



Minnesota Landscape
ARBORETUM



Univ. of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
Over 1200 acres - 330,000 visitors

Display Gardens

Roses, Herbs, Annuals,
Perennials, Hostas, Lilies,
Peonies, Azaleas, Weeds



Demonstrations & Model Landscapes

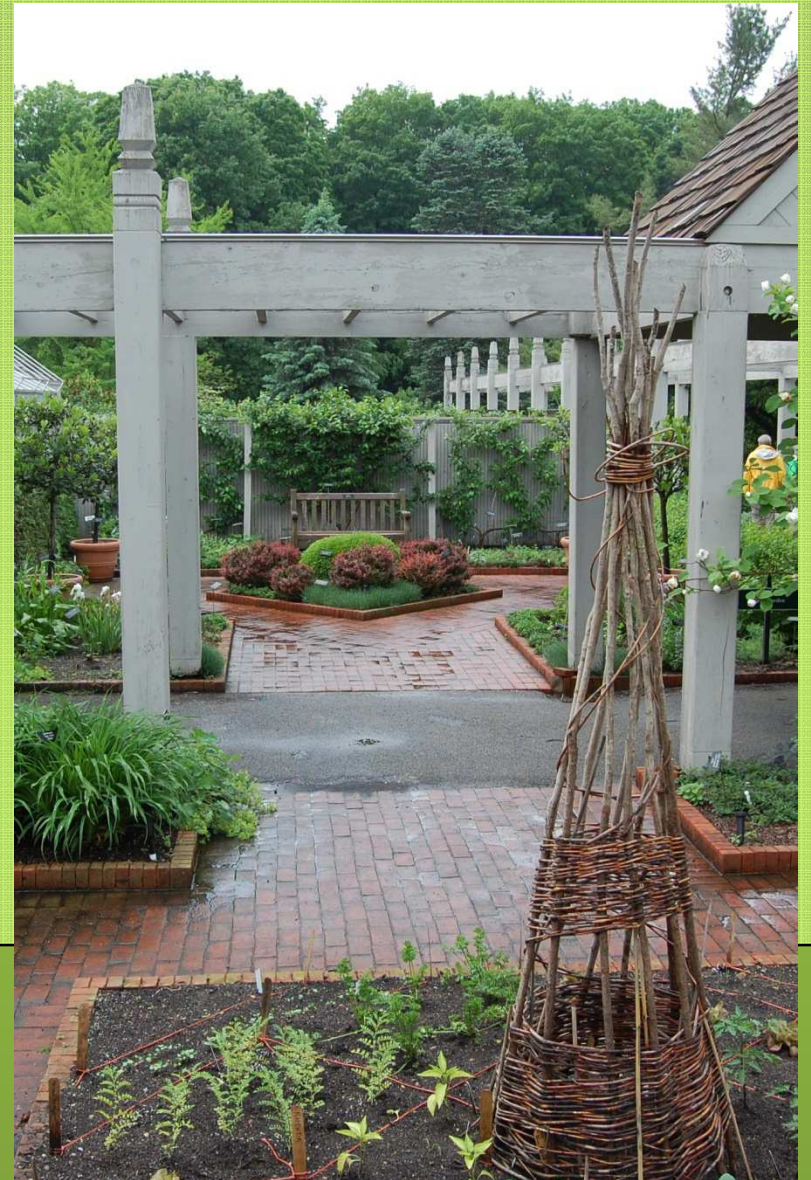
Home Demo Gardens

Rainwater Runoff Model

Parking Lot Rain Gardens

Shrub Walk

Shade Tree Exhibit



Plant Collections

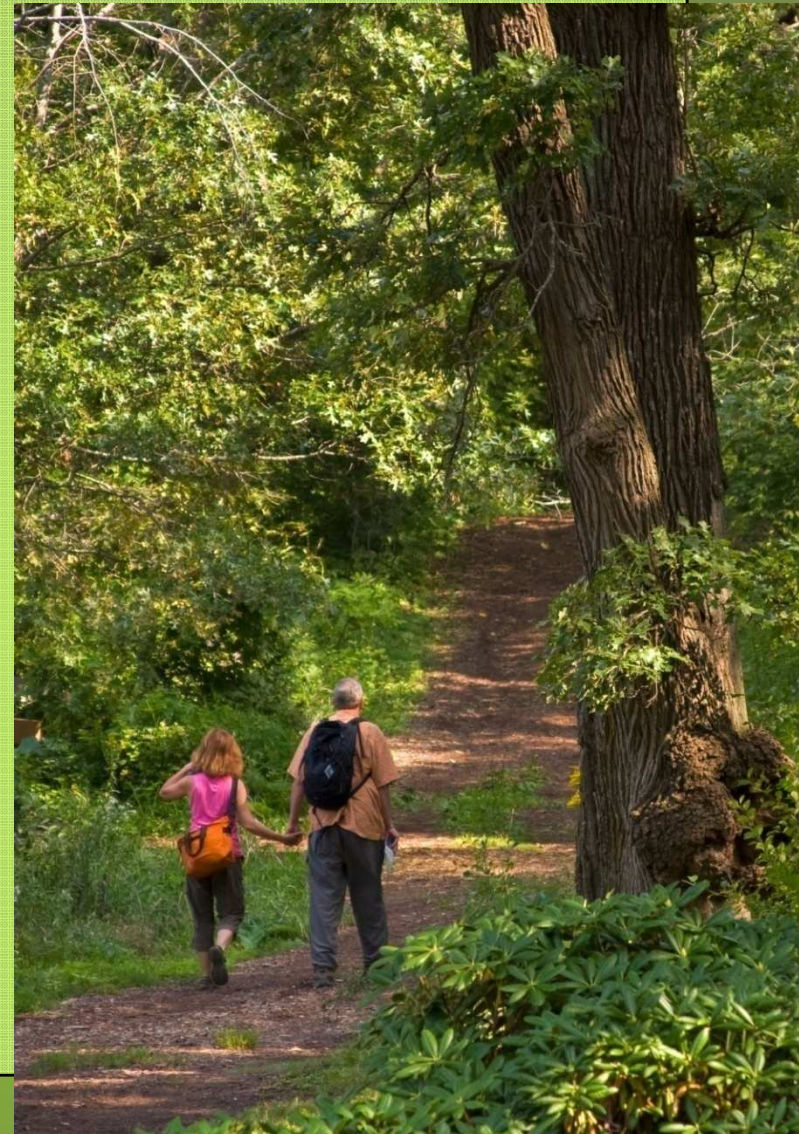
Trees, Shrubs, Herbaceous Plants



Native Plant Communities



**Big Woods (maple, oak)
Bog, marsh, sedge meadow
Restored prairie
2 small lakes**



“Where’s the place for me to play?”



Under The Oak

Nature play - All ages



Will kids know what to do?

Will they start doing this everywhere?

**Will they wear it out,
can we make it “visitor-proof”?**

Keep scale: “Kid-size”



Use safe spacing (under 3" or over 9")



Manageable “loose parts”

Sticks, cones, burlaps, tree
“cookies”



Maintenance: Think long-term



Offer Play-Starts (not “Done’s”)







Movement / Body Play



Object Play



Social Play



Imaginative & Integrative Play







We are at a turning point. Until recently taken for granted, opportunities for children to explore the natural world must now be intentionally created, through changes to the built environment of their daily lives.

*Robin Moore, Dipl. Arch., MCP
Director, Natural Learning Initiative
North Carolina State University*



National Guidelines

Nature Play & Learning Places

Creating and managing places where children engage with nature

ROBIN C. MOORE



Green Play Yard

Ideas for Childcares, Preschools & Backyards

PLANTS in a Play Yard?

Add plants around fixed play equipment and activity areas to open up new possibilities. Natural diversity sparks discovery. Shade adds comfort. With more to see and do, young ones and their adults spend more time outdoors. The result? Happier, healthier (and sometimes dirtier) kids.

Different Ages & Stages

Three zones show natural play features and plantings in tune with the changing interests and needs of Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers.



Want more details?

Find design principles and plant tips throughout the Green Play Yard and at www.arboretum.umn.edu/greenplayyard.aspx.

