



PHOTO OF THE MONTH: A Safe Place OLE  
Photo Credit: Natural Learning Initiative

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## News from the Field

### Summer in the Garden

Harvesting at POD-Wake Centers is in full swing. Children enjoyed peas at many centers, which are, by now, a sweet memory. Zucchini, yellow squash, tomatoes, lettuce, chard, peppers, basil, cucumbers, carrots, blackberries, and blueberries are also coming out of center gardens. Produce is being used for tasting activities and included in menus. The growing season continues with watermelons, potatoes, and sunflowers on the way.

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### [12th Annual Design Institute: Design for Nature Play and Learning](#)

Registration is now open for the 12th Annual Design Institute. This two day training offers plenary presentations, hands-on activities, and the opportunity to network with childcare providers



about the benefits of OLE improvements and nature play. Scheduled for October 2 and 3, 2014 at the NC Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, this event coincides with beautiful fall gardens and will inspire you with new ideas for connecting to the natural world.

[Click here to register.](#)

## Irrigation or Recycling?

Used one gallon jugs are easily repurposed to serve as a water source in the garden, as seen in this example from ABC Land. After rinsing out your empty one gallon jugs, just poke small holes in the bottom, place in the garden next to your plants, and fill with water. For more information about how to create simple irrigation systems use the search terms "self watering container" in your search engine (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.).



## Sharing Garden Produce

The sign reads, "Fresh garden herbs from the Raleigh Nursery School (RNS) Outdoor Learning Environment. Help yourself." These herbs are available for families to take with them at the end of the day to liven up their dinner. Herbs are a useful addition to the OLE. They provide sensory opportunities for children and are typically simple to manage. Plus they are a delicious addition to many dishes. Like other POD-Wake demonstration centers, RNS offers garden produce to families when they yield more than can be used at the center. This strategy helps connect the families to OLE activities and extends the health benefits of POD. Visit these green desk posts for ideas for using herbs:

<http://naturalelearning.org/theme-gardens>



## Production Gardens in the Childcare Setting

A Safe Place Child Enrichment Center manages a production garden that supplements the kitchens of three childcare centers. This garden is outside the fence and available for "field trips". The children are more involved with the daily care of smaller raised beds inside the fence and they grow the same vegetables that grow in the larger garden. This strategy provides the kitchen with the quantities needed for all the children to benefit from local, fresh food while at the same time giving children the learning experience and satisfaction of growing their own food. Centers without the resources for a production garden on site should consider an actual field trip to a community garden. [The Interfaith Food Shuttle](#) is a good resource for finding a garden close to your center.



The production garden A Safe Place.



Children plant seeds in the raised bed with POD Wake Gardener Caroline Asher.

## Save the Date:

POD-Wake Saturday Symposium: Design for the Outdoor Learning Environment

November 1, 2014: 9:00am to 1:00pm

Location: Heather Park Child Development Center



# Recipe

This month's recipes come from POD-Wake demonstration center Heather Park Child Development Center. These attractive recipes appropriate to the season are printed and shared with families as they pick up their children at the end of the day.

**RECIPE FOR:** Apple-And-Zucchini Salad

**INGREDIENTS:**  
1/3 cup vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon dried basil  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper  
2 large Red Delicious apples, diced  
1 large Granny Smith apple, diced  
1 green bell pepper, thin strips  
2 small zucchini, thinly sliced  
Leaf Lettuce

**DIRECTIONS:**  
  
Combine oil and next 6 ingredients in a jar; cover tightly, and shake vigorously.  
  
Combine apple and next 3 ingredients; toss with dressing. Serve on individual lettuce-lined serving plates.

**PREP TIME:**

**FROM THE KITCHEN OF:** Heather Park CDC

**RECIPE FOR:** Grilled Squash & Zucchini

**INGREDIENTS:**  
2 cups baby zucchini, halved lengthwise  
  
2 cups baby yellow squash, quartered lengthwise  
  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
  
Cooking spray

**DIRECTIONS:**  
  
Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Combine baby zucchini and baby yellow squash in a large bowl. Add olive oil, kosher salt, and black pepper; toss well. Place vegetables on a grill rack coated with cooking spray. Grill 5 minutes on each side or until lightly charred and tender.  
  
**Note:**  
MyRecipes is working with Let's Move!, the Partnership for a Healthier America, and USDA's MyPlate to give anyone looking for healthier options access to a trove of recipes that will help them create healthy, tasty plates. For more information about creating a healthy plate, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

**PREP TIME:**

**FROM THE KITCHEN OF:** Heather Park CDC

## Project Calendar

### JULY

Installation: Center specific projects for creating new settings

Activity: How to know when to harvest?

- On site technical assistance visits from NLI Team and Joanna Lelekacs, Center for Environmental Farming System.

## AUGUST

Installation: Center specific projects for creating new settings

Activity: Charting, measuring, and tasting the harvest

## SEPTEMBER

Installation: Center specific projects for creating new settings

Activity: Planting fall crops in production gardens

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

## OCTOBER:

Installation: Fruit trees, shade trees, and shrubs

Activity: Harvesting fall crops

- OCTOBER 2 – 3 [Register Now!](#) 12th Annual Design Institute: Nature Play and Learning

## NOVEMBER

Activity: Thanksgiving sharing from the garden

- NOVEMBER 1 POD-Wake Saturday Symposium, Heather Park CDC
- NOVEMBER 19 POD Wake Childcare OLE Leadership Series: Remaining Engaged with Nature During the Winter Months

## DECEMBER

Activity: Holiday celebrations in the OLE



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