demonstrate real knowledge of how plants grow and where some of our food comes from.”
— Linda Mathews,
Lee Elementary School, KS



*Winners failing to submit an evaluation are ineligible to apply for future grants.

Location of winners responding:
 Urban.....71%
 Suburban.....29%

Program leaders noted participant improvements in these characteristics:
 Environmental attitudes86%
 Attitude towards school.....86%
 Leadership skills.....86%
 Self-confidence86%
 Nutritional attitudes.....86%
 Community spirit.....71%
 Social skills57%
 Motor skills57%
 Volunteerism57%
 Scholastic achievement.....43%

Reported evidence documenting the effectiveness of gardening programs:
 Positive feedback from participants.....86%
 Positive community feedback86%
 Positive feedback from family members86%
 Positive feedback from administrators.....71%
 Decreased disciplinary actions..43%
 Improved attendance rates43%
 Positive survey results29%
 Funding and donations14%
 Awards and recognition14%

Subjects taught through programs:
 Health and nutrition71%
 Community service.....57%
 Math57%
 Science57%
 Art43%
 Cultural studies/issues29%
 Interdisciplinary29%
 Physical education.....29%
 Intra/interpersonal relationships29%
 English14%

Social studies.....14%
 Other14%

Percentage of time spent on instructional techniques (note: this is the average of all the responses for each technique):
 Student-led investigation/hands-on activities.....26%
 Independent Learning.....19%
 Collaborative project work18%
 Adult-led investigation/hands-on activities16%
 Lecture6%

Source of curriculum used by gardening programs:
 Combined materials from numerous sources71%
 Original material.....29%
 Nonprofit organization (such as NGA or Life Lab)14%
 Cooperative Extension (such as 4-H or JMG)14%

Compliance with State and National Education Standards:
 Respondents who connected their gardening program to State and National Education Standards57%

Importance of linking to the standards for respondents:
 Mandatory29%
 Very important.....14%
 Important.....14%
 Somewhat important.....0%
 Not important.....29%
 N/A14%

Approximate amount of money spent on programs:
 Less than \$250.....28.5%
 \$250 to \$50028.5%
 \$500 to \$1,00028.5%
 \$1,000 to \$1,50014.5%

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The majority of our students speak a language other than English. Thanks to our school garden program, these students have had multiple opportunities to develop oral language, acquire new vocabulary, and practice speaking English.

— Deana Jaramillo, Middleton Primary Center, CA



Participating youth felt a sense of responsibility and ownership. They were so proud each time they received produce from the garden, knowing they had had a big part in cultivating it.

— Amy Eiben, Famicos Foundation, OH



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Approximate value of in-kind donations to programs:

Less than \$250	43%
\$250 to \$500	28.5%
\$500 to \$1,000	14.25%
\$1,000 to \$1,500	14.25%
\$1,500 to \$2,000	0%
\$2,000 to \$2,500	14.25%
More than \$2,500	14.25%

Percentage of funding programs received from other sources (note: this is the average of all the responses for each source):

Grants	36%
Parent or Volunteer	
Organizations	14%
Instructor's pocket.....	14%
Donations	8%
School or School	
District Funds	8%
Fundraising	2%

Publicity about the programs:

Newsletter articles	13
Newspaper articles.....	3
Web site features.....	3

Type of organizations responding:

Public school.....	43%
Nonprofit Agency	14%
Alternative School.....	14%
Charter school	14%

Community interaction and additional impacts noted by respondents:

The gardening program served as a tool of change, causing a paradigm shift in the way students view their place in the community and on earth. They are now thinking critically about their food choices, food security, local and global environmental issues, the importance of cultural diversity, and the effect of their actions. I believe participating in this program has changed the lives of many students. Instead of feeling hopeless about school, the community, and the world, they now have a better understanding and awareness of the world, and see themselves as responsible citizens who can actively improve their lives.

— Waleska M. Velasquez,
 500 Role Models Academy
 of Excellence, FL

We began the program with well-defined high expectations and the positive response from the community, students, and administrators has been marvelous. Student interaction and leadership surpassed our hopes. Most of the students rose to the occasion and actively took charge of their learning. All of them looked forward to the program, and were actively engaged in educational activities that were relevant and meaningful. Student morale improved, too, and was wonderfully contagious! The faculty noticed immediate positive change in student behavior.

— Waleska M. Velasquez,
 500 Role Models Academy
 of Excellence, FL