

Summer fun starts outside

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Now that spring is here, we don't need activities to do inside, so this will be the last Kid's Corner until next September. Here are some ideas for things to do *outside* while the weather is warm!

- **Plant a garden:** You don't need a big space to plant a garden, you can even do it in a big pot. Plant some flowers so you have something pretty to look at, some vegetables so you have something to eat, and some herbs so you have something to smell. If you started scarlet runner beans in a cup last month, you can transplant them outside after May 15th. They have pretty flowers and have beans to eat!
- **Look at bugs:** Whenever you're outside, you're surrounded by insects you never see. Take a few minutes to look for some crawling in the grass, flying near flowers, and hiding under leaves. Watch and see what they do: are they pollinating flowers? Catching other insects? Eating plant leaves? Ask a grown-up to help you identify the bugs you find, and go to the library to learn more about them. Look for caterpillars and butterflies, they're really two forms of the same insect!
- **Go to the fair:** Master Gardeners will be at the fair again with fun activities just for kids. Did you catch ladybugs or shake the scarecrow's hand last year? There will be a new scarecrow this year in the Children's Pioneer Garden, and lots to learn about the first Minnesota pioneers. Be sure to bring a camera! The fair is also a great place to show off the vegetables and flowers from your garden, maybe you'll win a blue ribbon!
- **Read a book:** Take a book outside to read. When you're there, listen to all the sounds of nature. Can you hear the different birds singing? What does a dragonfly sound like? Do the trees make a sound? When you hear a bee buzzing be sure you're not sitting in the clover!
- **Pick a bouquet:** Take your garden inside by picking a bouquet of plants to put in a vase. Start with flowers and add interesting leaves and small branches. See if you can find leaves that *aren't* green.
- **Count:** Speaking of green, how many shades of green are there? When you start comparing all the green plants outside, you'll see they are all a little different. Some plants are very bright green, some are very dark, and some are almost gray. Even all the grass isn't the same green. Look around your neighborhood if you don't have many plants in your yard.

I'll be back with more inside plant activities and crafts next fall. Have a great summer!