

For more information on starting a Civic Ecology project or Defiant Garden in your area contact Caitlin Dreisbach at Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County. 315-788-8450 x 320 or by email: cnd29@cornell.edu.

Steps to get started....

- ⊕ **Locate families, youth, and community volunteers** interested in outdoor recreation supporting deployed soldiers.
- ⊕ **Find a location** in the community that will be accessible to the interested youth and volunteers.

These could be at:

Schools

Parks

VFW/Legion Posts

Armories

- ⊕ **Check out our information page at:**

<http://civicecology.org>
<http://defiantgardens.com/>

Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

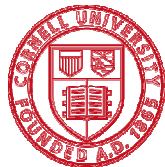
About Defiant Gardens:

Defiant Gardens is a program of the Military Families Project—a partnership between Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County and Cornell University Department of Natural Resources.

The program is designed for groups of youth aged 9-15 to work together with adult volunteers as a 4-H club. The youth will plan, plant, and manage the garden, but all will participate. Activities will be offered to communicate with deployed military family members.

Giving youth a decision-making role in the garden will empower youth and create a sense of ownership and belonging in the garden. This is also accomplished by regular meetings, participating in learning activities, and managing the weekly care of the garden.

Vegetable and herb gardens are the main focus of the Defiant Garden program because they bring the benefits of sharing with others, practical life skills, and better nutrition.



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County



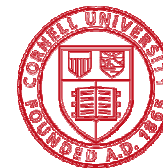
4-H
Youth Development

Civic Ecology

Connecting Families and Communities



Bringing together youth and families to foster greater connections to nature through environmental stewardship and recreation.



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County



4-H
Youth Development

What's the need?

The nature of deployments is changing. Our soldiers are leaving for longer and more frequent deployments. More than 26,000 servicemen and women, and thousands more family members across New York State suffer stress from these changes. These families need support. Studies suggest that activities as simple as gardening with neighbors help adults manage stress and build lasting relationships. Children who spend time in nature are happier and healthier.

Types of Civic Ecology Practices

- ⊗ Sport fishing to foster rehabilitation for veterans.
- ⊗ Stream restoration while doing outdoor activities near water.
- ⊗ Creating a garden to support troops while overseas.
- ⊗ Hiking while recording and documenting trail status and performing routine trail maintenance.
- ⊗ Hunting to reduce deer populations to restore native flora.



Civic Ecology Education

Civic Ecology Education is a new educational approach that partners youth together with adults to improve their local ecosystem in some way. The partnerships formed among youth and adults can help create an environment of belonging and cause youth

to be more involved in their communities.

Civic Ecology programs help foster trust, civic and political participation, giving and volunteering, as well as involvement.

Community gardening is one example of a nature-

based, Civic Ecology activity that engages military families with their communities, and can help military families better handle the stress of overseas deployments.



Why Should I Participate?

Getting involved in Civic Ecology practices can not only enhance your family relationships and sense of community, but also encourage environmental and outdoor activity. Military families can particularly benefit from these types of outdoor recreation to build a sense of place and community togetherness during potentially difficult and hard times. By supporting communities through environmental awareness, Civic Ecology can improve quality of life as well as enhance understanding of local social-ecological systems.

