

Feeding Families Together



GROWING PLACES
GARDEN PROJECT





why we do it

Food security is a growing problem today and can result from many situations, including change in job status, change in location, natural disaster and emergency; not just long-term poverty.

how we do it

By donating complete vegetable gardens and teaching our clients how to care for them and enjoy a healthier way of eating.

who we are

Volunteers, donors, clients, families, partners, and trustees—all coming together to nourish community.

eligibility determined by

- ✓ Economic need
- ✓ Availability of appropriate gardening space
- ✓ Commitment of 5-7 hours per week to tending a garden



Safe, affordable, and nourishing food is a growing issue for all Americans, and it's about much more than just having enough — it's also about knowing the right foods to eat and how to prepare them. A local garden is a wonderful way to provide nourishment for the body and soul.

our mission

Growing Places Garden Project's mission is to improve the food security and nutrition education of people with limited economic means. We do this by providing vegetable gardens and nutrition education so that people can grow food on their own and become more conscientious about their nutrition.

our goal

Our goal is to grow proficient gardeners who maintain their gardens on their own and, through our encouragement and support, continue to grow fresh, healthy food for themselves and their loved ones year after year.

our guiding philosophy

At Growing Places Garden Project, we believe that gardening can be transformative. We have witnessed the positive impact of teaching families to garden and the change that occurs when individuals are empowered and encouraged along the way. Something truly amazing occurs when a group of people come together to move soil, plant seeds, and watch them grow. The entire community is nourished and reminded that the potential to create abundance in our own lives is always within reach.



“Growing Place’s passion for the cause is inspiring. The issues of food, health, and the economy are on everyone’s mind these days, and Growing Places offers an important solution.”

Sarah Webb, Community Service Coordinator, Groton School

programs & services

garden program

Growing Places ensures access to fresh, healthy food for a wide range of clients by offering residential, container, and community gardens. We make a commitment of at least two years to our clients establishing gardens the first year at the client's residence or community gardens, and returning the second year with seeds and seedlings. All gardens, seeds and plants are supplied at no cost to our clients.

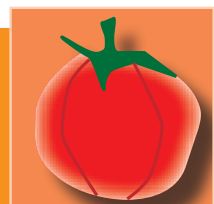
our gardens are

- Established at each client's residence or community plot
- Personalized to the client's dietary needs and aspirations
- Designed to conserve water and be maintained without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides

a garden takes shape



Many volunteers come together to take on the individual tasks that eventually becomes a garden.



“The experience of gardening taught me that patience and hard work bring great rewards and that I can be the creator of abundance in my own life.”

Malaena Nahimas, Stow, MA

nutrition education for adults & children

To help adults and children eat nutritiously and improve their physical health, Growing Places is partnering with Operation Frontline (of Share Our Strength) to provide nutrition-based cooking classes to current and prospective gardeners in the communities we serve.

For Adults, we offer a six-week class designed to promote healthy food choices, teach lifelong cooking skills and provide practical nutrition information as well as food budgeting strategies.



We've introduced nutrition education and cooking to a wide range of children through the schools in our service area to help reduce the growing number of at-risk youth. The program introduces children to the ease and benefits of more nutritious eating and shows them how to make easy, healthful snacks and meals.

Participants in both programs receive donated groceries, recipes and a gift bag of kitchen accessories to help them stay on top of their new skills.

ongoing support throughout the process

To ensure that our gardeners are successful, seasoned garden mentors are available by phone and email for consultations during the first year. In addition, Growing Places also supports our clients with regular newsletters that include helpful tips on gardening, recipes, articles and more.

providing food security

benefits of gardening

Our clients constantly tell us that they reap much more from their gardens than they sow and enjoy the many benefits gardening provides including:

- ✓ Increased diet of fresh, home-grown produce
- ✓ More creative, home-cooked meals
- ✓ Increased physical activity and more fresh air
- ✓ Reduced stress
- ✓ Creates a beautiful focal point to admire
- ✓ Fosters an appreciation for the miracles in nature
- ✓ Helps children understand where food comes from
- ✓ Provides bounty to share with neighbors and loved one
- ✓ Brings people and communities together
- ✓ Inspires the mind

our history

Kate Deyst and Cindy Buhner founded the organization in 2001 after reading an article in Smithsonian Magazine about a similar project started by Dan Barker in Portland, Oregon. In their first season, Kate and Cindy managed to find five worthy clients and became impassioned about making a difference one garden at a time.

Since 2001, we have helped nearly 1,000 people grow vegetables, gain self-confidence, and learn how to take more control over their nutrition.



