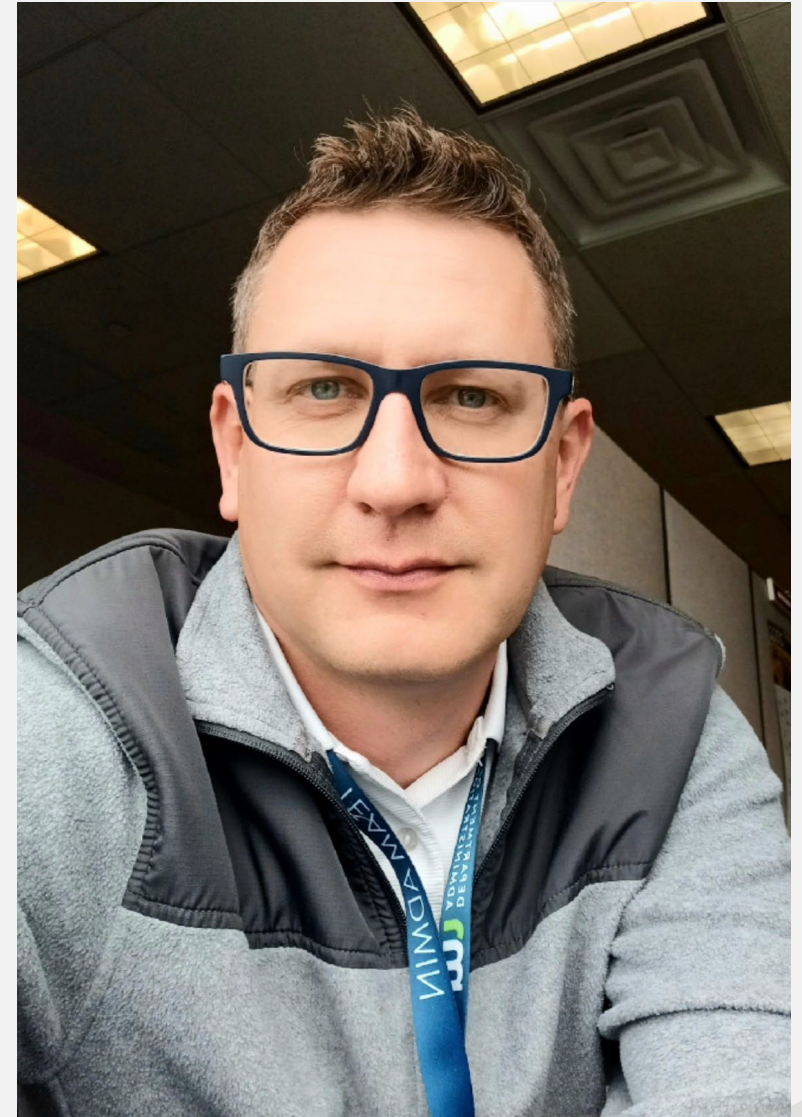


# Jamis Wehrenberg

## Background

- A Bachelor's degree in Environmental Design, A Master's degree in Landscape Architecture, and an Associate's degree in Information Technology (IT) Management with 7 years working in the IT field and assistive technology.
- Over 20+ years of direct experience managing and working with adults in licensed Corporate Foster Care/Day Program settings.



# What is a Sensory Garden?

- It's about stimulating the 5 senses: Sight, Smell, Sound, Touch, and Taste
- Encourages you to become more aware of your surroundings and be meaningful in them.
- Lets you escape the stress of everyday life to immerse yourself in nature and heal.
- Similar to Healing Gardens- enhance your sense of well-being, reduce stress, and calm your mind.

