

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY: DIXIE CUP GARDEN

CROP Hunger Walks help plant seeds of hope for families around the world. In places like Indonesia, this can mean literal seeds. As you sow your seeds and then harvest your “crop,” may you be reminded that the seeds you sow globally are helping others reap a bountiful harvest of change.

The Dixie Cup garden is a fantastic way to teach children and folks of all ages a simple way to start a garden. We’re going to focus on herbs (this exercise can also be done with vegetables, but they usually need to be transplanted into a ground-based garden to reach their full potential).



What you will need:

Seeds (we recommend basil, oregano, parsley or cilantro)
5 oz Dixie cups (enough for everyone to have one or two)
Potting Soil
A couple of refillable water bottles



Step 1: Planting

Fill the cups about halfway full of soil.

Let the kids poke their finger in the cup (they love to get dirty) to make a deep impression. Drop one to two seeds in and cover.

Gently add water to moisten the soil.

Label your cups, and don’t mix your seeds. (Basil and oregano should not be in the same cup!)



Step 2: After the Walk

Place the cups on a sunny windowsill, making sure they receive a lot of sunlight (4-6 hours each day if possible).

Make sure the soil remains nice and moist.

As the seeds begin to grow and leaves develop, it’s important the leaves don’t touch the window - the cold can shock them.



Step 3: Transplanting

Once the plants reach 3 to 4 inches tall, you will want to transplant them into 4- to 6-inch clay pots:

- Put the plants on small paper plates to catch extra water.
- Fill each of the pots about half way full with potting soil.
- Carefully remove the plant from the cup and place in the center of the pot. To best remove the seedling from the cup, point the cup downward at an angle. Tap the sides of the cup to help loosen the soil and catch the plant as it falls out.
- Fill the remainder of the pot with potting soil up to a half inch from the top of the pot.

**As soon as your herbs are mature, go ahead and harvest!
Just don't remove too much of the plant at once – no more than 1/3 of the leaves.**

Helpful Tips for your garden:

- #1** Moving your seedlings: You can store your seedlings on a tray or in a shoe box, which will allow you to move several seedlings around at once. If you do, be sure there is air circulation to prevent the growth of fungus.
- #2** Watering: Do not water seedlings daily. Instead, utilize a spoon to spread the water around the sprouting seedling every couple of days keeping the soil good and moist.
- #3** Moist Soil: You can wrap a piece of plastic wrap over the top of the cup. When the seedling pokes over the cup top you can use a baggie to cover the top.
- #4** Talking with your plants: You know you're intrigued! Talking to plants will help them by converting the released carbon dioxide that the plants convert will to food. Please note it is important to talk with the plants - don't play your Kenny G smooth jazz music on your stereo, which won't release any carbon dioxide!!

VEGGIES, EGGS AND A SIDE OF HOPE.

