



THE COURAGE

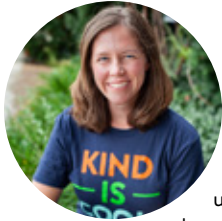
OF KINDNESS

...and the capacity for kids to change our world



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



Dear friends:

Reflecting back on the year, 2020 certainly brought its challenges. But it also brought unexpected opportunities to show our youth that no matter how uncertain life seems, and no matter how physically separated we may feel,

our community remains bonded through kindness and compassion.

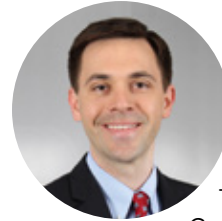
In a time when our mission was needed more than ever, **the Seeds of Caring community showed up in exceptional ways:**

- Our staff and board doubled down to do what we do best: help kids see and understand the needs in their communities, and develop the skills and confidence they'll need to go out and make a difference.
- Our funders elevated their support, with organizations like The Columbus Foundation and Kind Columbus awarding us capacity-building grants.
- Our families stepped up with generosity and commitment — and we added more than 6,000 child participants to our impact-making team.
- Week after week, our volunteers offered their porches as project collection sites, and their help in carting hundreds of thousands of donations to more than 40 non-profit partners.
- And our kids reached out and reached up. They shared new program ideas and championed innovative ways to ease the hardships they saw — and felt — during this strange year. They continue to amaze and inspire us.

2021 is already shaping up to be another year of growth for Seeds of Caring. As we cultivate a commitment to kindness and build bridges across our community, we'll continue to nurture our kids' capacity for changing the world. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Warmly,

Brandy Jemczura, MSW, LSW
Founder & Executive Director



Of the many words used to describe 2020 — trying, exhausting, unprecedented — you might be surprised at the one that stands out to me most: resilience.

The year began with Seeds of Caring positioned for tremendous growth and prepared to deepen our impact in the Central Ohio community. As the pandemic spread, its subsequent lockdowns forced our staff to quickly reimagine traditional in-person programming and how best to respond to the increased needs of our program participants and non-profit partners. With the continued generous support of both our community and corporate partners, Seeds of Caring not only survived 2020, but exceeded our growth and impact goals!

We also made significant progress toward building a strong future. We implemented a new, multi-year strategic action plan and invested in additional staff members and community partnerships, in order to grant kids across Central Ohio broad access to Seeds of Caring programs. The Board of Directors added seven new members in 2020 and helped update and standardize procedures that will ensure the growth and expansion of our programs are sustainable well into the future.

In these pages you'll read about some of the amazing outcomes our staff, volunteers, and program participants were able to achieve through incredibly hard work and an unwavering dedication to our mission. I am filled with gratitude for their tireless efforts and resilient spirits. And when I look back on all we've achieved together, I'm filled with hope and optimism for what lies ahead.

Joe Fullenkamp
Board Chairperson

OUR MISSION

Seeds of Caring empowers kids to create a kinder community with their hearts, hands, and minds.

OUR VISION

A kinder, more connected world- led by our youngest generation.

2020 Board of Directors

Joe Fullenkamp, Encova Insurance

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Crane Renovation Group

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Julie Porr, Community Educator

Claire Friedman,
OSU Wexner Medical Center

Executive Leadership Team:

Brandy Jemczura,
Founder and Executive Director

Noelle Juday,
Program Director

The volunteer team that makes it all possible:



Our 55 volunteers poured their hearts and their time into Seeds of Caring programs in 2020, helping to organize and lead projects, serve as porch drop sites, deliver donations to non-profit partners, prep supplies, and so much more. This talented, dedicated team delivered a volunteer value of \$36,584 (as calculated by Independent Sector), significantly reducing our program expenses. To each of you, thank you! We simply could not do it without you.

IMPACT

Impact on kids and families



9,114 child participants

empowered to create a kinder community (3x the amount in 2019)

1,925 kids

specifically engaged from underserved communities (4x the amount in 2019)



98% of grown-ups say volunteering with Seeds of Caring has **increased their kids' knowledge and understanding of community needs**

97% say their volunteer experiences with Seeds of Caring have **sparked important conversations within their family**

90% of grown-ups believe their kids have **increased confidence that they can choose kindness and make a difference**

"Thanks to Seeds of Caring, we are having important discussions about challenges in our world, in a way that brings awareness without overwhelming. The stories put a face to community challenges, helping kids relate and recognize the impact that they can have."

—Molly, parent participant

"Since participating with Seeds of Caring, I can see the wheels of empathy turning when my child sees someone he thinks might be struggling and wonders how he can help."

—parent participant

"Seeds of Caring has taught me that if someone is down, I can help them get back up."

