

A photograph of two children in a garden. On the left, a young girl with long brown hair and a large pink bow is holding two yellow sunflowers in front of her eyes. She is wearing a pink t-shirt with a floral pattern and the words "OLD NAVY" visible. On the right, a young boy with short dark hair is holding a single yellow sunflower in front of his eyes. He is wearing a black t-shirt with red and white stripes on the sleeve. The background is filled with many yellow sunflowers and green leaves.

IMPACT REPORT

2021

OUR BOARD



Nikhil Arora



Bill Calkins



Perla Sofia
Curbelo-Santiago



Jim Feinson
Chair



Sonya Harris



Tony Hillery



Kit Perkins



Tristana Pirkle



Larry Sommers



MJ Reale
Vice Chair



Will Raap
Emeritus



Zaw Win
Secretary

To Our Community,

The reach and impact of KidsGardening is growing! With only a small increase in our annual operating budget, in 2021 we had our most meaningful year ever.

- Over 3.8 million kids interacted with our educational resources, an increase of over 25%!
- Over 28,000 kids were supported through the Kids Garden Community
- Over 115,000 kids benefited from our grants and garden installations
- Over 82,000 kids used our curriculum publications

This means that millions of kids:

- Learned science and math in hands-on, engaging ways
- Learned about the cycles and beauty of the natural world, and the importance of environmental sustainability
- Discovered where their food comes from, learned about health and nutrition, and actually received fresh, healthful food
- Built language and social skills
- Connected with each other and their broader community

Many kids who struggle in traditional classroom settings succeed through garden-based education. That's why a dollar invested in KidsGardening, whether through corporate sponsorship or individual donation, is one of the most powerful dollars you can spend. Our small staff accomplishes an amazing amount. The true secret of our effectiveness is in bringing people and organizations together to support our kids and their communities.

- We enable collaboration across organizations, leveraging strengths and eliminating duplication.
- We foster educational effectiveness by providing tools to teachers, parents, and community educators.
- We promote learning and sharing of best practices and educational innovation.
- We enable, motivate, and celebrate the unsung heroes working hands-on with kids.

Thank you for your support in 2021, and in helping spread the movement that is the power of garden-based education.



Jim Feinson

Jim Feinson
Board Chair

Dear Friends,

It's hard to express how much pride I have in the work that the staff and Board at KidsGardening have done in this past year. Our love and respect for children and their educators and caregivers fuel our enthusiasm and steadfast devotion to creating resources that allow millions of kids across the country to play, learn, and grow through the garden.

2021 was a difficult year for communities across the country and the globe. As we adjusted to the ongoing nature of the pandemic, we also began to see increased racial tensions, economic pressure, and increased violence. People who care for and work with children are in the difficult position of processing these upsetting and confusing events themselves while also helping kids work through their feelings and assuring them that they will be kept safe. And did I mention there are curriculum and standards to teach to as well?

At KidsGardening, we know that gardens are a place where kids feel safe and can learn, hands-on, often more effectively than sitting at a desk. The ability to get outside, move their bodies, and engage in meaningful activities allows them to find a place of calm while also learning math, science, literature, or any other subject. Kids and their grown-ups need this time in nature more than ever.

KidsGardening's approach to supporting educators and caregivers throughout this difficult time can be summed up in one word: Connection. In 2021, we launched several new initiatives aimed at connecting youth garden advocates to new knowledge, funding, and perhaps most importantly, a supportive network of peers.

From the launch of the Kids Garden Community to a garden installation in a Promise Neighborhood in Philadelphia, 2021 was a year of connection and community. Please read on to learn more about the incredible projects we completed this last year that supported and grew the youth gardening movement.



Em Shipman
Executive Director



Working for a better tomorrow

KidsGardening acknowledges the many existing inequities in garden-based education and youth development. As an organization, we still have a great deal of work to do and are committed to action.



Our Commitments

KidsGardening set an organizational goal for 2021 to increase diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the services we offer and how these services are offered to our community. We are committed to furthering this goal throughout 2022 and beyond.

