

Congregation Kol Ami  
Early Childhood Program  
Garden and Outdoor Education  
Insiteful Journeys  
April 30, 2014

Garden as Outdoor Classroom

A. *Multidisciplinary Education*

Science

Art

Math

Nutrition/Cooking

Jewish Studies

B. *Skill Development*

Observation

Prediction

Problem-solving

Motor skills

Sensory

C. *Values*

Respect for environment

Appreciation of beauty of nature

Hard work

Patience

Collaboration

Curriculum

A. *Fall*

Introduction to Garden / Shehechianu

Fall Harvest

Sukkot

Bulbs

Seed study (Plant Lifecycle)

Composting

Olive Press – Hanukkah

Books

I Planted a Tree

Na'amah's Garden

Seeds

Maple Tree Tapping

Tu B'Shevat

Havdalah sachets: cinnamon and garden-grown lavender

Parsley seeds planted for Pesach

Create art project for garden installation

Planning for the Spring (seed selection, seed starting)

C. *Spring*

Preparing beds for planting

Planting

Plant what will grow quickly

Think variety – plant same vegetables, different colors or different types (eg, leaf and headed lettuce; red leaf and green leaf lettuce; yellow and orange carrots; red, white and purple radishes)

Plant vegetables/flowers that grow differently

(carrots/radishes below ground; cucumbers/squash on vines)

Harvest of Early Spring Vegetables

End-of-School Garden Dedication

D. *Summer*

Maintain

Harvest

Plant late summer/fall vegetables

Connections to Judaism

- A. Shabbat (Flowers picked and offered to clergy and synagogue staff on Fridays)
- B. Holidays (Sukkot, Tu B'Shevat, Pesach)
- C. Understanding that our blessings for food show our appreciation for the way our food grows (on trees, in the Earth, on vines)
- D. Jewish values respecting the Earth

## Special Considerations

- A. Emphasis on process
- B. Permit time for observation and questions
- C. Instill a feeling of ownership over the garden
  - a. Involve children in decision-making
  - b. Involve children in all aspects of gardening (dig, weed, plant, water, etc.)
  - c. Allow children to see tasks through to completion and enjoy fruits of their labor