



kids
GARDENING^{ORG}
HELPING YOUNG MINDS GROW

IMPACT
REPORT

2023

Dear Friends & Supporters of KidsGardening,

William Wordsworth wrote:

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

In a world where the pace of life can often overwhelm, where the pressures of environmental degradation and economic and societal stratification loom large, kids find solace and hope in the simplicity and beauty of nature, and we find hope in the power of generational change.

In schools and communities across America, our collective efforts have cultivated learning gardens of optimism and resilience. Through our programs and initiatives, we've witnessed firsthand the transformative power of connecting children with the natural world. In the midst of chaos, we've sown seeds of curiosity, nurtured roots of empathy, and harvested fruits of environmental stewardship.

This past year has been a testament to our unwavering commitment to making a difference. From urban gardens sprouting in concrete playgrounds to rural communities blossoming with newfound knowledge, the impact of our work resonates far and wide. We are unlocking new ways to educate and engage young learners, and fostering environmental consciousness that will continue to flourish.

As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, KidsGardening nurtures the simplicity of a seed taking root, the joy of a flower in bloom, the surprising taste of a fresh vegetable, and the wonder of a child discovering the magic of and a respect for nature. Together we can cultivate a brighter future, where the world is not too much with us, but rather, where we are in harmony with the world.

Thank you for your support and dedication to our mission. With your continued partnership, we look forward to growing our impact in the years ahead.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Feinson".

Jim Feinson
Board Chair

At KidsGardening, we have long championed the belief that gardens hold transformative powers, especially for our younger generations. In 2023, through our garden-based learning programs, we have witnessed yet again how nurturing green spaces fosters resilience and equips children with the adaptive skills necessary to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Gardening is not merely about cultivating plants; it's about nurturing growth in every sense of the word. As children engage with plants, they learn patience, perseverance, and the invaluable art of problem-solving. Each seed planted becomes a lesson in resilience, as they witness the cycle of life firsthand—the patience required for a seed to sprout, the determination needed to tend to plants in adverse conditions, and the joy of witnessing the fruits of their labor.

Gardening instills a deep connection to nature—an understanding that we are part of a larger ecosystem. This connection not only cultivates empathy and stewardship for the environment but also teaches resilience in the face of adversity. In a world where change is the only constant, children who have forged a bond with nature possess an ability to adapt and thrive amidst uncertainty.

As Executive Director, it brings me immense pride to see the positive transformation in the children we serve. In 2023, with your support, KidsGardening reached 2.7 million youth across the country with access to garden-based learning resources. This achievement is a testament to the power of nature-based education and the unwavering support of donors like you.

As we move forward, let us continue to sow the seeds of resilience and nurture the growth of future generations. Together, we can cultivate a world where every child has the tools they need to thrive.