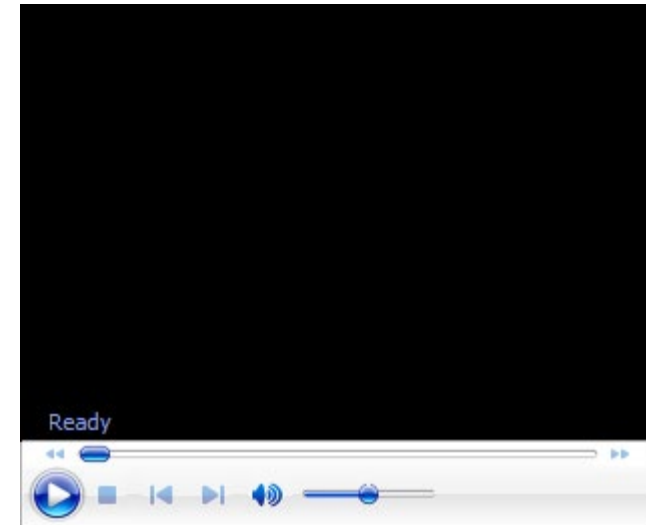






# The Sensory Experience

This is a short audio clip I recorded using [Freesound](#). It represents what the sped-up garden experience might feel like to someone who is blind. So, close your eyes and listen to the sounds of the garden. There is no one talking in this audio clip. There are only sounds of birds singing, feet walking on gravel, water babbling, frogs croaking, and someone faintly humming the song “Mockingbird.”



# Designing for Sight

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Using Colors, Shapes, Sizes, and Textures for the Eye:

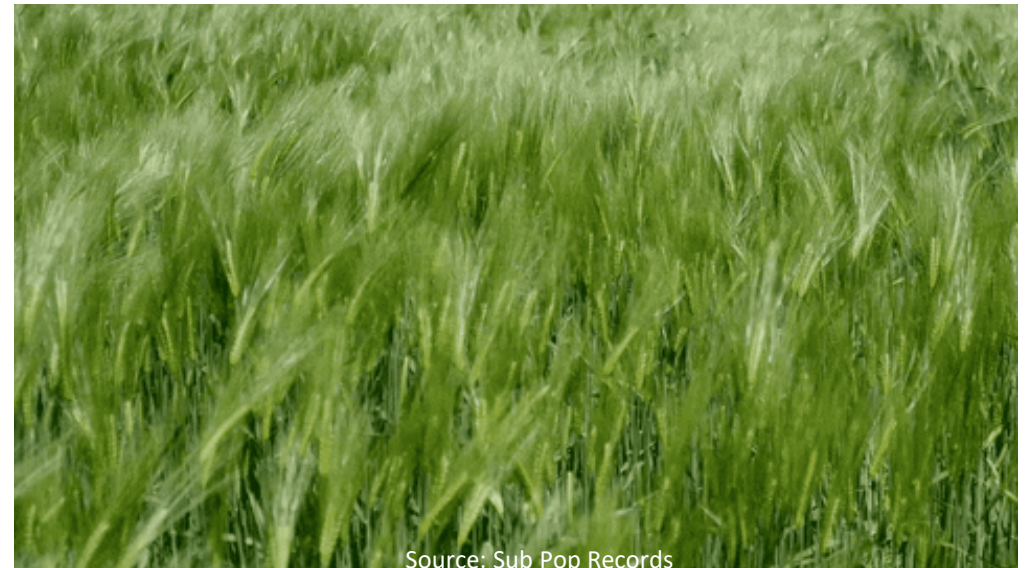
- Color: Bright, Bold colors or subtle gradients of the same color (i.e., Monochromatic)
- Highlight vistas of the surrounding topography
- Water features, sculptures, and shiny objects draw your attention





# Planting for Sight

- Put in plants with varied heights and textures to create flow and visual interest
- Put in plants that attract wildlife, such as birds, bees, butterflies, etc.
- Put in plants that add visual movement, such as ornamental grasses swaying in the wind
- Consider putting in water features
- Add sculptures and/or shiny objects to capture the attention





# Designing for Smell

Certain aromas can create emotional connections:

- Fresh Cut Grass, Fresh Apple Pie, Fresh Cut Christmas Tree, a bouquet of red roses
- Fragrant roses, lilacs, and apple blossoms used in many perfume scents
- Be intentional with smell and choose plants that provide scent throughout the entire season.





# Planting for Smell

- Put in aromatic Plants – such as roses, Lavender, Lemongrass, Gardenia, Jasmine, Freesia, Hyacinth, Lilac, Apple blossom
- Fragrant Herbs – Rosemary, Mint, Oregano, Chives, Sage, etc.
- Fragrant Mulch – Cedar, pine, cocoa bean, etc.