1



Diversify who we reach and serve

2



Improve the accessibility of our grant programs

3



Prioritize funding the programs that need it most

4



Prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within our educational content and leverage our platform to give an equitable voice to all communities in the youth gardening movement

5



Expand our work in Spanish and other languages

6



Continue education on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for the KidsGardening board and staff

OUR IMPACT

3.8M KIDS

In 2021, we reached approximately 3.8 million kids with the resources provided through our grants, educational resources, and online community.

248 programs were awarded funding through grants, garden installations, and contests totalling over \$170,000.

248 PROGRAMS



I LOVE what Kids Gardening is doing for kids and educators. We need MORE of this in the world!

Michelle



28K KIDS

reached through the Kids Garden Community



115K KIDS

reached through grants, garden installations, and contests



1.8M KIDS

reached through activities



1.7M KIDS

reached through lesson plans



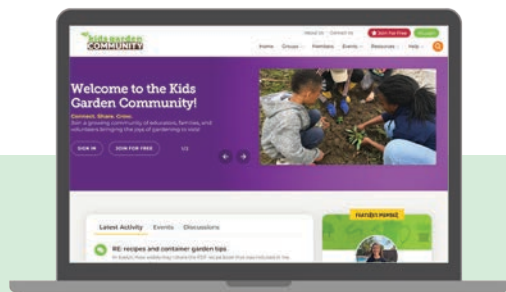
83K KIDS

reached through curriculum publications

DID YOU KNOW?

\$1 donated to KidsGardening reaches eight more children with resources to learn through the garden!

KIDS GARDEN COMMUNITY



Features

- Discussions
- Special interest groups
- Library of resources vetted by a resource review committee
- Library of funding opportunities
- Crowdsourced events and community-hosted virtual events
- Member directory

The Kids Garden Community is live! With the support of a dozen peer youth gardening organizations, we officially launched the Kids Garden Community in May of 2021. This free online community is open to anyone gardening with kids and provides opportunities for connection, peer learning, resource sharing, and program support.

After just six months, 1400 educators, families, and volunteers had joined!

1400

members at the end of 2021



160

discussion threads created



14

organizations represented on the advisory committee



91%

of survey respondents say being a member makes them feel more connected to the youth gardening movement

87%

of survey respondents say being a member has better equipped them to garden with kids



Gardening can be intimidating and seem overwhelming if you do not know what you are doing. The Kids garden community helps me learn while giving back and in turn helping kids learn the value in gardening.

Bernadette

BUDDING BOTANIST GRANT



“

Every day had some kind of magic, some new experience that was unexpected, a problem to solve (like how to improve the conditions for the worms in the worm bin), and always something yummy to prepare to taste or smell, thanks to materials we could buy with the funding for the garden.

Barbara Sarbin, Volcano School of Arts and Sciences



For the fourth year in a row, KidsGardening was thrilled to partner with the Klorane Botanical Foundation to offer the Budding Botanist Grant. In 2021, fifteen schools were selected to receive \$1,200 in funding to support garden-based initiatives that encourage our youngest citizens to learn about plants, explore their world, and take care of the life they discover in their local ecosystems.

The Ka Mala Maluhia (Children's Peaceful Garden) at the Volcano School of Arts and Sciences in Volcano, Hawaii, used a Budding Botanist grant to plant an abundance of native Hawaiian plants, from vegetables and herbs to medicinal and pollinator-friendly plants. Every elementary and middle school class had the opportunity to steward one of the garden spaces. Pre-kindergarten students planted edible Hawaiian native plants, kindergarteners focused on pollinators, first graders developed an herb garden, second-grade students grew vegetables, third- and fourth-graders created a sanctuary for honey bees, and the middle school students planted shade-loving native plants.

Because some students were attending school virtually, they received a "Garden-in-a-Box" kit to participate in the garden program. Each child received seeds or seedlings, soil, a large pot, organic fertilizer, and identification tags for their plant.



YOUTH GARDEN GRANT



Since 1982, the Youth Garden Grant has supported school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for students and their communities. This past year, thirty programs were chosen from 800 applicants to receive an award package designed to help start new garden programs or expand existing ones.