With heartfelt gratitude,

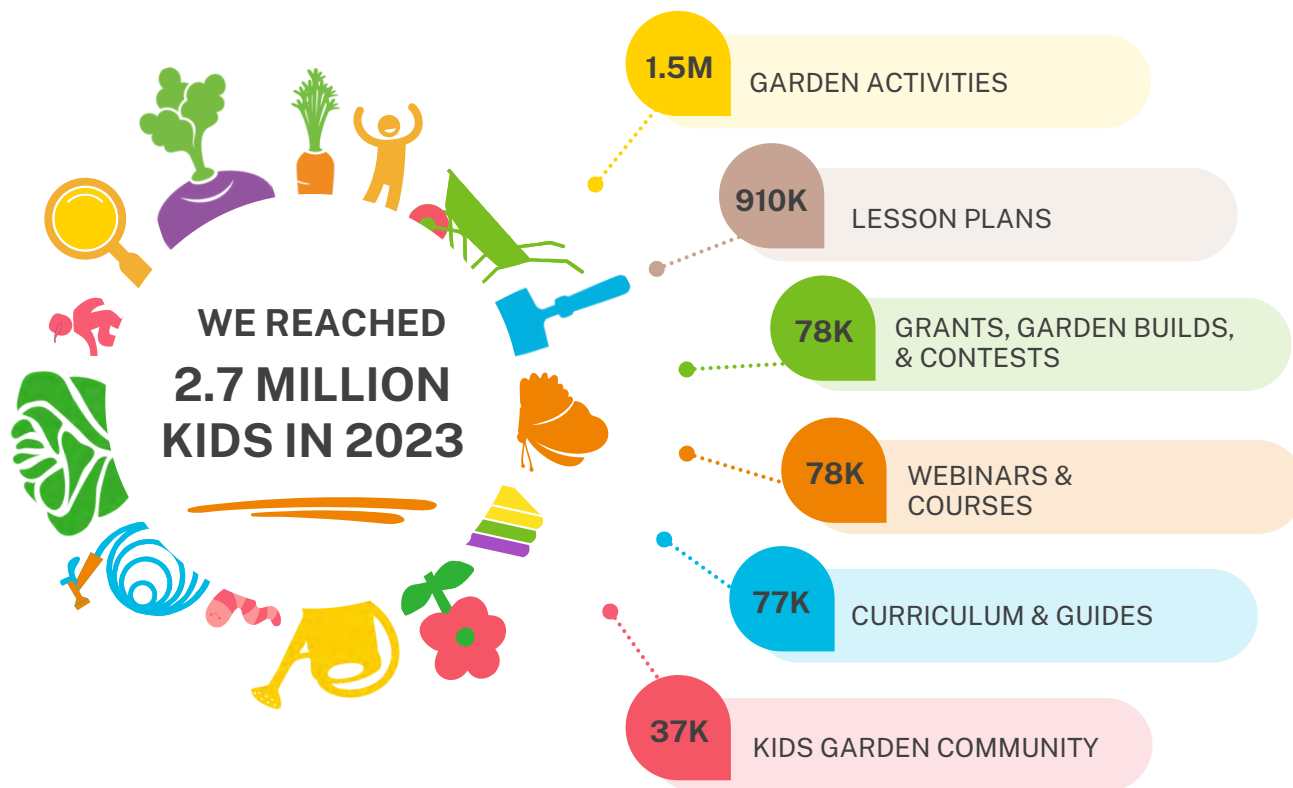


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Em Shipman".

Em Shipman
Executive Director



OUR IMPACT



OUR COMMITMENTS

Since 2021, KidsGardening has remained committed to increasing diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility in our work via the following commitments:

- 1** Understand who we reach and serve
- 2** Improve the accessibility of our work
- 3** Fund youth garden programs that need it most
- 4** Prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within our content and leverage our platform to give voice to all communities in the youth gardening movement
- 5** Educate the KidsGardening staff and Board on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility
- 6** Diversify KidsGardening's Board of Directors

LEARNING & GROWING IN ABRAXAS GARDENS

KidsGardening Youth Garden Grantee, Abraxas Continuation High School in Poway, California transformed a neglected tennis court into a flourishing school garden. Spearheaded by teacher Bob Luttkick and dedicated colleagues, the project bloomed into an outdoor classroom brimming with life and learning.

What began as 40 raised beds and an orchard, soon evolved into a 12,000-gallon aquaponic system teeming with tilapia and yielding abundant produce. Today, the garden not only nourishes the students but also extends its bounty to local families in need.

Driven by passion and commitment, Abraxas teachers and students cultivated four thriving educational programs within the garden's embrace. Over 150 students engage in Agriculture, Aquaponics, Culinary, and Transitions programs, fostering a sense of ownership, community responsibility, and environmental stewardship.

Abraxas serves students seeking a more intimate and flexible educational environment, offering personalized, project-based learning that ignites their passions and dreams. For many, the garden becomes a sanctuary, where they find solace, purpose, and confidence amidst life's challenges.

Bob's students, inspired by their garden experiences, envision careers in horticulture and sustainability, propelled by their newfound skills and aspirations. The Transitions program empowers young adults with disabilities, cultivating valuable skills and spreading contagious joy through their accomplishments.

As the garden flourishes, so does its impact on the community. Surplus produce finds its way to local organizations, nourishing families and fostering connections. A culinary program, born from the garden's abundance, teaches students to create nutritious meals from garden-fresh ingredients, sparking pride and culinary exploration.

Beyond science and cooking, the garden serves as a hub for interdisciplinary learning, weaving art, business, and community engagement into its vibrant tapestry. Despite accolades and achievements, it's the everyday moments of learning and growth that fuel excitement for the garden's future.

