



ARTS 'N' CRAFTS

Create • Have Fun • Get Messy

Tiptoe Through the Tulips: Homemade Stepping Stones

For ages 2 and up.

Objectives

- To help create a sense of ownership in your family garden by adding artwork to the garden.
- To teach children about soil compaction.

Materials

- Cement or concrete
- Something to mix cement with and a large container to do it in, like a wheelbarrow
- Aluminum baking pans or pie tins in various sizes
- Crisco
- Natural objects to imbed in the cement, such as rocks or shells
- Smocks, disposable gloves, containers for measuring water, and paper towels.

Set up

Talk to the children about the plants' roots and the importance of loose soil around the plant. Talk about how their feet compact the soil when they walk in the garden. Let them make foot prints in loose soil. Then discuss how they might avoid compacting the soil, introducing the idea of stepping stones.

How to

1. Grease the pans with Crisco and paper towels to keep cement from sticking.
2. Mix the cement, according to instructions. Make sure to scrape the bottom of the wheelbarrow to incorporate ALL of the cement dust.
3. Choose a mold and pour the cement into the mold or molds, if you are making more than one.
4. Have the children push items firmly into the cement. Note: the items can't stick up too far or they may cause someone to trip when they walk on them.
5. If they want, they can also add their glove-covered hand or foot prints to their creations.
6. Allow to dry for two days. After the first day, remove the stepping stones from their molds and flip them over to dry the bottoms. (At this point children can write their names on their stones by scratching them on the bottom using a pencil.)

Here are some great websites for further exploration and fun:

www.kidsgardening.com

www.crayola.com

www.kaboose.com

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