The Northern Youth Project, in Cañones, New Mexico, was one of our Youth Garden Grant winners in 2021. The Northern Youth Project offers experiential learning opportunities to rural youth, as well as internship opportunities through art, agriculture, and leadership. The Northern Youth Project garden, built 11 years ago on a quarter-acre plot, sits nestled in a hillside underneath the Pueblo de Abiquiu. The program collaborated with local schools and nonprofits to send plants, trees, and herbs home to the youth. They created newsletters with gardening tips, recipes to include in weekly food baskets, and offered cooking and food preparation programming to youth.

“

Our garden has become a safe space for youth seeking shelter from turbulent lives. The work we do with the land is a catalyst to heal. We come together as a diverse family of multigenerational staff members, volunteers, mentors, and youth. Together we model healthy life choices and reconnect with the earth.

Ana Maria Salazar, Northern Youth Project



GROMOREGOOD GRASSROOTS GRANT



In 2021, KidsGardening and The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation partnered once again to offer the GroMoreGood Grassroots Grant. A collective total of \$100,000 was awarded to 175 programs that are bringing the life-enhancing benefits of gardens and greenspaces to communities across the United States.

“

The best student quote was,
“If you garden then you are loved...
just know that.”

*Laura Hill, Friends of the
Mississippi River*

The Friends of the Mississippi River in Saint Paul, Minnesota used its 2021 GroMoreGood Grassroots Grant to restore natural habitat near JJ Hill Montessori School. They planted over 200 pollinator plants and laid the foundation for youth, family members, and the community to connect in the garden space. This new garden will be an outdoor laboratory where students learn how to support pollinator habitats and protect the watershed.



LITTLE SEEDS POLLINATOR PALS GRANT



The Little Seeds Pollinator Pals Grant presented by Little Seeds Kids and KidsGardening is designed to support youth garden programs interested in preserving and creating pollinator habitats to help rebuild declining pollinator populations.

Schoolyard Roots and Flatwoods Elementary in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was awarded a 2021 Little Seeds Pollinator Pals Grant. The funding helped the garden expand and it now hosts a diverse mix of annual and perennial fruiting and flowering plants that attract beneficial pollinators, show the full life cycle of plants, and invite curiosity and exploration through the senses. In support of the school's large population of multilingual students, the garden also features bilingual garden signs, and all worksheets and flyers sent home for Flatwoods' garden program are in both Spanish and English.



When a student who is living in a world where most of what they are reading or seeing is different from the language that their family speaks at home sees in the garden something that they recognize — whether its a plant or a word on a sign — that student feels a sense of belonging, and a sense of excitement because they can make connections between the garden, themselves, their family, their home, and their life at school.

Nicole Dugat, Schoolyard Roots



GROPRIDE GRANT

KidsGardening and The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation launched a pilot grant program, GroPride, to connect more LGBTQ+ youth and allies to gardens. Three programs were selected to receive award funding, consulting support, and participate in a year-long peer-learning community.



“

The Walla Walla Valley Farm to School Program of the Sustainable Living Center in partnership with Triple Point Walla Walla in Walla Walla, WA

We seek to gather stakeholder, community, and youth input to establish a sustainable, long-term vision and school garden support framework for LGBTQIA+ youth. The intention and plan are to engage and empower LGBTQIA+ youth in the planning and building of an accessible, safe garden space.

Rey Cooley, Walla Walla Valley Farm to School Program

“

Dykes with Drills in partnership with the Historic Rodgers Ranch Heritage Center in Lafayette, CA

The goal of our program will be to teach LGBTQ youth how to safely use power tools to build garden beds and their own garden tool box and how to manage a garden to grow healthy food.

Julie Peri, Dykes with Drills

“

Pride for Youth of the Long Island Crisis Center in Bellmore, NY

The goals of the gardening program are to promote health and well-being, promote a sense of community, reduce stress and symptoms of anxiety and depression, encourage creativity, encourage mindfulness and mental clarity, teach responsibility, and provide a sense of purpose. Youth will be in charge of the designs in the garden, allowing them space to creatively express their ideas.

Aiden Kaplan, Long Island Crisis Center



GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE

In support of their new show, Gabby's Dollhouse, DreamWorks Animation partnered with KidsGardening to provide a preschool in Philadelphia with a garden that can support young children to play, learn, and grow.

