

***“A sense of community, including sharing stories and traditions, may have been true in prehistoric gardening as it is in today’s community gardens. Community gardens bring neighbors together and provide fresh and nutritious food to people who might otherwise go hungry.”***

**– Diana**

Planting, bending, shoveling, digging, cutting, picking, hoeing, watering—these are gardening verbs that mean your body is on the move. There are many benefits to exercise. It clears your mind, makes you feel happy, creates a healthy heart, and makes you strong. And for all your effort, you get to eat good food too.

A garden takes empty space and turns it back to nature. Plants bring color to the landscape—red peppers, orange carrots, yellow corn, purple eggplant,

and green peas. Orange and black-spotted lady bugs, green preying mantises, yellow bees, black wasps, and song birds of different kinds move into the garden. Plant flowers that attract butterflies, and you have nature galore right in your own backyard, community, or school.

Nothing of value is won without hard work—football games, first prize in 4-H, straight As in school. Gardens take time, attention, and hard work, but when you sit down to a super fresh meal, there can be a great sense of satisfaction. To learn more about Diana Hershberger and the school gardens she helps create, visit [topekagarden.webs.com](http://topekagarden.webs.com).



Students dig in the Topeka community garden. Inset, Diana Hershberger and Wendy Pearson.