# Designing for Sound

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Using landscape features that create sound:

- Water Trickling
- Crunchy gravel Paths
- Wind chimes





# Planting for Sound

Plants that attract wildlife, such as:

- Berries for songbirds
- Water for frogs
- Nectar-rich flowers for Bumblebees

Using plants that capture the sound of wind:

- Grasses that swoosh.
- Leaves that quake (i.e., Quaking Aspen)
- Seed pods that rattle (i.e., False Indigo, AKA “Rattle Bush”)



Source: <https://twistedsifter.com/april-baths-8/>



Source: <https://rivermusic.tumblr.com/post/129076429158/applause-quaking-aspen-i-could->



# Designing and Planting for Touch

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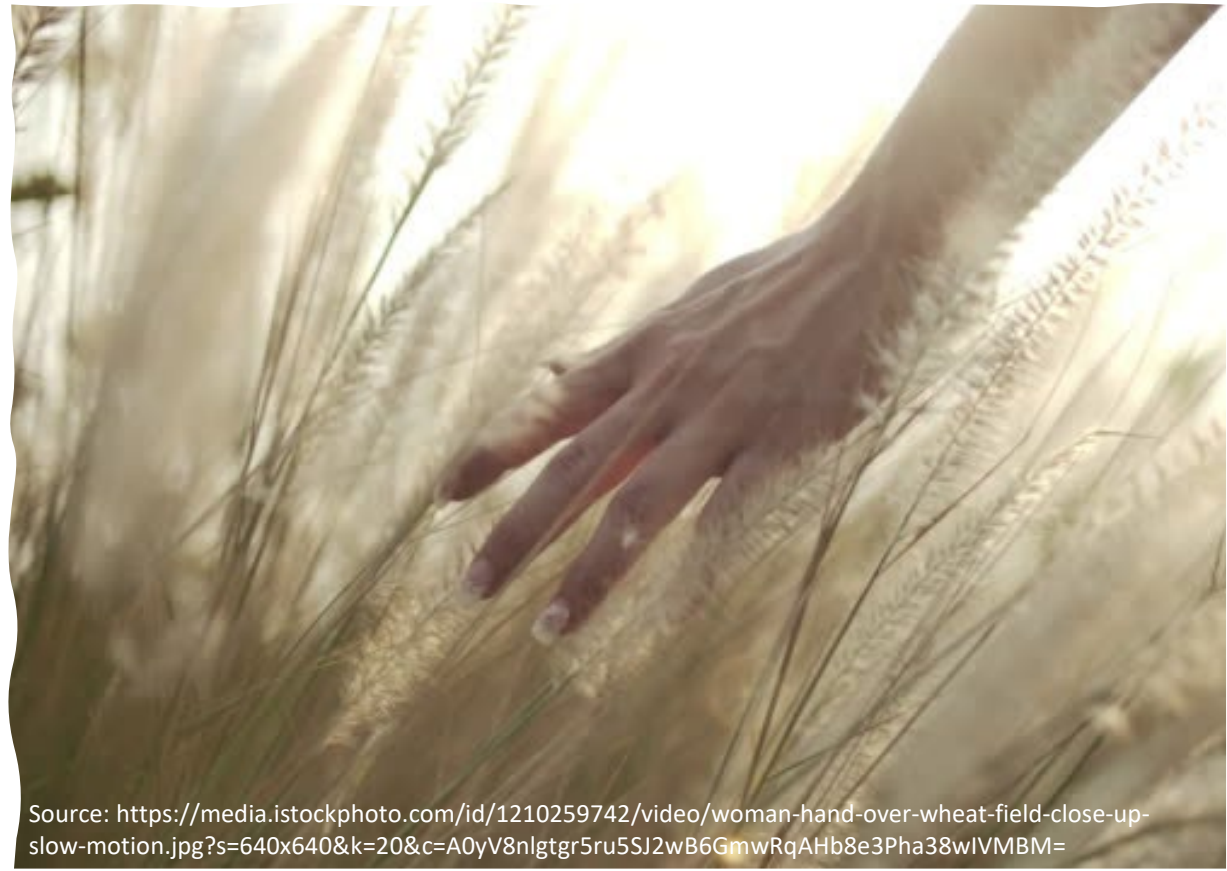


Use contrasting elements to create interest

- Soft, smooth, rough, spikey, etc.
- Use covered sitting areas and plants that shade to help create comfortable temperatures. Avoid dark colors with the sun.

