



# Preparing the Soil



# Dear friends,

Successful gardeners know that healthy soil forms the foundation for a thriving garden and bountiful harvest. Yes, building healthy soil takes time and attention — but it's an investment with rich rewards.

For KidsGardening, 2017 was a year focused on preparing our soil. The crop we're growing? Healthy, joyful kids with a passion for life and a love of learning!

After re-launching as an independent nonprofit in 2016, KidsGardening began re-building our soil by resetting priorities, nurturing relationships, and creating efficient and effective systems.

Over the course of 2017, while slowly growing our team and board, we launched two new programs (bringing the total to six for the year) and reached almost 22,000 kids with opportunities to learn, grow, and make connections through garden-based learning. Of the educators we support, 84% noticed improvements in nutritional attitudes of their students and 82% noticed improvements in environmental attitudes. These powerful outcomes are reflected in the smiles of every child touched by our work.

Gardens are perfectly imperfect learning labs for life's systems. They engage students in important hands-on lessons in STEM, literature, social studies, nutrition, environmental stewardship, civic engagement, personal responsibility, and many other subjects. Gardening also helps children grow mentally, emotionally, and physically.

KidsGardening enables educators, community leaders, and families nationwide to establish and sustain youth garden programs. We do this by providing grant funding, inspiration, curricula, and practical know-how. We do this because **all children need and deserve to have access to gardens in their daily lives.**

In 2018, we will be planting seeds in our newly prepared soil. Please join us. Reach out to me directly to learn how you can get engaged.



With gratitude,

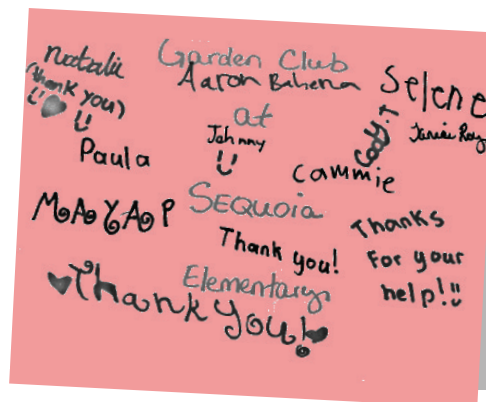
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## Program Spotlight



Sequoia  
Elementary  
School  
San Diego, CA

On December 5th, members of the KidsGardening team spent the morning with a group of **ProFlowers** employees expanding a garden at Sequoia Elementary School in San Diego. Sequoia had six pre-existing raised beds, which were managed by students in the school's youth garden club, who take time during recess to water plants and weed in the beds. The group's leader, Health Tech Janis Roy, says, **"Many students live in apartments so it's great to have them come outside and have the opportunity to dig in the dirt...they keep saying that they want to make the garden bigger, and I always tell them that we'll make it bigger!"**



Thank you note from Sequoia Elementary.

That's where ProFlowers and KidsGardening come in.

The build included the construction of two large composting bins, three smaller vermicomposting units, and four new raised beds that Garden Club students filled with a variety of flowers and herbs. Three new fruit trees and a pollinator garden were also planted during the expansion.

Although the content of these four beds may change over the seasons, without a doubt, they've generated a stir of excitement throughout the school. On the day of the build many teachers passed through the garden, expressing a desire to take advantage of the new features with their students. Kids could be heard saying **"I want to go to the garden, I want to help in the garden!"**

## Did You Know?

In healthy soils, you can find **billions of microorganisms, like bacteria and fungi, in a single teaspoon!**

Learn more in our new *"Digging Into Soil"* curriculum to be released this summer!



Program  
Spotlight

South Whidbey  
School District  
Langley, WA

The South Whidbey School District Farm and Garden Program, recipient of the **Chartwells K12 Eat. Learn. Live. Grow Grant**, integrates the garden into the school experience for students in grades K-8. The four gardens at these schools in Langley, WA provide students with a working knowledge and appreciation of the skills required to grow fresh vegetables and fruits, along with a deeper understanding of the importance of food in building a healthy community. Not only do students get to pick and eat fresh vegetables as part of their garden class sessions and “Healthy Snacks” program, but this robust garden program also delivers seasonal vegetables to the district’s elementary, middle, and high school campuses, as well as the local food bank.

The district’s garden programs have had a profound effect on students’ interest in healthy foods. Cafeteria staff have noted that more children choose a salad when they know the greens were grown at the school farm. Cary Peterson, South Whidbey’s Farm and Garden Program Coordinator, shared with KidsGardening that many students are excited to eat vegetables from the garden that they normally won’t eat elsewhere. She frequently hears students report, **“I don’t like broccoli, but I like this broccoli!”**

**“The Garden Program at South Whidbey is just one of the many ways we’re instilling lifelong healthy habits in students,”** said Belinda Oakley, Chief Executive Officer, Chartwells K12. **“We’re seeing that when students get their hands dirty planting, learning and harvesting, their attitudes on the environment and nutrition are improving. Even more, they have increased self-confidence and community spirit. There’s no question our partnership with Kids Gardening is making a positive impact on the way students feel about fresh and healthy foods!”**

2017 INCOME



2017 EXPENSES

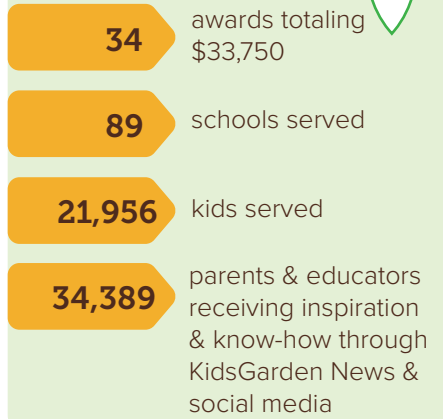


Growing youth  
gardens since 1982

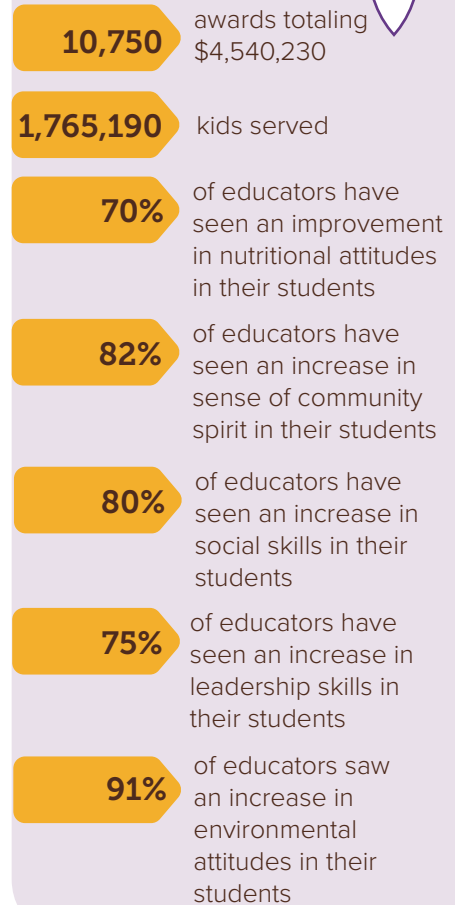
Small investments  
can reap **BIG** rewards.

Did you know? For many youth gardens, a grant of just \$500 or \$1,000 is often just what they need to start or expand their program.

2017 GRANTS



ALL TIME GRANTS





# OUR MISSION

We create opportunities for kids to learn, grow, and make connections through garden-based learning, engaging their natural curiosity and wonder.



## THANKS TO OUR 2017 CORPORATE SPONSORS



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