

GARDENING THE COMMUNITY



+URBAN FARMING + YOUTH DEVELOPMENT + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

www.gardeningthecommunity.org



GTC MISSION

Gardening the Community (GTC) is a youth based development and urban farming program focusing on sustainable agriculture, civic engagement, and food justice in Springfield. GTC provides youth with opportunities to grow food utilizing practices that benefit the environment and yield healthy and nutritious food. Additionally the youth in GTC develop an understanding of civic engagement and food justice by taking part in and creating city wide initiatives that address food equity in Springfield.

GTC CORE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Encourage Strong Youth/Adult Relationships

GTC believes sustained relationships with caring, knowledgeable adults are important for the healthy development of young people. Caring adults are critical for gaining a young person's trust and commitment to a program.

Build Youths' Responsibility and Leadership Skills

GTC initiatives acknowledge that youth are capable of actively contributing to their environment and should be involved in decision-making processes. The rationale for this is simple: when youth are involved in making decisions, they can become resources for creating the kinds of settings that promote positive development for themselves and others.

Create Opportunities that are Age/Stage Appropriate

GTC youth programs acknowledge the distinct needs of young people and create opportunities that are age and stage appropriate. For example, less mature youth may benefit more from in-program activities, while older youth may be ready to take on leadership responsibilities within the organization or the wider community

Build a Sense of Self and Group

GTC initiatives help young people develop a positive image of who they are, build their self confidence, increase their ability to think critically about the world around them, and give them a sense of their power to create positive community change. In order to do this, we work to increase young people's life skills, provide youth with opportunities to demonstrate their work and skills, engage them in self-reflection, and educate them about racism and other injustices that impact their lives and community. In addition to helping youth develop their personal identity, we provide opportunities for them to work cooperatively and creatively as a member of a team, coming together across many differences. Peer groups and peer support increase youth's attachment to the organization.

GTC CREW REQUIREMENTS AND TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Requirements: *Ages 10-21 / Interview with parent or guardian and staff*

Terms of Agreement:

In order to be successful with GTC, I agree to the following:

- I accept and understand the time commitment of the GTC program
- I understand GTC's mission and agree to participate fully in all program activities
- I will be motivated, open, honest, and respectful to other GTC participants, the community and guests to the garden
- I will arrive prepared and on time, and will let someone know if there is a problem
- I will handle all tools and plant life with respect
- I will act responsibly and appropriately in public
- I will be dressed appropriately for programming at the site, and off site
- I will keep all items not related to the program at home, unless approved by the staff

Youth may be asked to leave for the season for the following:

- If you are caught with any weapons, a parent/guardian will be alerted and you will be asked to resign your position for the season
- If you are physically or verbally abusive, or vandalize any of the gardens or neighbors' property in any way, shape or form, you will be asked to resign from the program for the season
- After repeated warnings from staff about not meeting the stated expectations of GTC, you may be asked to leave for the day. Your return will be on a probationary basis, and if violations of our requirements continue, staff will meet with you to determine if GTC is the right fit for you for this season. (Youth that are asked to resign can re-apply the following season, although the slot is not guaranteed and you will need to be interviewed again.)

Parent/Guardian Obligations:

- Parents agree to be present during specific program events (if possible) and support their child's participation in the program
- You understand that participation in GTC programs will involve the applicant walking or biking to garden and community sites and occasionally driving with GTC staff and interns. You give your permission for your child to participate in these activities.
- You are responsible for replacing anything stolen or intentionally destroyed by your child
- You agree that, under no circumstances, shall GTC and/or GTC's fiscal sponsor Third Sector New England, Inc., its employees, agents, officers, or directors be held liable for injuries that occur while youth is involved with GTC including injuries resulting from a misunderstanding of GTC rules or procedures or the misuse of tools

I _____ (youth) agree with all of the above, and if selected to participate in the GTC program, will abide by the expectations listed above.

I _____ (parent/guardian) have also read, understand and agree to the terms listed above and will STRONGLY encourage my child to abide by the guidelines.



GARDENING THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION FORM

All information will be kept confidential!

Youth Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Youth phone: _____

Youth email: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Current Age: _____

Medical Conditions (List all if any):

Current School: _____ Grade: _____

Guardian/Parent name: _____

Guardian/Parent phone: _____

Guardian/Parent Email: _____

Secondary contact information:

Name _____ Relation: _____

Phone number _____

Publicity Permission:

I give Gardening the Community permission to take photos and video of my child participating in the GTC program for use in brochures, flyers or other media to further the charitable purposes of Gardening the Community. Any such photos or video taken of my child by GTC staff will become the property of GTC.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____

GARDENING THE COMMUNITY STIPEND INFORMATION

(Revised 2012)

Gardening the Community is a full year youth development/civic engagement program, and not a job similar to Burger King or Six Flags. Each season we provide youth an opportunity to develop leadership and civic engagement skills, as well as opportunities to learn about urban farming, the food system and food justice. To recognize this leaning and to show appreciation for the time and effort you contribute while with GTC, we offer a modest stipend.

- *The stipends are made available monthly, usually within 2 weeks of the end of the month.*
- *Stipends are awarded under the following criteria:*
 - prior experience with GTC, age or grade, and funding availability*
- *The stipend will reflect your level of participation during the previous month (number of days present during the month).*
- *You will not qualify for the stipend for days during which you are not present, or for days where you are sent home due to breaking a program rule.*
- *No partial stipend will be allowed for 1/2 day participation*

Please sign AFTER reading the following with your parents:

1. *I understand the stipend policy stated above.*
2. *I understand that GTC is a program that provides a stipend to youth for program participation and that stipends are not an hourly wage, nor is this a job in the traditional sense of the word*
3. *I understand that my stipend check amount will depend on my age, attendance and compliance with program rules as well as funding availability*

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read and understand the above sheet describing GTC's stipend program.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPLICATION QUESTIONS

We want to know who you are! Think carefully about your answers to these questions. Write as completely as you can, and try to use all of the space provided. You may attach a separate sheet if you need more room.

What interests you about GTC? _____

What do you think will be your biggest challenge with engaging in the GTC Youth Development Program this season?

What leadership goals would you like to develop? _____
