

# Conducting an Action Project

## Ideas for Action Projects

You and your group can choose an Action Project in any of these areas. You can view actual examples of Action Projects that other groups have completed on the Garden Mosaics website ([www.gardenmosaics.org](http://www.gardenmosaics.org)).



### Garden Research

Conduct a planting experiment, internet research, soil measurements, or observations in the garden.

### Land Use

Create a green map of your neighborhood, or talk to elected officials about the value of community gardens.

### Garden Enhancement

Plant flowers, construct interpretive signs, or build a wheelchair-accessible raised bed.

### Art in the Garden

Make an art object with a gardening theme and present it to the gardeners at a gift-giving ceremony.

### Food Systems

Celebrate the garden harvest, research aspects of the local food system, or create a neighborhood food map.

### Nutrition and Health

Host a garden banquet using foods from the garden, or make a cookbook from gardeners' recipes.

### Garden Design

Design a new garden for your school or community center.

## Conducting an Action Project

### *Choose the Project*

1. At the start of your project, **let the youth know they will be doing an Action Project. They will use what they learn from their interviews and observations in the gardens and neighborhood to plan the project.**
2. **Have the youth read about other groups' Action Projects on the Garden Mosaics Action Projects online database.**

3. **Decide on the *general topic of the Action Project*.** You can make this decision before the youth program starts. For example, if you are running a summer science program, you can decide that the Action Project will focus on garden research.

We have included guidelines for Action Projects in the following areas:

- Art in the Garden
- Food Systems
- Garden Design
- Garden Enhancement
- Garden Research
- Land Use
- Nutrition and Health

4. **Help the youth decide on the *specific Action Project* based on the results from their *i-m-science investigations*.** If you will be conducting a Garden Research Action Project, during the *i-m-science investigations* the youth should ask the gardeners what information they might need about plants, insects, soils, and related areas. The youth can conduct research to answer the gardeners' questions and report back to the gardeners what they discovered. Or if you will be conducting an Art in the Garden Project, the youth should ask the gardeners about their interests in garden improvements and be on the look out for an area of the garden that could be "spruced up," such as a fence that would look nice with a mural painted on it. In addition to taking into account the gardeners' input and the youth's own observations, you will need to make sure the project is feasible given the time and resources available to your group, and the youth's ages and abilities.

Plan for the Project

5. **Have the youth complete the *Action Project Planning Form*.** Included in the plan should be the objectives, steps needed to reach each objective, background information needed, materials needed, the role of each member of the group, how they will involve gardeners and others (e.g., scientists, artists), and how they will present their project.

Collaborate with Others

6. **Discuss ideas for the Action Project with the gardeners to see if the plan addresses the gardeners' interests. The youth may revise their ideas based on these discussions.**

Understand the Science Related to your Project

7. **Use the Science Pages and other resources** to help the youth understand the concepts and skills necessary to conduct the project. Have the youth conduct the activities on the Science Pages and guide them in a discussion to make sure they understand the concepts.

Conduct the Project

8. **Have the youth conduct the Action Project, including taking photos** (See *Photo Guidelines*, Section VII).

Share your Results

9. **Have the youth present their results to gardeners and other community members.**
10. **Have the youth describe their Action Project using the online *Action Project Form* and submit their form and photos to the Garden Mosaics website.**