—Sam, 8 year-old child participant

"Seeds of Caring gives our kids the opportunity to pick service projects close to their hearts & gives them guidance in learning the 'why & how' their efforts are making a difference."

— Kimberly, parent participant



Impact on our 40+ non-profit partners

Met critical needs of **41 non-profit partners**, providing **\$529,000 in volunteer value**

96% of non-profit partners say Seeds of Caring met a real need for their organization



1,463 holiday baking kits

for local food pantries



24,720 sack lunches

for hungry & homeless neighbors

"Every interaction we have had with Seeds of Caring and its families has been wonderful.... we are so grateful for all of your help!"

—local nonprofit partner



1,714 comfort care items

for youth entering foster care

and much more!

Impact on the wider community



223 meaningful service, social action, and community-building projects

for Columbus-area kids and their families



19,458 family volunteer hours

contributed to the community

"A big thank you to one of the most positive, powerful organizations in our city teaching our children (and grown-ups too) that kind hearts and helping hands can help heal a community!"

—Aimee, parent participant



ANTI-RACISM: LISTEN. LEARN. ACT.

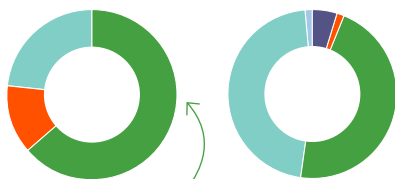
Children are naturally curious. Compassionate. And capable of engaging in big conversations. As racism rose in the consciousness of so many of us this year, Seeds of Caring called on our DEI committee to help develop a meaningful way for kids and families to listen, learn, and act.

The three-day program we created used video, read-alouds, art, interactive exercises, and more to explore the topics of systemic racism, privilege, and unequal representation. To help kids at Moms2B see themselves represented, our families created more than a hundred Brown Like Me care kits, which included children's books, toys, and dolls depicting black and brown skin tones. At the end of the program, families were invited to create their own anti-racism pledge.

Frank (6) summed it up perfectly when he explained, "I learned there is always a reason to hope things can be better for people who are not treated fairly. Kids like me can be the reason things get better."



FINANCIALS



Expenses (\$246,568)

● PROGRAM SERVICES:.....	\$157,175
● ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL:.....	\$32,481
● FUNDRAISING:.....	\$56,912*

* A portion of this was investment in fundraising infrastructure to set Seeds of Caring up for long-term sustainability

Revenue (\$316,343)

● CORPORATE DONATIONS.....	\$15,055
● EVENT FEES.....	\$5,075
● FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS.....	\$145,242
● INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS.....	\$146,614
● OTHER.....	\$4,357



"Our children have grown so much through our involvement with Seeds of Caring. They are now starting to understand that our community needs the support of each other and that they too can make a difference."

—Terry Johnson, parent participant



BRINGING IT HOME:

Outreach continues with our at-home curriculum

Thinking back to January 2020, it's almost impossible to remember what we had hoped the year would hold. When the words "pandemic" and "COVID" suddenly became part of our everyday vernacular, those hopes and our best-laid plans had to change. For Seeds of Caring, the in-person programs we'd offered our families simply weren't possible. But the need for kids to stay connected to their community stayed the same — and the needs of our non-profit partners skyrocketed. With their traditional volunteer power diminished due to circumstance, the Seeds of Caring team saw opportunity everywhere: to build empathy in kids as they experienced first-hand the unpredictability, instability, and isolation that some in our community face every day. And to demonstrate that kindness is both a commitment and a choice, one we can — we must — make when times feel toughest.

We shifted to an at-home curriculum, bringing those projects right into families' living rooms as we provided age-appropriate education, meaningful service projects, and opportunities for empathy and reflection. And because compassion sometimes takes courage, we lifted our chins and tackled the tough stuff — from rooting out racism to welcoming refugees to overcoming the despair of COVID-related social isolation.



"In a time where we found ourselves struggling to find purpose, Seeds of Caring filled that void in such a meaningful way."

—Kristen Johnson, parent participant

The Johnson family was an exceptional picture of this compassionate courage. With their parents' encouragement and support, Jalen and Jordan (both 7) and their little brother Caden (5) prioritized participation in eight Seeds of Caring service projects throughout 2020, logging more than 50 volunteer hours as a family.

Maya Angelou said, "If one has courage, nothing can dim the light that shines from within." The many family volunteers supporting Seeds of Caring's mission shone so beautifully in 2020. Each provided hope, a sense of purpose, and made meaningful connections during a time when our kids and community needed it more than ever before.

140 TOTAL AT-HOME service, social action, and community-building **PROJECTS** to keep kids connected to their community during the pandemic.

