

The Pennsylvania Farm to School Network Success Story: **GREEN TREES EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

Pike County, PA



Green Trees recognized that they needed to expand their school garden this past year. With the support of various grants and donations, the center will expand the garden into a Sensory Garden experience. The plan showcases a large 16-by-16-foot garden enclosure with 11 raised garden beds.

Green Trees Early Learning Center Inc. is a nonprofit center for early childhood education in Pike County, Pennsylvania. The location is an 1800s bed and breakfast that was renovated into an early learning center and is currently busy working on engaging children and the local community in a school garden.

Children of all ages engage in the school garden program to learn about pollinators, planting, healthy food items, and holistic elements of gardening. These elements include healthy self-esteem, confidence building, and coming together to be a part of a community. Originally created in 2018, the garden has developed over the years from a small garden bed to a garden play space for children. It is also the location for community and family outreach activities, including storytime, arts and crafts, and yoga in the garden.

“Green Trees Early Learning Center, Inc. has...history in gardening. Letters from the mid-1900s detail a small farm and tomato garden where today, children at Green Trees plant various fruits and vegetables.”

– **Cera Alber, director**





Equipment will be purchased to help support the needs of individuals with diverse abilities to engage in gardening activities, which includes adaptive seating and tools. Musical elements will enthruse the senses of sound, adding an auditory journey for all who enter. The Sensory Garden will debut during Farm to School Month in October 2023, just in time to prepare for activities in the spring.



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