Get the kids outside and in the garden with Charlie Albone's helpful tips. **Pictures: SUPPLIED**

Kids will benefit both physically and mentally from spending time outside in the sunshine.

Keep kids busy outside

By Elle Cecil

LANDSCAPING expert and Better Homes and Gardens star Charlie Albone is a father of two young kids. With the weather warming up, what better way is there to spend quality time with the kids than out in the garden? With the help of Richgro, you can get the kids to burn some energy and end up with a beautiful garden at the same time!

Plant seeds

Planting seeds with your children can encourage them to consider the life cycle of a plant. By putting time and effort into carefully cultivating the garden and seeds, it's likely that your child will be more invested in the outcome of the seeds growing. Fast growing seeds such as beans, sunflowers and basil will germinate quickly and provide excitement and stimulation for your child in the garden.

Make rock labels

For the seeds or plants you put in the garden with the kids, making rock labels is a good way to ensure that you don't lose track of what is growing where! First, get the kids to find a few medium to large sized rocks, and paint the names of each plant on the rocks. You can then place them near each variety to maintain a good record of your new additions!

Start a worm farm

You can teach your kids a bit about sustainability with a worm farm. Generally, kids like the idea of worms eating leftover food scraps and the concept of using worm waste as garden food. You can purchase starter kits from your local garden shop, or make your own using items from around the house. An old esky or polystyrene box would do nicely, and there are plenty of easy-to-follow tutorials online that show how you can prepare your worms' new home. Then, all you need to do is get some worms! These composting worms are different from regular earthworms, but are readily available to purchase at most garden centres.

Play 'nature watch'

Slowing down outdoors in nature can be beneficial for both the body and mind. Encourage your kids to spot as many creatures as they can - birds, caterpillars, bees, spiders and other bugs. See if they can name different types of plants, or lie down on the grass and see if you can spot shapes in the clouds.

Regardless of what you end up doing in the garden with the kids, everyone is sure to benefit from the fresh air and physical activity. Not only will you make some great memories together, but burning some energy outside will help them sleep better at night and give parents a break!

For more gardening ideas or product information, visit www.richgro.com.au.

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