



July 2014 Youth Keep Busy and Help the Hungry

Youth are keeping busy and learning new skills while gardening at all three DYS facilities this summer. As vegetables are ready, the fruit of the youths' labor will be donated to hunger-relief programs.

Youth Specialist Charles Danzy coordinates gardening efforts for youth served by the mental health units at Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility (IRJCF). Youth are growing peppers, tomatoes, onion, okra, corn, squash, beans, and collard greens. Mr. Danzy explains, "A lot of them are really impressed seeing the seeds sprout up. It makes them feel useful. They are pleased to be able to do something with their hands that is a benefit." The vegetables will be donated to local non-profit organizations.

At Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (ChJCF), the Horticulture Career Technical Program, led by teacher Janay Thompson Davis, instructs students in plant identification, basic greenhouse operations, garden maintenance, and retail and wholesale marketing. ChJCF also has a garden club for older youth who have completed school. With help from staff (Darlene Schmidt, Victor Ashford, and Pamela Winkler), the garden club has expanded its beds this year and will sell produce at a local farmer's market in order to help fund the program and reward youth with a special dinner. Produce from ChJCF will also be donated to the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank.

Science Teacher Keith Smith, along with volunteers from the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, coordinates the Green Thumb Project at Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (CJCF). Green Thumb is growing cabbage, peppers, onions, and basil. Produce will be donated to families in need throughout southern Ohio.

The gardening efforts in our facilities provide meaningful activities, which is a key to the *Path to Safer Facilities*. Boredom and troublesome behavior are prevented by keeping youth engaged in healthy activities. Thank you to all of our staff and volunteers who make it possible for youth to give back through our gardening initiatives!



A youth helps prepare new garden beds at ChJCF



Youth at IRJCF work in the garden



A Youth at CJCF waters the seedlings in the greenhouse