

# JOYFUL MIND PROJECT

mindfulness education for schools and families

## Program Reports

### Winter Programs:

In January 2016, we offered a 10-week program for children ages 5-10 at **Sophia's Garden**, a Demeter-certified farm in Sebastopol, CA. Students worked on a set of three attentional skills: concentration, mental clarity, and equanimity. Through storytelling, artwork, and movement we learned to self-regulate impulses and emotions. As an approved Pathways Charter School vendor, half our students were able to enroll in this class at no cost. Special thanks to **Monique Camp** for her continued support of our program.

### West Side Elementary:

Also in the winter of 2016, we completed a 16-week program in two classrooms at West Side Elementary in Healdsburg, CA. This program utilized research-based curriculum from Mindful Schools plus original stories to foster empathy and attention. Special thanks to parent **Autumn Phipps** for being our champion at West Side.



## A message from our Executive Director:

Dear friends and families,

I believe mindfulness can transform not only individual lives, but also entire communities. I have seen first hand how this set of skills brings forward insight, empathy, and a desire to help others.

In 2016, we received our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and worked hand in hand with many diverse populations bringing mindfulness into the world. Side by side, we created a partnership with the schools and the families we serve.

We also developed a Mindfulness for Athletes program and offered new mindfulness programming for parents.

I would like to give special thanks Liza Fox, Marie-Michel Tasse, Mark Stefanski, and Steven Copeland for their time and dedication to our program. These members of our community have been instrumental to our success.

With much gratitude and joyful enthusiasm,

Chelsea True  
Executive Director  
Joyful Mind Project



## Spring Program:

Our 6-week spring program was hosted in April 2016 by parent **Liza Fox**. In the nourishing environment of the Fox family home, children ages 7-9 entered mindfulness practice through the door of the imagination, enjoying art projects, songs, and games to help foster attention, compassion, gratitude and generosity. Special thanks to Liza Fox and her family for hosting us in their home.

## Summer Program:

**Open Sky Retreat Space** was home to our 5-week summer series in June 2016. Children ages 5-9 worked to cultivate compassion, concentration, and increase impulse control, while enjoying eight acres of countryside and gardens. A special thanks to Marie-Michel Tasse for sharing yoga with the children, Mark Stefanski for his teaching on our interdependence with nature, to Susi Brennan and Quin Cowmy, both Bay Area mindfulness instructors, for their heartfelt lesson on gratitude, and to **Barbara Hirschfeld** for welcoming us into her retreat space.

Joyful Mind Project

## Children Creating Change: A Family Mindfulness Program

In November 2016, we completed the second year of our mindfulness + social engagement program for families. Affectionately known as C3, this program continues to be a fulfillment, and a true expression, of our commitment to practice.

The families in this program worked to generate empathy and awareness within themselves and in our communities through many acts of service and social engagement.

We created handmade gifts for the families and staff at **Oakland Kaiser Pediatric Oncology**, served our homeless population through the **Community Church of Sebastopol**, pressed 100 pounds of apples into juice for seniors receiving meals through **The Sonoma County Council on Aging**, delivered Valentines to **Golden Living Senior Center**, shared in the wisdom of the bees at **GaiaBees**, a biodynamic apiculture sanctuary, and prepared meal boxes for families in need with **The Catholic Worker**.

Together we are learning that our mindfulness is only complete when it includes others.



Apples generously donated by **Walker Apples** of Sebastopol. Pressed into juice at **GaiaWise**, a permaculture center in rural Sebastopol, CA, founded by **Kyra Auerbach**.

## Autumn School Programs:

### Sonoma Academy

A great source of joy this year was guest teaching at Sonoma Academy, a college preparatory high school located in Santa Rosa, with a thriving mindfulness elective course for students in grades 9-12. Special thanks to **Ellie Dwight**, Assistant Head of School, for the invitation!

### Sebastopol Independent Charter School

Starting in September, we implemented an 8-week program with the 5th and 6th grades at SICS. Students learned foundational practices, worked with difficult emotions, & practiced meeting resistance with open-mindedness. Special thanks to teachers **Laurie Hartsook** and **Autumn Rose Deason**.

### Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm

Our new Mindfulness for Athletes program launched in November with the boys and girls high school basketball teams at SWSF. Special thanks to **Coach Mike Carroll, Coaches Paul, Caleb, & Jefferson, & to all the players** for their ongoing dedication to the practice!

