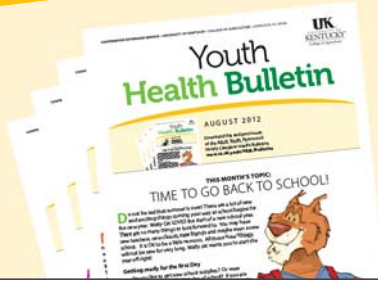


Youth Health Bulletin



APRIL 2015

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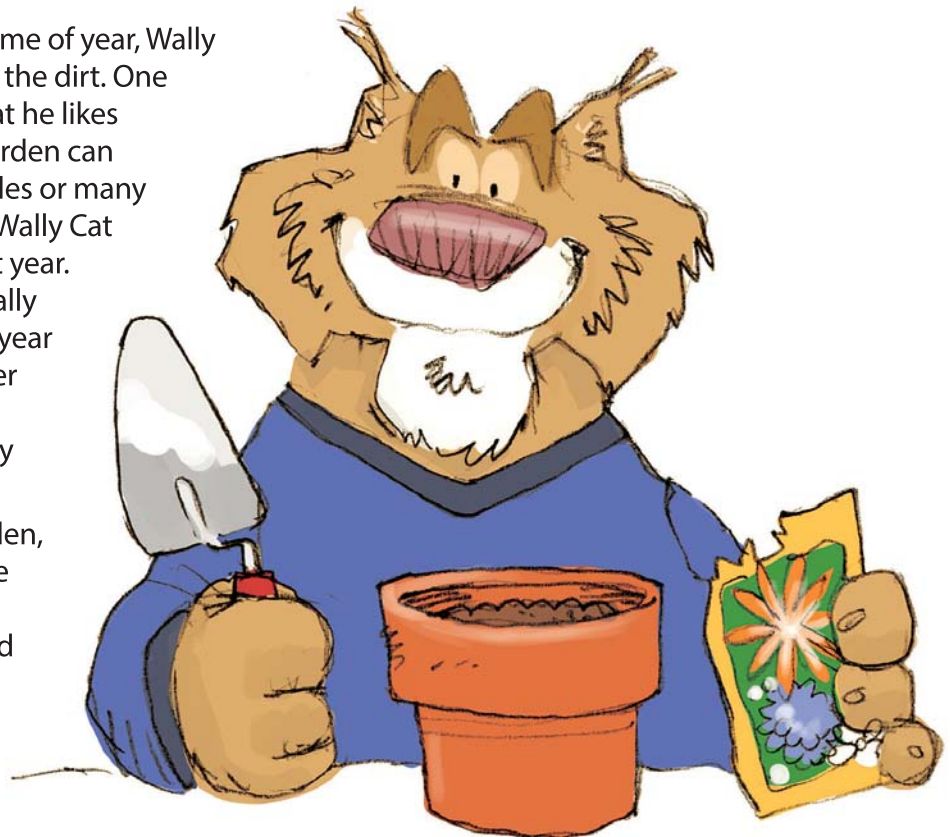
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DIGGING IN THE DIRT!

Do you like to dig in the dirt? This time of year, Wally Cat loves to go outside and dig in the dirt. One of the reasons he likes it so much is that he likes to start a garden this time of year. A garden can have flowers, bushes, fruits or vegetables or many different types of plants out together. Wally Cat planted a tomato and herb garden last year. After the tomatoes and herbs grew, Wally Cat and his parents made a pizza. This year Wally Cat has decided to try some other vegetables in his garden such as bell peppers and squash. There are so many different plants to grow.

When planning and starting a garden, you first want to think about where the garden will be located. Do you know a sunny, out-of-the-way place that would be perfect for your garden? You want your garden to have plenty of sun

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A garden can have flowers, bushes, fruits or vegetables or many different types of plants.



Continued from page 1

because plants like to have sun and need it to grow. If you are not sure where to place your garden, you can start watching where the sun is throughout the day. An area that gets a lot of sun is usually a pretty good place. What do you do if there does not seem to be much sunlight anywhere in your yard? There are actually plants that do very well in the shade. Lettuce and spinach grow well in more shaded areas.

When you are starting a garden, you want to make sure the soil is good. Having good soil is really important for growing plants in your garden. You want to make sure your soil is not too sandy, too dry, too wet or too hard. Did you know that if you have weeds growing in the area you want to start a garden, then it is very likely that you will not have many problems getting vegetables or flowers to grow there too? Also, if you see a worm or two, that is a good thing.

Once you have selected where to plant and put seeds in the ground, you need to make sure the seeds get plenty of water. Water is needed so that plants can live and grow. Did you know that water actually helps plant to stand up tall? A normal

garden usually needs about one inch of rain each week. If it does not rain regularly, you may need to water your garden. If you can, try to water your garden early in the day. This allows the plants to soak up all of the water before it gets dark.

Then all you have to do is... WAIT! It may be the hardest part. It takes some time for plants to grow, but with all your hard work and care, your plants will soon start growing and your garden will fully appear.

If you already have a garden in your yard, perhaps you could try planting a new vegetable this year. Even if you have a garden already, you still may have to do many of the steps above to make sure the area is ready for planting again.

SOURCES:

- University of Illinois Extension. My First Garden. <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/firstgarden/index.cfm>
- Colorado State University Cooperative Extension. Planting a Garden with your Child. <http://www.colostate.edu/Dept/CoopExt/4DMG/Children/plangard.htm>

Youth
Health Bulletin

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