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MEDIA RELEASE

School gardens to combat climate change



Creating school gardens is on the agenda for many schools as a way to provide a hands-on learning experience to address sustainability and climate change issues at a community level.

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Cultivating Community, a not-for-profit gardening support organisation, have created an exciting partnership to offer a nine week program beginning on 20 August to inspire and support teachers, parents and community volunteers learn more about how to develop and maintain sustainable school gardens.

The nine week course includes hands-on demonstrations about how to create a fun, transformative learning environment. Participants will visit RBG Cranbourne and RBG Melbourne and various school garden sites around Melbourne to learn directly from teachers and their students.

According to Christine Joy, Education Coordinator, "Gardens are an example of a rich landscape that feeds the children's imaginations, encourages questioning and promotes deep thinking skills. In gardens we can use the powerful tools of the senses, emotions and memory to trigger deep and transformative learning".

Working with nature will teach children empathy and foster a connection to the wider planet. In addition, children who have access to outdoor spaces for play; become adults who make sustainable choices in their daily lives.

Ms Joy added, "Gardens provide the perfect learning space for children of all abilities, interests and learning styles. A garden for children is about growing food but it is also about growing food for our imaginations. A garden is about also about growing your community and we therefore offer this course to the wider members of school communities."

Dates and times: **Wednesdays from 20 August – 29 October**
 5pm – 8pm
Field days: **3 September and 22 October**
Cost: **\$500 per participant**

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