

# Aloe

If you read about Aloe it likes the light but ours have always done well as long as we make an effort to put them as near a window as possible. They like loose well drained soil and in most cases should receive no water from November until March.

## *Why do we call Aloe Vera child friendly?*

**First** because it is juicy. Most children like feeling things. That is part of the allure of having your own plant. You can touch it. You can break off a piece and walk on it with your bare feet. You can mix in a little tempera paint or food color and finger paint with it. You can even put it on burns. (**Caution**... beware of all plants with children under age three. Their skin is tender and may react in unusual ways to almost any plant. If a child's skin get's itchy or red after exposure to any plant wash with soap and warm water and call your physician.) Having read the caution aloe is a component of thousands of skin care products. It has been used on MINOR burns for thousands of years. The FIRST treatment for a minor burn however is usually an ice cube or cold water. Then you can dab on a little Aloe (as long as the skin is not broken or blistered, burns that blister may require the attention of a physician and surely an antibiotic ointment. If your child is burned look up proper first aid on the internet.

**Second** because it is a good plant to learn about root division. Gently remove as much soil as possible and then cut off the young plants from the main root keeping as many small roots as possible on the new plant. Most children will be safer using scissors for this task than a knife. The cut can be dusted with sulfur or fungicide to prevent rot but if the parent plant looks healthy it is probably not necessary. Put a few stones or a square of old but clean nylon stocking in the bottom of a flower pot...add a few inches of soil then do your best not to cover up the crown while you add soil to the pot. Press down and water from the bottom by setting the new pot in a bowl of water.

**In the Bible there are some important verses about good roots, among them:** Colossians 2:7, Ephesians 3:17, and Romans 11:16, **There are also verses about bad roots.** Hebrews 12:15, 1 Timothy 6:10, and Luke 8:13.

**This could be a good activity for Sunday School, VBS, or weeknights. The Kids get to leave with a plant of their own in a Styrofoam cup...punch two holes in the bottom with a sharp pencil.**