The Caring Center, an early childhood education center with childcare, after-school, and summer programs, was excited to augment their outdoor play area by expanding their garden space. KidsGardening joined folks from the Caring Center on Earth Day to install eight new garden beds, rebuild an old bed, plant three apple trees, and add a special Gabby's Dollhouse planting bench. Em Shipman, KidsGardening Executive Director, attended the event and said "Our partnership with DreamWorks Animation is allowing the phenomenal educators at this preschool and early care center to engage 160 kids in garden-based education in just this first year. Kids are learning where their food comes from, connecting with plants and nature and its cycles, and getting therapeutic time outdoors."



KIDS GARDEN MONTH

Each April, KidsGardening celebrates Kids Garden Month with an annual contest! We invite kids nationwide to submit their responses to a special prompt as a way to lift up their voices and learn about the impact gardens have on their lives.

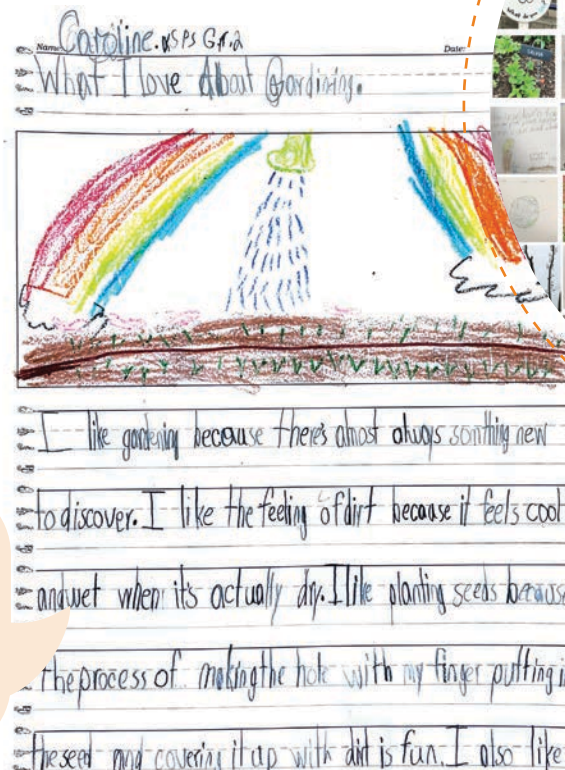
In 2021 we asked kids to share what they love about their garden. We received 365 entries! This year, in addition to the weekly and grand contest prize winners, six schools were awarded \$500 to fund school garden improvements thanks to the generous sponsorship of Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation and the School Garden Support Organization (SGSO) Network.

Thank you to American Meadows for sponsoring Kids Garden Month 2021!



The Second Graders at St. Peter's School in Philadelphia, PA, spent a week working on short essays about what they love about gardening.

Logan is 5 years old. He absolutely loves gardening and nature! He is medically complex, has special needs, and developmentally delayed. He has had 13 surgeries and the garden is his healing place. Even after an open skull surgery, he was out there within 3 days to harvest his veggies. The soil and fresh air nurses him back to health. His garden is a consistent, safe haven in a world with so many unknowns and surprises. It really has been a lifesaver for both him and me."



We asked the third graders of Tracey Magnet School what they loved about our garden, and they said there were too many reasons to fit in one picture--so we're submitting a hundred and thirty pictures!

NEW RESOURCES

For over three decades, we have been creating and publishing resources to help teachers, volunteers, and parents plan and implement effective youth garden programs.

Garden Stories

Garden Stories launched in September 2021 as a way to highlight the work of garden educators and celebrate diverse representation in the youth garden community.

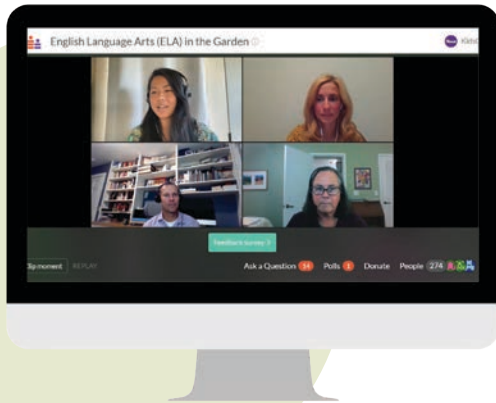
In December, we featured the amazing work of Wambui Ippolito, an urban landscape designer and garden enthusiast in New York City. Wambui is passionate about involving kids in the garden design process and shared her many suggestions for embracing a diversity of growing traditions, gardening with limited space, and living a more regenerative lifestyle in the spirit of giving back to the Earth.



