



Iowa Gardening

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If reading the article in the Summer issue on gardening with children piqued your interest, the following ideas will have you and your little ones in the garden in no time. Mary Hawley, master gardener from Belmont and the community's children garden creator and organizer, has some ideas for "specialty" gardens—and your children won't be able to wait to get their hands in the soil.

PIZZA GARDEN. Of course, in the shape of a pizza, this circular garden can be outlined with rocks to symbolize the crust, while the area inside nurtures various "toppings." Hawley chose tomatoes, onions, and basil peppers and sprinkled marigolds throughout to resemble cheese. And the best part: Make an actual pizza at the end of the growing season with what was grown in the garden.

RAINBOW GARDEN. Arranged in an arch, Hawley used orange marigolds, yellow marigolds, green zinnias, purple gladiolas, and red cannas to complete the rainbow. "This was good to teach them [the children] about seeds, transplanting seedlings, and bulbs," says Hawley. "And they enjoyed taking cut flowers home each week to their families."

THREE SISTER'S GARDEN. A traditional Native American garden that consists of corn, beans, and squash. "Each plant helps each other to grow," says Hawley. "The corn gives the beans something to climb on, the squash shades the roots of the corn, and the beans put back the nitrogen needed to keep the soil fertile."

FLAG GARDEN. Create a flag by planting red, white, and blue petunias. Hawley shares a word of warning: "We learned that rabbits prefer the blue petunias!"

For more information on gardening with children, contact Hawley, 641/444-4000, 57hawley@kalnet.com.