



2nd February 2026

Simple gardening ideas to boost children's wellbeing at home

As Children's Mental Health Week (9th- 15th February) approaches, families are being encouraged to turn to gardening at home as a simple, screen-free way to boost children's mood, confidence and resilience. Gardening offers calm, creativity and a sense of achievement, and it doesn't require a big garden or specialist tools to make a real difference to young minds. British Garden Centres has put together a guide to some quick and easy gardening ideas that you can do at home as a family to boost both your health and wellbeing.

Why gardening?

Gardening offers children a gentle, hands-on way to unwind from screens and everyday worries, helping them feel calmer and more focused right away. By planting something themselves, they learn patience and gain a real sense of pride from seeing their own hard work pay off. Touching soil, smelling floral scent and fresh herbs and nurturing living plants boost happy feelings naturally.

Gardening ideas for children to try at home

Grow your own cress characters: Why not save clean yoghurt pots or eggshells and invite your children to draw funny faces on them using pens or paints? A simple activity to try at home, you can fill each pot with damp cotton wool or compost, sprinkle cress seeds on top and place them on a bright windowsill. Within a few days, children can "give their characters a haircut" with scissors and add the fresh cress to sandwiches or salads, building pride and curiosity about where food comes from.

Plant a smile: Ask your child to choose a flower or plant to grow specifically for someone they care about, like a grandparent, friend, teacher, sibling or neighbour. Let them decorate the pot, write the person's name on a label and help water and tend the plant together. When it is ready to be given as a gift, children experience the joy of kindness, as well as the satisfaction of seeing how their care has created something beautiful. You are literally planting a smile through the power of gardening.



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Create a calm corner indoors: If outdoor space is limited, families can design a small “calm corner” inside using houseplants on a shelf, bedside table or living room nook. Pots of lavender, mint, peace lilies or ferns can be grouped with a favourite cushion or blanket to make a soothing space. Children can help choose and arrange the plants, mist the leaves and water, and use the corner as a place to read, breathe deeply and take a break when emotions feel big.

Start a salad or herb pot: A simple jar or pot of herbs or salad leaves is both calming and teaches children where their food comes from. Families can fill containers with compost, sow seeds such as lettuce, chives, basil or mixed leaves, and keep them watered on a sunny windowsill. When it is time to harvest, children can snip the leaves themselves and add them to meals, building a sense of responsibility and encouraging them to try new, fresh foods.

Make a wildlife spot: Supporting wildlife can be a powerful way to help children feel connected to the wider world. Set up a shallow dish of water as a bird bath, leave a small log pile in a corner of the garden, or tuck a bug hotel into a flowerbed or balcony box. Children can help refill the water, look for visiting insects and birds, and keep a simple nature diary, which can prompt gentle conversations about change, seasons and caring for the planet.

Design a plant pot: Invite children to paint or colour a plant pot using colours and patterns that represent different feelings, like calm blues, joyful yellows, or bright patterns that express excitement. Together, choose a plant from your local garden centre that matches the mood, such as cheerful daisies or soothing green foliage.

Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: “Gardening gives children the chance to create, problem-solve and see real results from their efforts. When a child grows their own cress or tends to a plant, they're building resilience and self-belief in the most natural way possible. This Children's Mental Health Week, we're encouraging families to get their hands in the soil and discover just how powerful these simple moments can be for young minds.”

ENDS

WORD COUNT: 713

Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 75 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.



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BGC was launched in 1990 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 75 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 3,200 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres, Woodthorpe Leisure Park, and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

Facebook: British Garden Centres

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