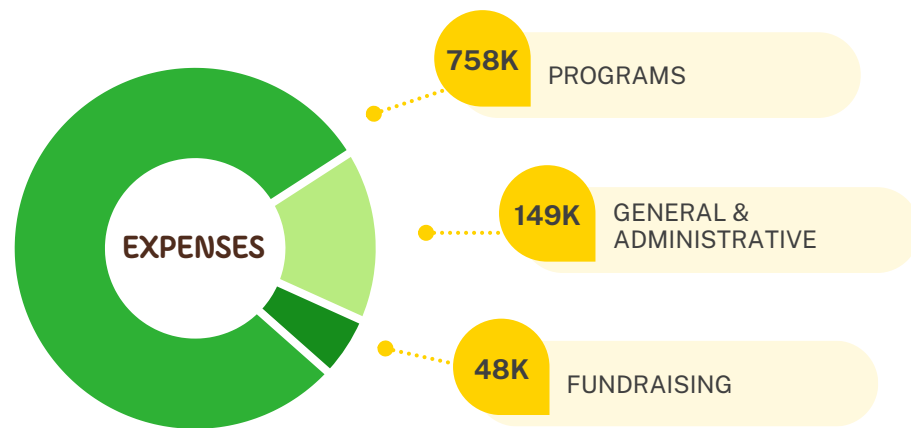
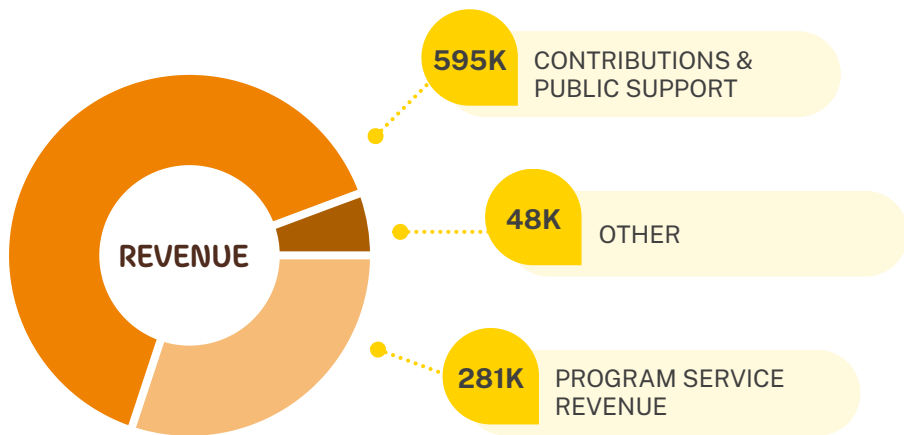
In the heart of Abraxas Garden, amidst the lush greenery and bustling activity, lies a testament to the power of passion, dedication, and community. It's a place where seeds of knowledge and compassion are sown, where dreams take root and flourish—a true oasis of learning and inspiration.

“ The spirit and joy reflected in their accomplishments are contagious. Our students' hearts and energy are immeasurable. ”

— Bob Luttkick, Abraxas Continuation High School



FINANCIALS



KIDS GARDEN COMMUNITY



In its third year, the Kids Garden Community provided resources, connection, and support to over 7,000 members!

“ One benefit of the [Community] that's hard to quantify is just how inspirational it is on a very daily basis! Every time I read the posts I feel nourished and energized from the reminder that our small program, out in the middle of nowhere, is part of this huge happy determined successful movement! ”

— Claudia, Kids Garden Community Member



96% OF MEMBERS SURVEYED SAID THIS COMMUNITY BETTER EQUIPS THEM TO GARDEN WITH KIDS

48% OF MEMBERS SAY BEING A MEMBER MAKES THEM FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO THE YOUTH GARDEN MOVEMENT

[EXPLORE THE COMMUNITY](#)

FEATURED CONTENT



New Meadowsaping Guides!

KidsGardening teamed up with our friends at American Meadows to develop two guides for educators and caregivers to celebrate and promote meadow plantings with kids. “Meadowsaping with Kids” helps educators and caregivers understand the process of meadowsaping and uplift its benefits with kids. The “Meadowsaping Makes it Better Activity Guide” provides information and inspiration for creating meadow plantings anywhere — even in containers — and features six fun, hands-on projects to delight and inform young gardeners.

Growing Food is Digital (and in Spanish)!

As part of a USDA Farm to School Implementation Grant, KidsGardening was able to fund the translation of the Growing Food curriculum into Spanish. Growing Food is now available in Spanish and English as a free digital download as part of a “Seeds of Success Toolkit”. The curriculum provides a collection of 20 lesson plans with engaging experiences for students to learn science through the study of food systems and garden activities.



GRANTS



NEW!

Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day and KidsGardening share a belief that the garden has the power to do more than grow flowers and herbs, it can grow people, communities, and even kindness, too. Together, we announced our new Lots of Compassion grant program, designed to support local leaders looking to transform vacant lots into gardens to help grow compassion in their community.



240

PROGRAMS
AWARDED

60,000

KIDS
BENEFITTED

\$374,700

AWARDED IN CASH
AND SUPPLIES



The GroMoreGood Grassroots Grant, brought to you by The ScottsMiracle-Gro Foundation and KidsGardening, was designed to bring the life-enhancing benefits of gardens to communities across the United States.



Designed to further the mission of the Klorane Botanical Foundation, the Budding Botanist grant helped students learn about plants, explore their world, and inspire them to take care of the life they discover in their local ecosystems.



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.



“ We are celebrating the exciting transformation – not just of soil and seeds, but of hearts, minds, and communities. Thanks to the generous \$20,000 grant from Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day and KidsGardening, we have turned this vacant lot into a thriving garden, a place where flowers, herbs, and most importantly, people, can grow. ”

— Mrs. Sara Lohrmann, Project GO

BUILDING GARDENS. GROWING COMMUNITY.

