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## POD-Wake Project News #5

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POD-Wake Newsletter #  
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**PHOTO OF THE MONTH: Planting peppers at Childcare Network #61**  
Photo credit: Natural Learning Initiative

## News from the Field



### Community Workday at Johnson Pond

Raleigh area Young Professionals Network (YPN) brought volunteers to Johnson Pond Early Learning Center, a first cohort POD-Wake demonstration center.

Coordinated through the Wake Smart Start office, Sarah Konradi and Caroline Asher of NLI facilitated these activities:

- Install a vine teepee in preschool space
- Remove old black plastic edging around the play structures and sandbox
- Install stumps on the path edge, to hold sand back the sandbox
- Sand and smooth stumps
- Plant 8 trees
- Create perennial planting beds in toddler area
- Plant strawberries in a repurposed gutter attached to the fence

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### Planting Season in Full Swing

With the assistance of POD-Wake Gardener Mary Archer, demonstration sites have been busy planting vegetables and more! Tomatoes, marigolds, watermelons, cucumbers, squash, zucchini, celosia, and sweet peppers will be delighting gardeners of all ages soon, as the results of their efforts begin to bear fruit.




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### Coming in May:

Behavior mapping at all POD-Wake centers. Don't be surprised to see Sarah Konradi and Julie Murphy, Design Associates at NLI, with I-Pads in hand, in the OLEs at your center in the month to come. After scheduling a time to visit with center directors, they will use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to collect physical activity data for measuring the impact of the POD-Wake renovations. Just pretend you don't see them!

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**May 20** - POD-Wake Interactive Design Session with Webinars at the College of Design. [Please share this registration link](#) with center directors and teachers you know who want to improve their OLEs.

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### Outdoor Inspiration from Wake Smart Start

Wake Smart Start QE Specialists brightened the April Child Care Directors meeting with a fairy garden hands-on activity. [Follow the WSS Garden Classroom board on Pinterest](#) for

details on activities for getting outside with kids.

## Resources

[Illustrated guides to organic pest control available at Toxic Free NC.](#) This non-profit has been working to eliminate toxins in NC since 1986 and is a great resource for the child care garden.

[Free webinar June 2nd on Fire Ant control through the Extension Learn.](#)

[Follow the Natural Teachers Network](#) at Children and Nature Network to keep up with the latest trends and research.



You can extend an invitation to birds by providing nesting materials. See these ideas from the National Wildlife Federation on [How to Offer Bird-Nesting Materials in Your Garden.](#)

Eastern Carolina Organics is a local food hub, used by farmers in this region. [Their crop calendar.](#) is useful for the child care gardener as well! [Explore their website for recipes too.](#)

[NC Extension's Farm to Preschool page](#), includes local and national resources, including curricula, grant opportunities, and NLI's Green Desk.

edWeb.net primarily serves the K-12 community but these recent offerings are useful for early child care as well. You will need to join this free network to take advantage.

- Free webinar, May 19, at 5:00pm - [Preparing Children for Kindergarten and Beyond](#)
- [Grant Writing 101: Basics for Beginners](#) - This webinar was offered April 30 and is still available to view online.

## Project Calendar

### MAY

Installation: Bean teepees or beans on fence; potatoes in grow bags

Activity: Planting summer vegetables from transplants; planting pumpkins

**May 20** - POD-Wake Interactive Design Session with Webinars at the College of Design.

[Please share this registration link](#) with center directors and teachers you know who want to improve their OLEs.

**JUNE**

Installation: Wildlife and perennial Gardens

Activity: Bugs, birds, and worm programming

**JUNE 25** - POD-Wake Childcare OLE Leadership Series: Enhancing Cognitive Development in the OLE

**JULY**

Installation: Center specific projects for creating new settings

Activity: How to know when to harvest?

**AUGUST**

Installation: Center specific projects for creating new settings

Activity: Charting, measuring, and tasting the harvest

**SEPTEMBER 30** - POD-Wake Childcare OLE Leadership Series: Composting and Vermicomposting: Recycling Food Scraps Creates Healthy Soil for Gardens

**OCTOBER**

**OCTOBER 2 - 3** - **Save the Date!** *12th Annual Design Institute: Nature Play and Learning*

**NOVEMBER**

**NOVEMBER 25** - POD-Wake Childcare OLE Leadership Series: Remaining Engaged with Nature During the Winter Months



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