Use Plants that invite touch

- Soft velvety leaves like Lamb's Ear
- Spongy and damp carpet of moss
- Light and feathery ornamental grasses



Source: <https://media.istockphoto.com/id/1210259742/video/woman-hand-over-wheat-field-close-up-slow-motion.jpg?s=640x640&k=20&c=A0yV8nltgr5ru5SJ2wB6GmwRqAHb8e3Pha38wIVMBM=>



# Designing and Planting for Taste

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Designing gardens with edible plants:

- Keep on top of aggressively spreading berry bushes like Raspberries.
- Keep on top of pests who also love edible plants

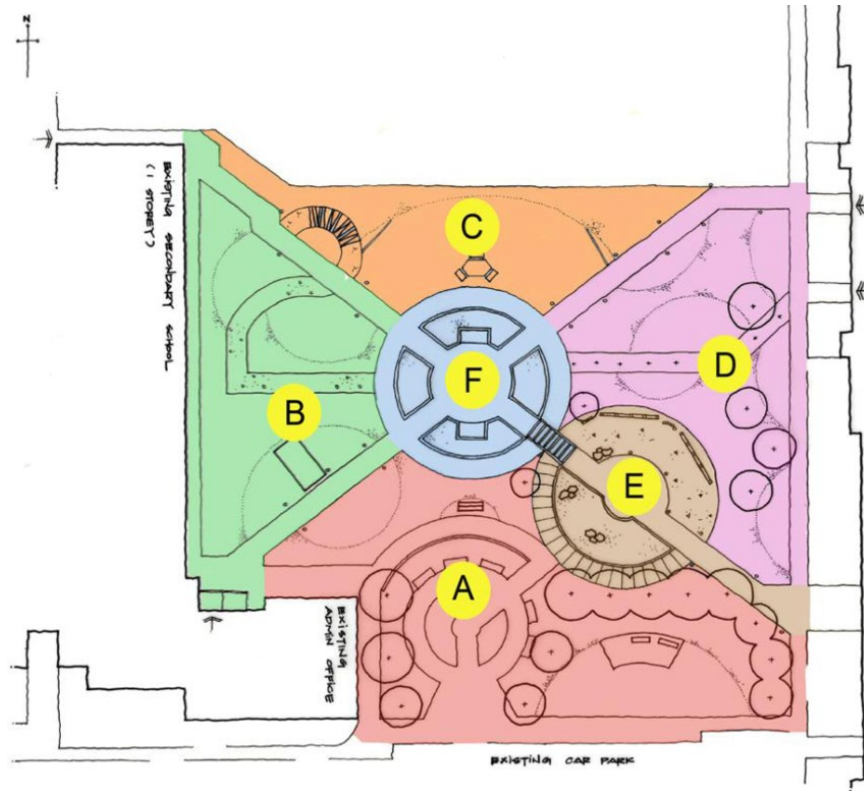
Use Plants that invite taste:

- Berries such as raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries
- Herbs such as rosemary, mint, basil, lemongrass, and many more
- Edible flowers such as Nasturtium, Pansy, Arugula



# Developing the Sensory Garden Layout

Can be designed in distinct zones:



Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hazreena-Hussein/publication/261181277/figure/fig1/AS:392469452738563@1470583417330/Plan-of-the-sensory-garden-showing-the-zones-of-the-RSDCD-Legend-Zo-Asteroids-Arts.png>

Can be designed for an all-in-one, multi-sensory experience:



Source:  
[https://www.buildinggreen.com/sites/default/files/styles/smartphone\\_full/public/articles/Discovery\\_Garden.jpg?itok=-4EZUEQM&timestamp=1481560324](https://www.buildinggreen.com/sites/default/files/styles/smartphone_full/public/articles/Discovery_Garden.jpg?itok=-4EZUEQM&timestamp=1481560324)