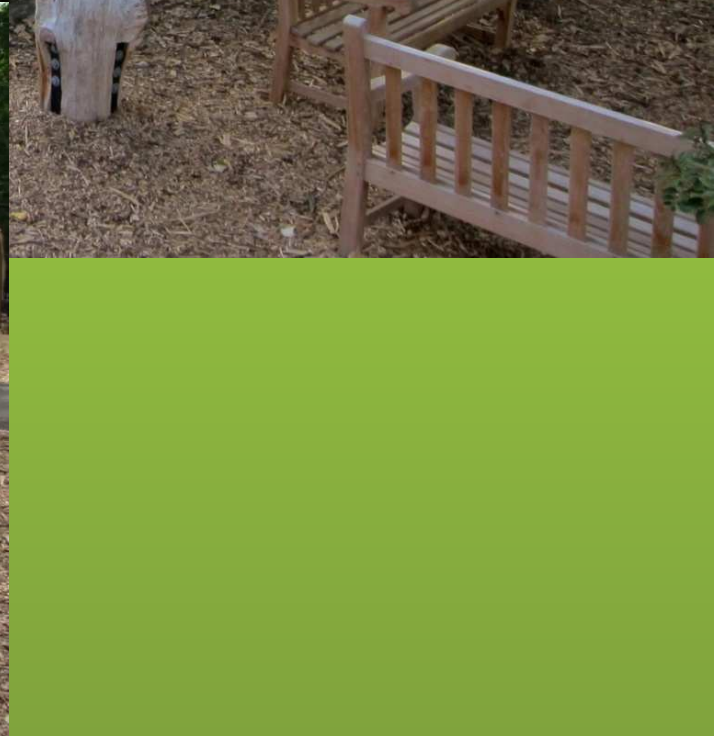




PRE-SCHOOL (3-5 years)



**Wheeled Play Track
Crabapple Corner & Bird Arbor
Stage & Playhouse
Rottery for Decomposers
Sand & Water Play
Program Shelter
Climb-on Log & Log Play
Fort-start**







PLANTS set the Stage.

Use plantings to transform an open area to provide more choices. Small trees and tall shrubs can create cozy nooks for quiet play, out of the active hubbub.

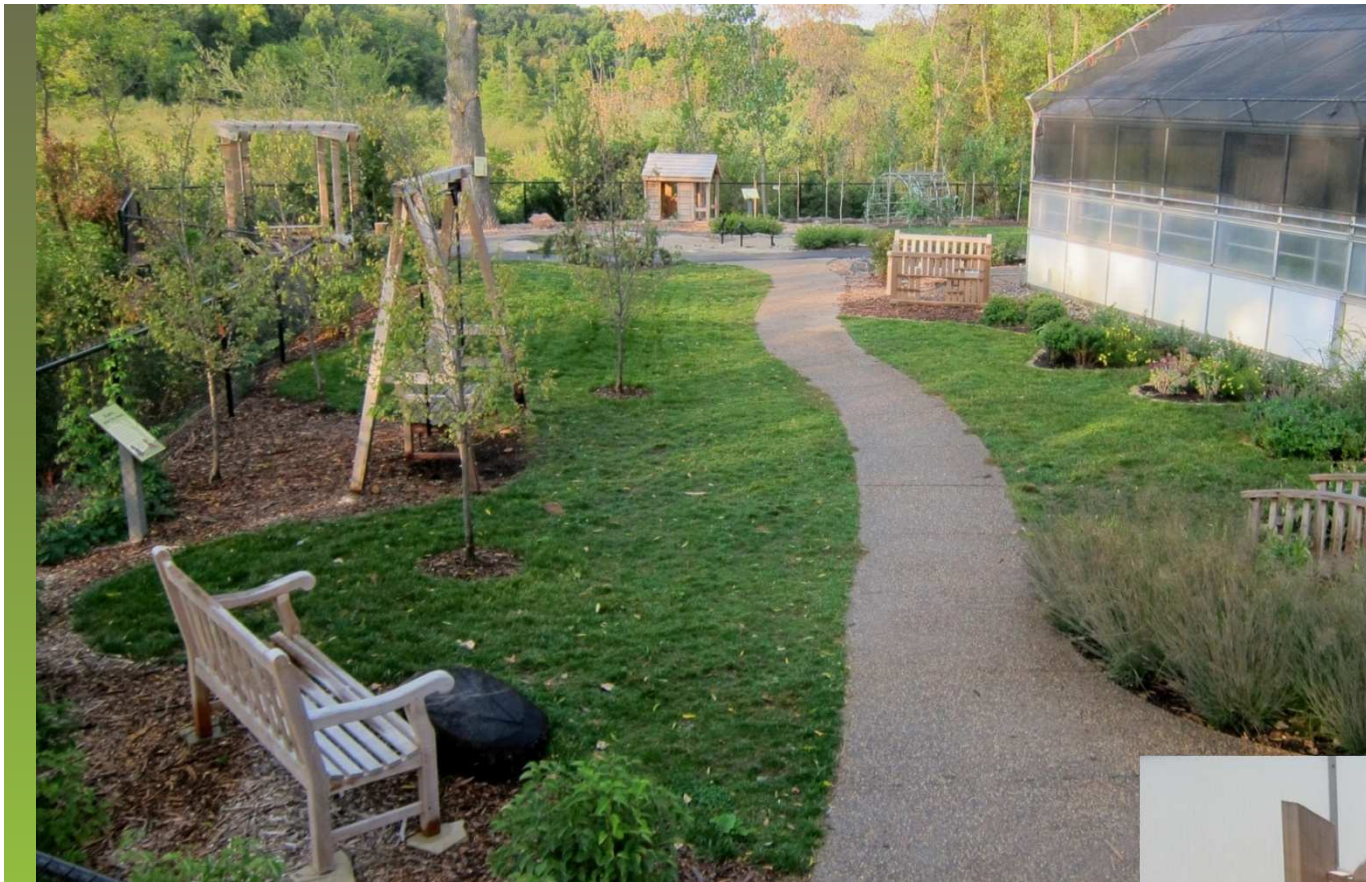
TIP: Varieties with upright branches will let leaders see where children are.