For more than 40 years, KidsGardening has used our experience as youth garden designers and educators to install and improve high-impact, fun, and sustainable youth gardens across the country.

In support of their Planet Friendly Ambassadors program, McCain Foods partnered with KidsGardening to build two new youth gardens in Wisconsin!

Now, youth at the Boys & Girls Club of Portage County in Plover, Wisconsin, and Ronald Dunlap Elementary in Appleton, Wisconsin experience the joy and wonder of garden-based learning.



1,200+ KIDS ARE LEARNING IN THESE NEW GARDEN SPACES!

“ This school year we froze the cherry tomatoes that were harvested and turned them into a pizza sauce. When we asked the kids where they thought the tomatoes came from, they couldn't believe that they were from our garden outside...Thank you so much for all of your hard work into making this experience possible for the Boys & Girls Club! ”

— Hayley Entzminger, Boys & Girls Club of Portage County



LANDSCAPE DESIGN COURSE

In May 2023, KidsGardening launched our first e-course, Landscape Design for Youth Gardens. This 8-session course is designed to introduce participants to the basic steps and elements of landscape design that can be used to plan a youth-friendly garden that is engaging and appealing to youth and their communities.

“

We're building a new garden after finishing a remodel of our school, and this was exactly what we needed to get excited and plan for next year's outdoor learning areas.

— Laura B.

”



“

This is one of the best online workshops I have ever attended!! So well thought out, designed, arranged, presented, etc. Can't wait to start putting things into practice!!

”

— Michelle S.

Landscape Design for Youth Gardens

Learn the basic steps and elements of landscape design for an interactive, fun, and sustainable youth garden.

Enroll \$25

900+ ENROLLEES
SINCE LAUNCH

[SEE THE COURSE](#)

NEW WEBINARS IN 2023!

In 2023, KidsGardening offered 12 educational webinars to provide live, engaging, continuing education opportunities for our audience.

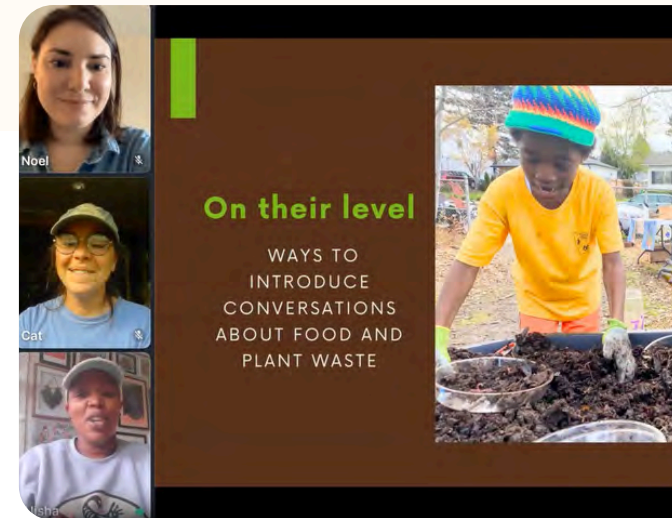
Culturally Inclusive Teaching in the Garden Series

- ▶ Principles Of Culturally Responsive Garden Education: Honoring Diversity And Inclusion
- ▶ Honoring Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Culture in Youth Gardens
- ▶ Celebrating African American and Black Culture in Youth Gardens
- ▶ Fostering Hispanic, Latinx, and Spanish Origin Culture in Youth Gardens
- ▶ Nurturing Middle Eastern and North African Culture in Youth Gardens
- ▶ Featuring Asian and Asian American Culture in Youth Gardens



Additional Webinars in 2023

- 🐛 Garden-Based Summer Camp Model
- 🐛 Cultivating Resilience in Youth with Deep Nature Connection
- 🐛 Composting with Kids
- 🐛 Connecting Garden Lessons to Science Standards: Using NGSS to Deepen Children's Knowledge and Thinking about the Natural World
- 🐛 Grant Funding for Youth Garden Programs: A Q&A with National Grantmakers
- 🐛 Approaching Garden Education with Compassion and Connection



3,260 EDUCATORS & CAREGIVERS
ENGAGED WITH OUR WEBINARS

[VIEW ALL WEBINARS](#)

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS, SPONSORS, & PARTNERS IN 2023

“As our community's local garden center, KidsGardening is easily our favorite organization to support! In a world where technology and less enriching activities for our youth reign, their work and mission are vital. Educating and empowering kids in an area that really matters - what could be more important!”

— Lauren Younis, B.B. Barns



CORPORATE FOUNDATION FOR THE PROTECTION AND THE PROMOTION OF PLANT HERITAGE



NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



[SUPPORT OUR WORK!](#)



Photo: Kids Garden Month