*“Every moment is a new beginning, another opportunity for tuning in, and perhaps coming – in that very moment – to see and feel and know ourselves and our children in a new and deeper way.”*

*- Jon Kabat-Zinn*



### Parenting as Practice: A Mindful Parent's Circle

In October 2016, we began a new mindfulness program for parents. This 6-week series created a space for parents to come together and pause together in the midst of our busy lives.

We met every-other Wednesday evening to sit in silence and to share our stories so that our own inner-wisdom could come forward and inform our parenting.

The group utilized a “listening circle” format, where deep listening and mindful speech created a safe container for honest sharing.

Some of the themes we explored included attuning to the wisdom of the body, allowing our children's sovereignty to emerge and bloom, being with difficult emotions, and transforming the judgmental mind.

Special thanks to **Sarah Emerson** for co-facilitating this group and opening the meditation hall to us at **Stone Creek Zen Center**.



**Special thanks to our guest teachers:**

Guest teachers provided rich and nourishing content to our students this year. We are grateful for the work of:

- Emily Foubert, Sustainability
- Indigo Cochran, Mindfulness
- Marie-Michel Tasse, Yoga
- Mark Stefanski, Mindfulness & Environmental Science
- Michael Thiele, Apiculture
- Quin Cowmy, Yoga & Mindfulness
- Susi Brennan, Mindfulness

**Special thanks to the schools we served in 2016:**

- Pathways Charter School
- Sebastopol Independent Charter School
- Sonoma Academy
- Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm
- West Side Elementary



Children gather near a hive at **GaiaBees** with apiculturist **Michael Thiele**, learning how the wisdom of honeybees can be an inspiration for the evolution of new paradigms of life.

**Testimonials:**

"Chelsea and the Joyful Mind Project provide a much needed service to Sonoma County. As new residents, we were searching for a place to land and begin to build community with like minded families. Chelsea took us under her wing, provided resources and connections, while offering her beautiful program to our twins. As a parent volunteer I had the honor of watching her reverent and thoughtful classes: From her initial greeting with each child to her closing circle, Chelsea gave the children tangible skills to foster meaningful relationship, help regulate emotion, and bring developmentally appropriate awareness to their daily experiences. Joyful Mind project is a model organization in how mindfulness can be a tool for providing "wrap around" care and education for the entire family."

**- Dr. Liza Fox, Clinical Psychologist, Mother to Hannah and Elijah, 8 years old**

"I want to raise my two daughters in a world where ideals such as generosity, love and compassion feel abundant and not scarce... Participating in Joyful Mind Project has been an opportunity for me to bring forth these ideals as part of my children's education AND to do it in community!"

**- Marie-Michel Tasse, Yoga Instructor, Mother to Malaya and Zumielle, ages 9 and 6**



## Gratitude to our Donors and Contributors:

Joyful Mind Project was made possible in 2016 by the generosity of these friends and families:

Alex Mustacich	Kyra Auerbach
Alexander Kahn	Laura Flores
Amelie Woolf	Leah Pullis
Autumn Phipps	Liza Fox
Barbara Hirschfeld	Marie-Michel Tasse
Breton Michel	Melanie McDonald
Cami Lewton	Michael Thiele
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Kamala Bennett	Tonia McCallum
Kasia Slabon	Tracy Roth
Kevin O'Connor	Trish Collins
Kim Alexander	Veronica Perez

## Call to Action!

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Your generosity helps ensure that our programs will continue serving the community for a long time. If you are moved to do so, **your tax-deductible donation may be made online [here](#)** or sent by mail to:

Joyful Mind Project  
PO Box 1002  
Sebastopol, CA  
95473

*“What you share, you strengthen and that which you share lasts forever as your true legacy.” –Lynn Twist*

To donate your time or to explore becoming a community partner, please feel welcome to contact Chelsea True at: [chelsea@JoyfulMindProject.org](mailto:chelsea@JoyfulMindProject.org) or by phone at (707) 540-1702.

To learn more about supporting Joyful Mind Project, Annual Membership, or upcoming programs, please visit our website at [JoyfulMindProject.org](http://JoyfulMindProject.org).

### ABOUT US:

The mission of Joyful Mind Project, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is to increase the well-being of youth, families, and school communities through the practice of secular mindfulness. With a whole-child perspective, Joyful Mind Project offers mindfulness education to schools and families in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Chelsea True is a Mindful Schools Certified Instructor and the founder of Joyful Mind Project. Her life has been supported by mindfulness for more than twenty years.

