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
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 gifs 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 though 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.

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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 Hirschfield for welcoming us into her retreat space.
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 Hartsok 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

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
- Alexander Kahn
- Amelie Woolf
- Autumn Phipps
- Barbara Hirschfeld
- Breton Michel
- Cami Lewton
- Catherine Vrabel
- Chris Fortin
- Colette Fafard
- Debbie Hammond
- Debra Gambrell
- Eric Cohen
- Erin Nantell
- Inge Schaefer
- Jaimie Mustacich
- Jenwynn Fauver
- Julia Stone
- Julie Brody
- Kalee Allcott
- Kamala Bennett
- Kasia Slabon
- Kevin O’Connor
- Kim Alexander
- Kyra Auerbach
- Laura Flores
- Leah Pullis
- Liza Fox
- Marie-Michel Tasse
- Melanie McDonald
- Michael Thiele
- Michelle Bachman
- Monique Camp
- Nancy Karsh
- Nikki McKenna
- Patricia Enochian
- Rebecca Stoddard
- Rusty Shores
- Sara Bleiweiss
- Sarah Emerson
- Sean Butler
- Sinziana Socol
- Stephanie Elliot
- Tiana Krahn
- Tonia McCallum
- Tracy Roth
- Trish Collins
- Veronica Perez
Call to Action!

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

To donate your time or to explore becoming a community partner, please feel welcome to contact Chelsea True at: 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.

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

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.