



HERBY CULTURAL PLANTING

Materials you need:

- Garden space, small individual pots for each child or some large pots.
- Potting Mix
- Watering cans/spray bottles.
- A variety of herb seedlings or native food plants that reflect a rich cultural diversity like basil, oregano, Vietnamese mint, lemongrass, native lemon myrtle, Davidson's Plum, Native Turmeric, Warrigal greens, native violets.
- Information about what you are planting so you can share with the children in an interactive way – check the info guides on the plant or do a google search for specifics. You might find [this page of factsheets](#) helpful or [this webpage](#) if looking for stockists to source something unique.
- Garden tools and gloves for children to access.

Setup for play:

- What type of cuisine is each herb associated with?
- Depending on the ages of the children show them how to add soil to pots or turn over and dig holes in the garden soil.
- As you work together name each plant then share some basic information about where they originated from and ask what type of foods we often associate with this herb or food plant. Keep it to 2-3 varieties and simple facts for the younger children, add greater variety and more facts for older children. Help them to make the connection between what they eat at home and the influence of different cultures and foods.

What are they learning with this activity?

As the children select, plant, look after and learn more about the herbs they are planting they are learning to:

- Explore, infer, predict and problem solve
- The skill of transference and representation
- Use hand/eye coordination skills and increase their spatial awareness
- Develop new vocabulary and language skills
- Recognise symbols and how things can represent other things
- Strengthen fine motor muscles, visual motor integration and control
- Use descriptive language to name different plants and herbs.
- Become aware of connections, similarities and differences between people.
- Explore the unique aspects of their identity through simple actions and play
- Respect and care for natural living things
- Persevere and experience the satisfaction of a job done well and a sense of achievement

Extending the play:

- Show children how to use cameras to take photos or video to record their plant or garden growth. Encourage children to create their own displays to share information about their gardens or pots. Use photos, drawings, facts about the plant, magazine pictures of foods and cuisines the herbs are used in.
- Find some simple recipes to try using the herbs or food items picked from the garden.
- Cut and package the herbs with the children then share with families to take home and use.
- Ask families if they have a favourite recipe they would like to share using one of the herbs you have planted or perhaps something specific to their own family culture you might not be aware of.