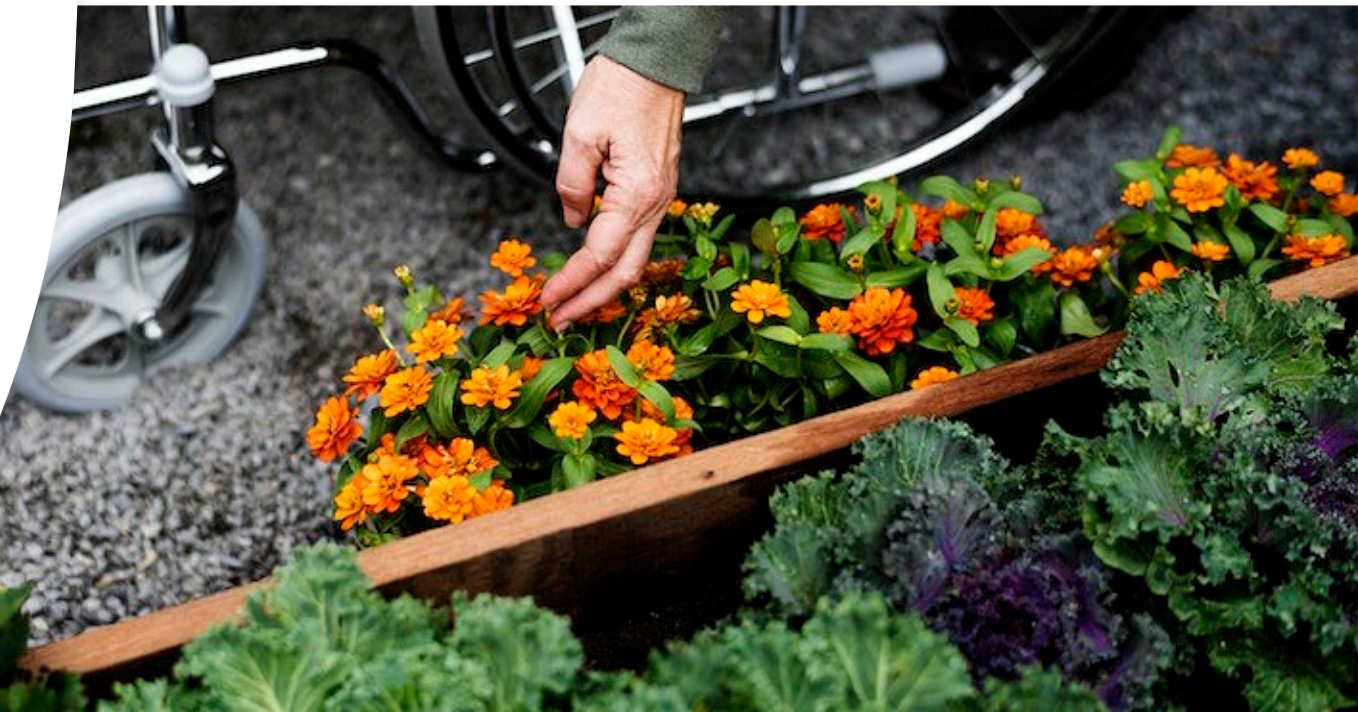


# Designing With Accessibility in Mind

Gardening is a great way to enjoy comfortable physical and mental activity.

Studies show that gardening can improve mental and physical health

Horticulture Therapy uses plants and plant-related activities to promote health and improve mobility, muscle coordination, strength, balance, endurance, socialization, and memory skills.







Source: [www.lowes.com](https://www.lowes.com)

## Container Gardening

- One of the easiest ways to start an accessible garden is with containers
- Easy to reach to plant, weed, and water
- Use stands to elevate the containers for easier access
- Larger size pots are heavier, making some pots stable enough to lean on for support to get up and down and prevent falling.





## Raised Bed Gardening

- Great for areas with limited space
- Less compacted soil
- Less weed pressure
- Better drainage and warms quicker in the spring
- Easier access for those that need to sit or need space for a wheelchair





## Vertical Gardening

- Going vertical allows all users to garden at any level and comfort
- Saves space and reduces garden bed footprints, and reduces wastewater
- Easy to weed, water, and harvest.
- The Farmstand: Grows 12-36 fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, herbs, and edible flowers all at once. It can be used indoors or outdoors. It is self-watering and self-fertilizing, making it virtually maintenance-free.



# Resources

[How to create a sensory garden | Kew](#)

[Traditional Rolling Indoor/Outdoor Gardens – Accessible Gardens](#)

[Accessible Gardening : NCHPAD - Building Healthy Inclusive Communities](#)

[The Farmstand Vertical Growing Planter \(lettucegrow.com\)](#)

[Traditional Rolling Indoor/Outdoor Gardens – Accessible Gardens](#)

[What are the benefits of raised beds and how can I construct one myself? | Extension \(unh.edu\)](#)