

Now is a great time to get together as a family and promote the healthy values of gardening and good food. Not only can people connect with their kids in a new way, it provides exercise and awareness of healthy food choices that can be grown in the backyard.

“With nearly one third of children in the United States overweight or obese— a rate that has tripled in adolescents and more than doubled in younger children since 1980—there has never been a better time to start than this new growing season to promote a solution to this nationwide epidemic,” says Jeffrey Restuccio, author of *Get Fit Through Gardening* (Hatherleigh Press).

Restuccio is not simply promoting gardening as exercise, but a new way of gardening; one that has more in common with aerobics, the martial arts and circuit training than traditional gardening.

Restuccio believes his simple, inexpensive solution can have a significant impact on millions of children in the United States. “Exercising while growing your own fresh fruits and vegetables solves so many problems.”

Growing their own food will provide added incentive for the children to eat it. Not only will they be proud of their accomplishments, but they will also discover that fresh produce always tastes better and is more nutritious.

Gardening is a wonderful social activity. Grandparents, parents and children can all enjoy exercise, the outdoors and doing something meaningful.

Gardening actually saves money. It is a perfect activity for those with limited budgets.

Children are more open to new ideas. They are more flexible. And with proper education, they can develop lifelong habits that increase both their enjoyment and the caloric benefit of gardening.

