Ways to Plan and Design a Children’s Garden

Let your imagination be your guide.
Important Planning Questions

Where will the children’s garden be located?

• At a School
• Within the Community
• At a Nature Center or Community Center
• New Site
Important Planning Questions

Who will be visiting the children’s garden?

• Just kids
• Families
• Public admission
• Educators and students

Now that you’ve considered where the garden will be located and who will be visiting it . . .
What will visitors see?

Consider these important elements when designing a Children’s Garden:

• Boundaries/Edges
• Paths
• Material
• Theme Gardens or Garden Rooms
  • Water Features
  • Wildlife
  • The Senses
  • Adventure
  • Entertainment
The Garden Edge

A landscape without a boundary is like a painting without a frame.

• Provides enclosure and increases child safety
• Can be living such as trees, hedges or shrubs
• Can be man-made such as walls or fences
Different Paths for Every Adventure

- Stone
- Wood chips
- Gravel
- Brick
- Concrete
- Pine needles
- Asphalt
Material Choices

Natural or Synthetic

• Seating

• Sculpture
Creating Garden Rooms

• Rooms may recreate different environments with plants and physical elements.
  
  Example: Marsh habitat with aquatic plants and life size turtle for children to climb on.

• Rooms may have a specific theme with a fun educational component.
  
  Example: Butterfly Garden signage teaches children about native butterfly species.

• Rooms must be designed for children.
  
  Example: Seating in the garden must be an appropriate child height.
The Many Themes of Garden Rooms for Kids

Water Features

• Fountains

• Ponds
The Many Themes of Garden Rooms for Kids

Wildlife

- Cuddly Animals
- Interesting Insects
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The Senses

- Taste Fruits
- Touch Leaf Textures
- Smell Flowers
- Hear Nature
- See Life
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Adventure

- Green Spaces for running
- High Structures for Climbing
- Low Structures for Crawling
- Secret Places for Hiding

- High Structures for Climbing
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Entertainment

• Corn Maze

• Transportation

• Amphitheatre

• Labyrinth
Words of Advice

Children’s Gardens are not for adults, so if you have access to a group of kids ask them for ideas. It’s their space. Let them participate in the planning process. You’ll be surprised what children can create with a single crayon and some paper.