For more information about **Growing Places Garden Project**, please visit us at www.growingplaces.org or call us at **978.598.3723**



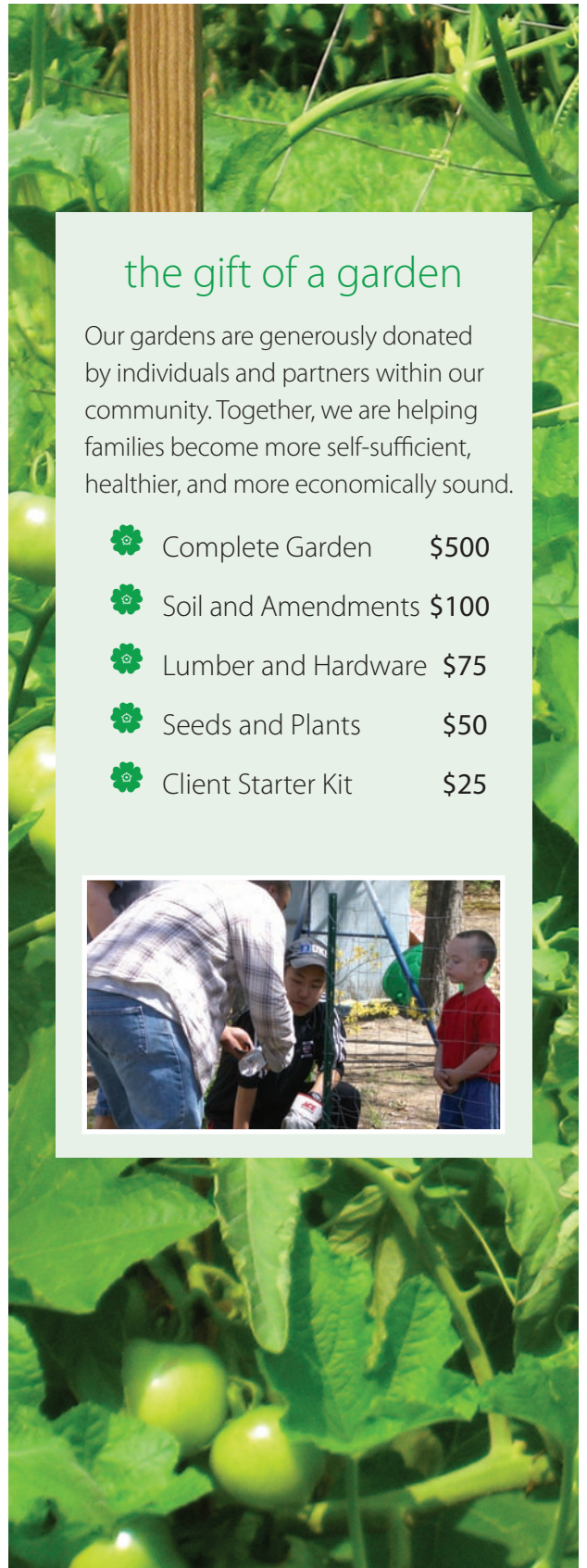
“What a tremendous experience it was for all of us! The girls from Troop 30744 rose to the tasks and really achieved a sense of purpose and accomplishment for this rewarding work.”

Pamela Erdos, Assistant Leader, Girl Scout Troop 30744

the gift of a garden

Our gardens are generously donated by individuals and partners within our community. Together, we are helping families become more self-sufficient, healthier, and more economically sound.

- 🌻 Complete Garden \$500
- 🌻 Soil and Amendments \$100
- 🌻 Lumber and Hardware \$75
- 🌻 Seeds and Plants \$50
- 🌻 Client Starter Kit \$25



collaboration is key



partnering for success

We recognize that we alone cannot solve the complex issues facing the communities we serve, and we look forward to collaborating with others to develop and implement joint strategies that go beyond the scope of our organization. With funding received from the 2010 Compassion Capital Federal Grant through the Center for Democracy & Humanity @ Mount Wachusett Community College, we have established a Community Partnership Program.

this will enable us to

- ✓ Increase collaboration and community engagement
- ✓ Establish connection with key individuals and organizations
- ✓ Access a greater number of potential clients in our service area

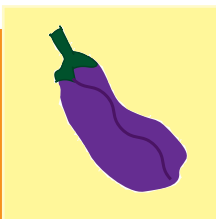
At the same time, Growing Places will enhance visibility and awareness of food security issues throughout the community and take a leadership role in combating important hunger, health and nutrition education issues.

Our Sphere of Influence*

Growing Places' mission encourages widespread community action focused on improving food security. We rely not only on our partners but also our supporters who generously donate funds and goods and the volunteers who provide crucial time and labor. Together, we form a strong coalition of like-minded individuals or a "sphere of influencers" that produce powerful connections benefiting everyone involved.



* Adapted from the SPICE Model in the book "Firms of Endearment" by R. Sisodia, J. Sheth & D.B. Wolfe



“ Your nutrition and cooking classes provide a hands on, age-appropriate approach to helping our students develop healthier eating habits. ”

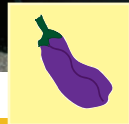
Jennifer Jones, Fitchburg Public Schools

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Growing Places is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

