

## TMC ON THE MOVE: SPRING CLEANING

Spring has returned and that means it is the ideal time to do a walk-around and walk-through of your trailer. Your TMC Lab may have been sitting in heavy weather or braving the road with you through a variety of winter weather. This is a great time to perform thorough checks to make sure you are road safe and program ready as you start traveling more often. Check:

- ✓ Tire pressure and assess for wear
- ✓ For loose wires in or around the trailer
- ✓ Make sure all electric connections are working properly (brakes, lights, etc.)
- ✓ The exterior for signs of rust or damage
- ✓ Any items that did not store well over the winter and for others that need replacement

Any discoveries should be addressed immediately. Make sure you also schedule in a day to organize and review inventory in the trailer. All those ideas you keep thinking you want to add to the trailer, maybe this is the time to make the room and get those supplies ordered and stored! Occasionally, it is good to “clean house” and what better time than Spring Cleaning!

~ Claire Sponseller, University of Idaho  
Extension 4-H



## Spotlight on You: Madison OST

The Think, Make, Create Trailer was a great highlight for the kids and staff of The Madison Community Center OST program in Madison, SD.

The school-age kids were able to engage in a variety of STEAM activities throughout the trailer's one month visit. All activities that a staff member chose to complete were new to each individual child. This brought a “unique aspect” because the kids were able to explore and use materials they had never seen or worked with before. An important part to recognize is that inside the trailer all the supplies and directions are provided. This makes completing the activities a lot easier and gives more time for the kids to have great discussion as well. Both the staff and kids enjoyed the variety of activities that were provided in the trailer.

The highlighted activity, within our program, was the electronic circuits. While completing the activity, kids were able to apply their knowledge of science and technology to accomplish their goal of making a light shine bright to complete their circuit. Most of the kids, in our program, have never seen a trailer like this before, so they loved all the science and technology activities. Another version of circuits the kids worked with was the modeling clay circuits, or Squishy Circuits. Both circuit activities specifically worked on expanding teamwork and communication skills while working with a partner.

Having access to the TMC Trailer has been great! All the staff and kids have benefitted from the Think, Make Create Trailer in more ways than one.

~ Kaylee Winrow, Youth Service Coordinator  
Madison Community Center OST

# Give It A Try: Garden Art

As youth begin discovering where plants grow and what they need to grow, we can talk about what nutrients these plants provide our bodies. A great way to engage youth in learning about these nutrients is to have them design and decorate garden art with the nutrients and benefits of each fruit or vegetable they are growing. This can be added to the outside of potted plants, painted onto rocks for gardens, or on wooden stakes (such as paint stirrers) to place next to each plant in the garden.

*Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension*



## Put it Into Practice: Gardening

When learning about what plants need to grow, we need to consider the location where they will be growing. If you are working on starting a school or community garden, or starting plants in pots you can have youth evaluate different locations. Youth will evaluate based on:

- Sunlight availability
- Proximity to water source
- Good well-drained soil
- Proximity to garden tool storage
- Overall accessibility.

Check out this evaluation tool from Junior Master Gardener program: [http://jmgkids.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Week4\\_Worksheet\\_Home-Sweet-Home.pdf](http://jmgkids.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Week4_Worksheet_Home-Sweet-Home.pdf). For more information on Jr Master Gardener, contact your local program coordinator list on [jmgkids.com](http://jmgkids.com) under the "Contact" menu.

*~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension*

### Tips and Tricks: Garden Spacing

Have you ever wondered how much room certain plants need to grow? Many plants need different amounts of space to grow. For example, a carrot needs about 1 square inch, where as a broccoli needs about one square foot. Creating a paper towel garden is a great way to learn how much space plants need and to plan out your garden space. And the best part? Paper towels will degrade in the soil so you don't have to worry about planting different seeds! Check out this Jr Master Gardener lesson on paper towel gardening - [https://jmgkids.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Paper\\_Towel\\_Gardening\\_p165-67\\_and\\_fall\\_append.pdf](https://jmgkids.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Paper_Towel_Gardening_p165-67_and_fall_append.pdf). For more information on Jr Master Gardener, contact your local program coordinator list on [jmgkids.com](http://jmgkids.com) under the "Contact" menu.

*~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension*

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