

Activity: Plant Care Goal: Psychological Populations: All

TH Activity Plan – Watering Medium Pots

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Photo by D. Relf & Southern Living.com



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Participants will practice plant care watering medium pots 3-6” in diameter.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS:

Cognitive/Intellectual: Master watering skills & develop skills for plant care

Physical: Handle pots & watering tools using hand dexterity

Psychological/Emotional: Managing emotions, expressing emotions in positive & acceptable ways

Sensory: Expand tolerance & willingness to engage in sensory experiences

Social: Demonstrate sense of responsibility

Materials

medium pots with plants that need watering
plastic saucers (flat bottom and large enough to hold the pots)
small, lightweight watering cans, squeeze bottles, or watering bulbs, water meter
water
watering cans and cups
wipes

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Pre-session prep:** Gather materials & set up work area.
2. Facilitator begins session by demonstrate & discuss techniques for watering containers sized 3-6”, described here as medium pots.
3. Participants to practice techniques for watering containers like watering from the top down, watering from the bottom up (like a wick), using a water bulb & hydrogel water storing crystals.
4. Discuss potting medium used in medium/small containers & cell packs, some of which do not hold water for long... with a need to water more frequently.
5. Practice watering appropriately using water meters, sense of touch, visual cues, climate & weather inputs, and using facility watering schedule if appropriate.
6. Clean-up work area.
7. Create a watering schedule if part of the activity is to encourage participants’ sense of responsibility through regular plant care.

APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS: This activity is appropriate for most populations. For younger children, people with developmental delays, dementia or other cognitive challenges, watering can be an inclusive activity, one with sensory stimulation and enjoyable time in the garden with other people. Delivered in a group setting, this horticultural task can prioritize social goals like expressing emotions appropriately (when having to wait a turn to use watering equipment, getting wet with cold water), working in a group & interacting with leader/therapist. For individuals with sensory processing challenges, the activity can try to expand tolerance to sensory stimuli, especially tactile inputs.

Adaptive gardening techniques of hand-on-hand watering, and use of lighter smaller watering can ensure all participants are able to undertake the watering task. This activity may be an important lesson within vocational horticulture programs, providing hands-on application of theory.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Sun protection is recommended for outdoor sessions. Potable water should be used.

NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Plants that thrive in containers include pansy, sedum, Angelonia, impatiens, vinca, caladium, ivy, geraniums, heuchera & lantana among others. Check their tolerance for heat, cold, sun and water requirements. Smaller plants will need more tending and more frequent watering. Hotter climates will dictate frequency of watering as well.

Related therapeutic horticulture sessions can include watering & water requirements for cell packs, large pots, raised beds, lawns & vegetable gardens. Discuss types of potting medium used for different purposes and how each holds water differently.

REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:

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petunia



begonia



zinnia

