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Export date: Wed Sep 9 16:36:33 2026 / +0000 GMT

Shelburne Family Chiropractic & Wellness Centre hosts community garden

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A community garden is a shared space for families, both green and seasoned, to care for their own plants in a communal, welcoming environment.

Tucked behind a Main Street storefront, the backyard of Shelburne Family Chiropractic & Wellness Centre features a thriving community garden.

Owner Alexandra Magder said that the garden itself is not new. The clinic inherited an existing garden and reshaped it into a more structured community project, offering residents the chance to try their hand at growing and caring for plants.

?We've had that garden in place for quite some time, including with raspberry bushes and an apple tree as well,? Madgeer said. ?We always are looking for opportunities where we can encourage healthy and positive family activities, and because we're such an agricultural community, we thought it was just a great opportunity to utilize that garden for that.?

Working with a local landscaping company, they tilled the soil and laid down garden fabric, cut planting holes, and organized a simple system at the front desk with seeds, tools, and popsicle sticks so families could label their plots.

During a two-week window in June, every available plot was claimed.

Participants range from first-time gardeners ? including children under five planting for the very first time ? to families who already maintain gardens at home but wanted to join a shared community effort. A rain barrel supports eco-friendly watering, while staff step in to water daily during hot weather for families who cannot visit regularly.

Magder said the garden is meant to promote healthy, positive family activities, physical movement, and outdoor time, while teaching children where their food comes from.

?The garden helps to promote wellness as well? gardening is a very physical activity,? she said. ?It's also just a great way to encourage families to get out there, teach young children how to grow and encourage them to learn.?

Half of the garden is dedicated to pumpkins for families participating in the growing season, to be harvested close to Halloween, while the other half is planted with five varieties of lettuce, grown by clinic staff and earmarked for donation to the local food bank.

The lettuces, chosen for their low maintenance and multiple harvests, allow the garden to give back several times in a single season.

Looking ahead, the clinic hopes to continue planting pumpkins each year, though staff will consult with landscapers about crop rotation and soil health.

If pumpkins are not feasible in future seasons, they say the garden will still be used ? ensuring the space remains an active, green asset for Shelburne and the many families interested in developing their green thumbs.