



SELF-EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Scholarly Publications

[Growing Vegetables and Values: Benefits of Neighborhood-Based Community Gardens for Youth Development and Nutrition](#) by Julie Ober Allen & Katherine Alaimo, PhD

[The Role of Community Based Programs in Reducing Recidivism in Ex-Offenders](#) by Paige Paulson St. Catherine University

[Cultivating Community Collaboration and Community Health Through Community Gardens](#) by Jacqueline Lanier, Julie Schumacher & Kerri Calvert

[Community Gardens: Lessons Learned From California Healthy Cities and Communities](#) by Joan Twiss et al., National Institutes of Health

[Research & Benefits of Community Gardens](#) - North Carolina State University

Benefits of Community Gardens

1. Making Fresh Produce Accessible

Especially in urban neighborhoods, it can be challenging to regularly obtain fresh produce without having to drive many miles.

This means that people do not eat a healthy and nutritious diet because obtaining produce simply is too time-consuming and costly.

However, when there is a community garden in a neighborhood, studies have demonstrated that people consume more fresh fruits and vegetables.

This enables people to lead a healthier lifestyle.

2. Cleaning up the Environment

Plants naturally add oxygen to the air that people breathe. At the same time, they contribute to cleaner air by removing air pollution.

Plants further absorb rainwater, which means that there is less runoff in the streets. This, in turn, means that fewer pollutants are washed into rivers, streams, and lakes.

3. Building Stronger Communities

Participating in a community garden provides neighbors with an opportunity to connect on a one-on-one basis.



People who might otherwise have been cooped up at home, leading a solitary life, are brought out into the community where they can interact with others.

When people take a plot in a community garden, they foster a sense of ownership and begin to feel more personally invested in their neighborhood.

Additionally, because more people are out in the neighborhood, it may be possible to reduce crime rates. It is much easier for crime to thrive when neighbors are shut up in apartments rather than being outdoors.

4. Opportunities for Learning

Educational opportunities abound in community gardens. They are a wonderful place for people to interact with individuals who may have different cultural, social, and religious backgrounds.

Moreover, working together in the garden may be a great way to discuss environmental issues and how to live a healthier life.

People may share the knowledge they have gained about growing bigger and better produce while also gaining knowledge about business principles and working as a team.

Community gardening is especially valuable for children who may know little about where food comes from and how it is grown because it gives them a chance to participate in the food supply chain.

Some people will find a mentor among their fellow gardeners, and more than one will discover a lifelong friend.

5. Relieving Stress and Increasing Wellness

Modern life is stressful. Most people race from one activity or item on their to-do list to the next without reflecting on why they are doing what they are doing.

Gardening is an invitation to slow down, connect with nature, and foster relationships with like-minded individuals.

It creates an opportunity for people to think about all of the other items on their to-do list and decide which ones are really important and meaningful. The rest is just noise.

Accordingly, a community garden is a place that helps people to relieve stress and increase their overall sense of wellness.