INFANTS (up to 16 months)



Crawl-along Garden
Shady Swing
Pull-up Stumps
Peek-a-boo Wall
Bridge with Grasses
Rolling Hill



PLANTS have sense-appeal.

A "crawl-along" garden rewards a baby's journey with plants surprising yet safe. Furry leaves, feathery tops and bright petals wake up the senses, with something intriguing around each bend.

TIP: Help babies learn new words; talk about what they are seeing and feeling.



TODDLERS (16 - 33 months)



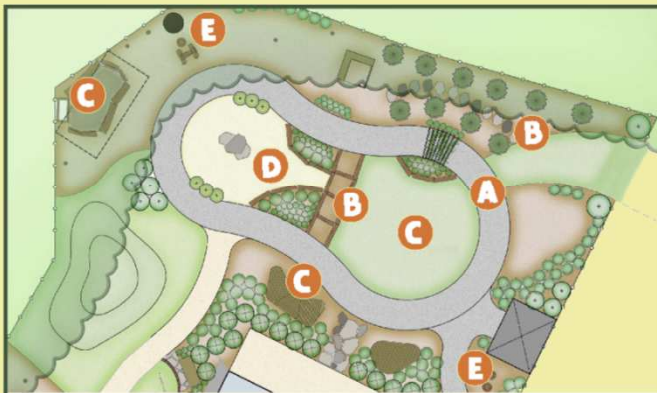
**Wheeled Play Track
Vine Tunnel
Shade Arbor
Popple Woods Path
Sand Play
Toddler Playhouse
Tiered Multi-use Seating**





DESIGN TIPS for Play Yards

To design an outdoor area, choose elements with play value and learning potential. Surround them with hardy, diverse, non-toxic plants that create an intriguing, comfortable place for children and leaders to linger.



The diagram shows how elements are arranged in the Toddler Area here. Find more ideas in the photo gallery at right.

A Main Path

A primary path organizes the space. It lets children navigate easily, and adults move quickly if needed. Wide curves offer a wheeled play journey.

B Side Paths

Narrow "shortcuts" and adventure trails with varied surfaces encourage exploring and movement.

C Gathering Places

A variety of spaces for large and small groups provide active and quiet settings for games, storytelling, art, snacks, etc.