Webinar Opportunities

In 2021, KidsGardening began offering educational webinars to provide live, engaging, continuing education opportunities for our audience. Over the course of three webinars, we engaged 800+ educators and caregivers.

- 🌱 **Gardening Under Lights** — Featuring author and indoor gardening expert Leslie Halleck
- 🌱 **No-Dig Gardening for Kids' Garden Success** — Featuring author and garden expert Charlie Nardoizzi
- 🌱 **English Language Arts in the Garden** — Featuring authors of Books in Bloom, Valerie Bang-Jensen and Mark Lubkowitz, and high school ELA educator Jennifer Tianen



PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHTS

Discovering Through Hydroponics

Complementing the Exploring Hydroponics Guide, KidsGardening had the honor of partnering once again with The National Farm to School Network and The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation to publish a new electronic publication titled Discovering Through Hydroponics which targets students in kindergarten through second grade. The guide is currently being pilot tested by 25 schools in Arizona, California, Florida, Oregon, and Washington. The new guide focuses on teaching plant basics through hydroponic garden systems. You can download a copy of the guide, complete with activities in Spanish, on the KidsGardening website.

National Head Start Association Partnership

Our partnership with National Head Start Association (NHSA) and The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation continued to grow in 2021 as we reached early childhood education educators through three free webinars, presentations at two virtual national conferences (NHSA Annual Conference and Natural Start Conference), and the development of a new 4-hour online professional development course titled “Gardening with Kids Basics” to be offered through NHSA’s Knowledge Academy.



Compassion Flower Garden Guide — Mrs. Meyer’s

KidsGardening teamed up with our friends at Mrs. Meyer’s to develop a collection of garden projects to help educators and caregivers teach kids about compassion, teamwork, kindness, friendship, generosity, and gratitude.



Farmers Market Cards — Dick & Jane Educational Snacks

In support of Farm to School Month and local produce, Dick & Jane Educational Snacks sponsored the creation of a set of printable Farmers Market Cards that include fun facts about 40 different foods.



Garden Activity Packs — Pete and Gerry’s Organic Eggs

In partnership with Pete and Gerry’s Organic Eggs, KidsGardening developed Summer and Fall Garden Activity Packs which include a variety of ways to garden with egg cartons and egg shells.



Pollinator Profiles — Little Seeds

Thanks to a partnership with Little Seeds, KidsGardening created twelve downloadable pollinator profiles to feature a new pollinator friend each month.



Garden Activity Packs — Smart Pots

KidsGardening kicked off its 3-part Garden Activity Pack series with Cooking! With this GAP, young gardeners learn how to grow produce and then prepare it using a simple quick pickle recipe.



Subpod for Schools: A Compost Guide For Educators — Subpod

KidsGardening partnered with Subpod to create a 16-lesson activity guide for educators to teach about diverting waste, rebuilding soil, and growing food by composting.

FINANCIALS



OTHER INCOME
\$208,410

EARNED INCOME
\$38,245

CONTRIBUTIONS
\$419,932



FUNDRAISING
\$58,761

GENERAL &
ADMINISTRATIVE
\$105,657

PROGRAMS
\$525,618



OUR SUPPORTERS

Our mission is made possible thanks to the hundreds of donors and dozens of partners devoted to ensuring that all kids have opportunities to play, learn, and grow through gardening.





Thank you! Your resources are so well thought out and save me from hours of resurrecting my own lessons from classes I did decades ago. You have everything I need right at my finger tips. Just completed a program for kids ages 3-11 on seeds. I love KidsGardening!

Chris

Support Our Work

Recurring donations, planned giving, gifts of stock, gifts in memory, or even a vehicle donation — every gift matters. No matter the size.

kidsgardening.org/donate

Subscribe

Don't miss out! Get monthly resources and announcements delivered straight to your inbox.

kidsgardening.org/subscribe

Connect With Us

Follow along with a growing community and share the great things happening in your gardens.



132 Intervale Road
Burlington, VT 05401

802.660.4604
info@kidsgardening.org