News Notes —

Spring is off to a wild start in several areas of the Northwest—especially Montana with the endless amounts of snow!

Like me, I’m sure you are ready for Spring! I can’t wait to work in my yard (which is a never-ending project)! There is just something about the new growth on plants that brings a renewed energy to myself. It reminds me that God is there always nurturing me along. I might show small signs of growth but He never gives up on my progress.

How have your students grown and progressed this year? Are they showing signs of newness in abilities and overcoming challenges they face? Are these signs of growth celebrated?

I always found it refreshing to look for new ideas for my classroom in the Spring. Because I know that if I’m feeling the drabness of Winter and the same-old routine—I’m sure the children are too.

How about you? What new ideas or goals do you have for your classroom? Are you looking for fresh ideas to spark the interest of the children and bring the brightness of Spring in?

Perhaps it comes from an art project or changing up the bulletin board or by simply adding fresh color by creating a silk flower arrangement for a book shelf or counter. It’s little touches that can go a long way in creating a refreshing ray of Spring joy! Whatever it may be, I hope you find Spring joy.

May God bless you with a delightful Spring!

Golda
Join NAEYC April 16-20 for the 2018 Week of the Young Child as we celebrate our youngest learners!

- **Music Monday:** Sing, move, celebrate, and learn!
- **Tasty Tuesday:** Promote healthy food choices while cooking, eating, and having fun!
- **Work Together Wednesday:** Work together, problem solve together, learn together.
- **Artsy Thursday:** Think, build, create.
- **Family Friday:** Engage and honor families!

Share your WOYC activities several ways:

- **Email:** ECEC Coordinator; golda.pflugrad@nw.npuc.org
- **Facebook:** NPUC ECEC Directors & Teachers Facebook page
- **Social media:** #woyc18. Learn more at NAEYC.org/woyc
ECEC Breakouts:

- What would you like to have presented?
- **Suggest a Presenter:** It’s not too late to suggest a presenter or possible topic.

  To suggest a presenter go to: [www.2018teachersconvention.com](http://www.2018teachersconvention.com)

  Go to the upper right corner on the webpage and select the menu. Then go to the
  “Suggest a Presenter” and linked form are located on that page.

  All forms must be completed and submitted by April 15, 2018

When Visiting Chicago—here are some must see places:

- The Art Institute of Chicago
- Millennium Park
- Cloud Gate
- The Magnificent Mile
- Skydeck Chicago—Willis Tower
- Museums
- Lakefront Trail
- Wrigley Field
- Chicago Cultural Center
- Navy Pier
- Historic Sites
- 360 Observation Deck

Teachers Convention will be here before you know it—Chicago here we come 2018!

**Amazing Reggio-inspired carpets!**

I came across these carpets in the January/February 2018 issue of Exchange magazine. I love the variety and the calming color-schemes. Just in case you are considering purchasing a new carpet—your options could include Joy Carpets!

![Reggio-inspired carpets](image)

Joy Carpets & Co.

Visit [www.joycarpets.com](http://www.joycarpets.com) to see their complete line. Created with pride in the USA!
How To Grow A School Garden: A Complete Guide for Parents and Teachers
Arden Bucklin-Sporer and Rachel Kathleen Pringle

What is wonderful about a school garden is that every age is able to participate (yes, even Toddlers!). The learning that takes place in having a school garden—from prepping the space, planting the seeds, watering, and waiting for plants to grow, far out ways the potential negative thought in providing and cultivating a school garden. Children can help at each step in the process instilling in them the knowledge and skill they can carry with them for life. In their book, “How To Grow A School Garden”, Bucklin-Sporer and Pringle provide a list of benefits of school gardens:

Benefits of a School Garden:

♦ They enhance academic achievement.
♦ They promote healthy lifestyles.
♦ They instill an environmental stewardship ethic.
♦ They encourage community and social development.
♦ They instill a sense of place.

I believe that the benefits of having a school garden far outweigh the planning, time and energy involved. I encourage you to consider having a school garden even if it’s only a couple containers/pots, or planter boxes. A high level of learning will still be there. Perhaps you already have a school garden...I would love to hear about your process in creating and developing your gardening space and of course I would love to see pictures! You can always email me: golda.pflugrad@nw.npuc.org.

10 Preschool Books on Gardening—help your class get inspired to garden!

- The Little Gardener: How to Grow Your Own Food
- The Carrot Seed
- The Curious Garden
- Planting a Rainbow
- Up a Garden Down in the Forest
- My Garden
- Compost Stew: 30 1/2 Recipes for the Earth
- Tree Lady
- The Tale of Peter Rabbit
10 Easy Steps to Creating a Preschool Garden

Lemon Lime Adventures: Dayna

1. Build Children’s Background Knowledge:
   * Read nature books
   * Go on nature walks
   * Do see explorations
   * Sort flowers by color

2. Plan the Garden with the Children:
   * Use graphs and picture charts to chart ideas for the garden
   * Have children create lists of material needed
   * Encourage drawings and labels of what the children want the garden to look like

3. Involve the Parents and Community:
   * Have children make posters and letters asking for help
   * Create a sign-up for jobs parents/community member can help with
   * Ask for donations of plants, materials, tools to borrow, and even snacks

4. Prepare Your Materials Ahead of Time:
   * Borrow and collect as many tools as you can get
   * Kid sized gloves, shovels, rakes and watering cans
   * Weed and clean out your space ahead of time
   * Have snacks and water prepared for the children and volunteers

5. Take Children on a Field Trip to Purchase the Plants (if possible):
   * Let children pick their favorite colors
   * Gather a variety of seeds
   * Plan to plant a variety of sensory plants
   * Wagons are extremely helpful for gathering the materials

6. Involve the Children:
   * Allow the children to do the “jobs”
   * Have enough materials to keep everyone busy
   * Make sure you have “activities for those that aren’t interested in planting

7. Allow Time for Explorations:
   * Highlight when worms are found
   * Discuss the difference bugs
   * Let children explore the tools in open dirt

8. Remember Not All Children Will “Plant”:
   * Gardening can be great for sensory input
   * Some children might just enjoy digging
   * Deep holes can be great for sensory needs

9. Plan For The Future Care:
   * Make sure school staff is on board and willing to help on the weekends
   * Create a schedule/sign-up for community and parent volunteers to help water and weed
   * Plan extension lessons in the garden (journaling, measuring, science observations, etc)

10. Have Fun!
    * The Preschool Garden provides so much fun while learning at the same time. From outside reading time to science experiments...The possibilities are endless!