D Sand and/or Water Play

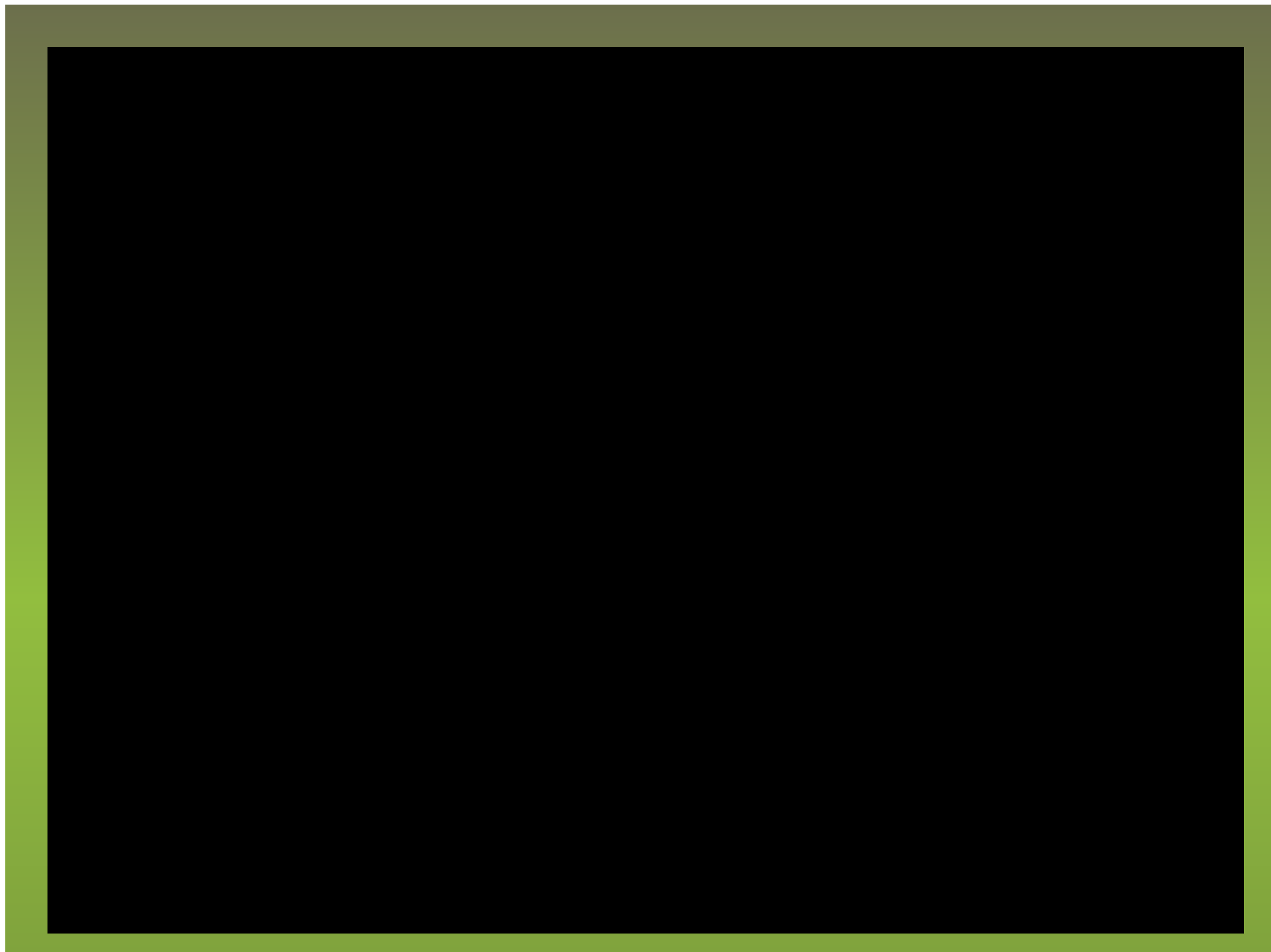
These creative and social play settings have endless appeal. For safety, contain sand with rocks, timbers or plants.

E Affordable Additions

Simple ideas can increase an area's versatility and accommodate the needs of its users.







Thank You!

