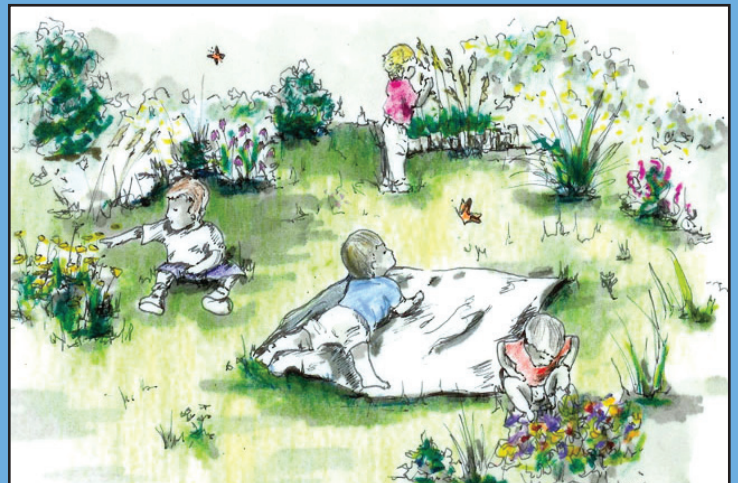


THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN MASTERPLAN

OBJECTIVES

- To create an interactive garden for preschoolers and adults alike.
- To create stimulating, friendly, and safe spaces throughout the garden.
- To promote the importance of nature in child development.
- To promote the NCBG mission through family-oriented activities.
- To foster partnerships with neighborhood residents, schools, and related agencies and institutions designated by NCBG.
- To gather information about user needs and expectations from all users of the NCBG community.
- To report on the feasibility of developing innovative child-centered botanical gardens, focusing on cost, required installation time, user satisfaction, play and learning value, staffing, sustainability, and replicability.



Drawings by Meghan Mick

CHILDREN'S GARDEN CHARACTERISTICS

- Natural Appearance
- Contrasting Topographies
- Educational
- Accessible For All Abilities
- Hands-on/interactive
- Unique Sense Of Place And Community
- Seasonal Interest
- Diverse Wildlife Habitat
- Relaxing Environment For All
- Safe
- Sturdy, Easy To Maintain
- Stimulates The Imagination
- Appeals To The Senses

*The North Carolina Botanical Garden
A Children's Garden*

A TRIP AROUND THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN

The Circle of Trees marks the entrance to the Children's Garden on the main pathway from the parking area. This central location provides cool shade during summer months and a main gathering point for small groups, families, and users of the trail system.

The Arbor welcomes visitors. Sculptural gates direct visitors to the Wooden Bridge and over a channel of flowing water. Pathways encourage visitors to safely explore a variety of intriguing spaces and attractive plants of the Children's Garden along the way. The Sundial, made from colorful local stones, reflects the perfect synchronicity of the natural world.

The existing Oak Tree, a celebrated landmark, is a beacon seen from the wooden bridge. Benches and flowering shrubs surround it and provide a comfortable, shaded space that doubles as an outdoor classroom and gathering place. The Sitting Area connects to the Hill and the Infant Garden.

The Hill provides children a summit to enjoy a panoramic view of the garden. Steppingstones provide a variety of ways up the hill and also act to prevent erosion. The Living Willow Tunnel, which curves along one side of the hill, offers peephole glimpses of the Sundial and Entry Bridge.

The Infant Garden is a self-contained area designed so that newborns to 2 year olds can enjoy nature freely, playfully, and safely.

The Aquatic Garden and Bog, located on either side of the Entry Bridge, are a habitat for North Carolina aquatic plants and related insect life. Frogs and dragonflies are the special inhabitants of this setting. Children's artworks express observations about the aquatic critters.



Adjacent to the Visitor Education Center is a Watering Station. Here, children can water plants using the water collected from the roof and stored in a cistern.

Visitors can examine different types of moss up close at the semicircular Moss Garden. This elevated garden occupies a shady area and is home to a variety of moss and shade-loving plants.

Children can venture into the "woods" to play with sticks and hide behind boulders to their delight at the Miniature Forest. Planted with low trees and native shrubs the Miniature Forest is a fairytale space reminiscent of works of children's literature.

Children can dig and build in the Dirt Play place. The space is enclosed by a circle of smooth rocks and modeled off of a prototype created in the Herb Garden.

Children can leave notes for fairies and read the notes of other children in a full-size mailbox at the entrance to the Fairy Garden. This "fairy-scaled" space is enclosed by a cluster of multi-stemmed shrubs. A small, multilevel structure is the "fairy house." A hollowed rock is the "fairy swimming pool."

At the Giant Nest, children pretend to be birds, learn about bird habitats, and have fun building nests from natural materials.

Adjacent to the Children's Garden, the Horticultural Therapy Garden invigorates visitors of all ages and abilities.



Drawings by Meghan Mick

The North Carolina Botanical Garden

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