

Joining Hands



Goals

Students will critically reflect on what they want to gain from summer gardening and build respect for the diversity of their fellow youth gardeners.

Objectives

Students will make a mural of joined hands that explains what skills they bring to the garden and what they want to get out of their work in the garden.

Materials

- Poster board or plywood
- Pencils
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Seeds and dried beans
- Glue



Time: 45 minutes

Background Information

One of the main goals of community gardens is to build community. This activity serves as a community building exercise. Students need to understand that everyone has strengths and skills that they bring to the garden, and that everyone has a different vision for their work with the garden. This activity not only produces a beautiful piece of art, but also helps to illuminate each student's skills and strengths while ultimately building connections.

Introduction (5 min)

Discuss with the group that today will be a chance to understand where each member of the group is coming from. This is a chance for the group to be able to explain why they are there and what they hope to get out of the group. In the middle of the poster board (or plywood) write in large letters what the central theme is or a phrase that would be appropriate for the group (e.g. Peace, Growing Together, Respect).

Activity Steps (30 min)

1. Have each student trace his or her hands spread out together creating a heart between the two index fingers and thumbs of each student's hands on the poster board or plywood. Make it so each hand's pinky finger is touching another student's pinky. They should form an oval around the central word or phrase.
2. Ask each student to write on the fingers of the right hand what skills they bring to the garden (e.g. strong hands to dig, good eyes to pay attention to the needs of the plants).
3. Then ask each student to write on the fingers of their left hand what they want to get out of the summer gardening program (e.g. new friends, knowledge, fun).
4. Have students color in the parts of the hands that do not have words. Consider having seeds or beans available to glue into the hands as well.

Conclusion (10 min)

Have the participants each describe their hands.

Sources

Adapted from: Guinan, Kelly. *Go with Peace*. 2005.

Notes