At-home projects included activity bags supporting refugee and **IMMIGRANT FAMILIES**, meal packs for kids facing **FOOD INSECURITY**, encouragement kits for **LGBTQ YOUTH**, and much more.



EXERCISING OUR EMPATHY MUSCLES

Every Seeds of Caring program is designed to engage kids' hearts, hands, and minds. Kindness and empathy are social-emotional skills that can be taught and practiced from the earliest ages. Through read-alouds, reflection questions, and interactive exercises, our programs help kids explore and exercise empathy. Throughout the year, kids shared messages of cheer and encouragement like "thank you for being you," "the world is tough but so are you," and "we are in this together." Imagine how different our world could be if our children have the chance to build their empathy muscles from the earliest age. Let's make it a reality.

"I did it to help kids that needed our help. So they feel loved like I do."

—Abigail, 5 year old child participant



MEETING NEEDS TODAY.

Building compassionate leaders for tomorrow.

Where Patrick (age 12) and Aggie (age 9) saw hardship, they also saw an opportunity to serve. After more than three years as Seeds of Caring volunteers, they were poised and prepared for this moment, ready to step into compassionate leadership when it was so very needed. We helped them create a video calling all caring kids to join them in making sure their neighbors, those experiencing hunger and even homelessness, were being cared for.

Thousands of kids heard — and answered — the call to service.

Throughout 2020, the kind kids of our city provided 24,419 sack lunches for The Open Shelter, Van Buren Shelter, and St. Stephens Community House. A handful of these kind kids included sisters Katharine (9), Izzy (7), Annabelle (5), and Hannah-Claire (3), who recognize that helping others is a "must do," versus a "can do." Their weekly commitment to packing sack lunches for Seeds of Caring integrates a sense of service into their daily lives. And while service to others makes the girls feel good, they understand that's not its primary purpose; even at their young ages the girls are developing a deep recognition of the needs of others, along with an appreciation that the needs of others is reason enough to help.



"My hope for our community is for everyone to have a home, to live equally, to live in peace, and for everyone to have food."

—Katharine, age 9



"These lunches are the highlight of the week for the recipients. You are doing such great work and we really appreciate it!"

—St. Stephens Community House

During a pitstop one afternoon dropping off lunches, one of the girls noticed a woman at the park and said to her dad, "I think she's hungry and needs help. Can we give her a lunch?" Mom Julie believes that awareness of a person in need — people who are so often "unseen" by anyone else — is a direct result of their engagement with Seeds of Caring. She says, "We should all, always, be trying to expand who we see. You have to care enough to see before you can know how to help — I'm so grateful we've had the opportunity to expand our kids' vision of the world and the people in it."

Thousands of kids and families teamed together in 2020 to provide **24,419 SACK LUNCHES** for hungry and homeless neighbors

KIND IS COOL.

WHAT KINDNESS IS TO ME

Kindness is more than a moment of common courtesy. It's bigger than any single act of service. Our Seeds of Caring kids know this — and in a year when kindness was needed more than ever, these small heroes delivered in big ways.



"Kindness is standing up for what's right."



"Kindness is picking up litter."



"Kindness is making people feel like they matter."

KINDNESS CORPS:

Shifting the narrative

One of the most important messages of 2020 was that of equality and inclusion. A primary goal for Seeds of Caring became ensuring that all children have equal access to our programs — and that all children grow up knowing they can be leaders and change-makers in their communities.

Through outreach programming, we were able to welcome 1,925 child participants from underserved areas to Seeds of Caring (a 324% increase over 2019!). Many of these kids participated in our inaugural Kindness Corps program. For nine weeks, the student-group program engaged elementary-age kids in meaningful service projects and empowered them to embrace Seeds of Caring's 3 Key Truths for Kids:

I CAN CHOOSE KINDNESS.

I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

I CAN BE A FRIEND TO ANYONE.

By asking kids to consider not what they need but rather all that they have to **give** to their communities, we help them understand that they can be the change they want to see in our world. Seeds of Caring partnered with St. Stephens Community House, Columbus Recreation & Parks, and LSS CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence, just to name a few, to carry out the Kindness Corps program. Through innovative, video-based education, we're able to engage kids' hearts and minds as they learn about senior social isolation, environmental stewardship, racism, and more. And by providing all the resources and supplies kids need to put their hands to work making donations for local non-profits — from activity kits for Children's Hospital to snack bags for hungry neighbors — we're making sure that **all** children recognize their value and their own ability to help others.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

PARTICIPATE IN A PROJECT

Want to help your kids or students build empathy and realize their potential to make an impact? Register for a service, social action, or community building project today!

PARTNER WITH US

Are you a nonprofit, an educator, a business, or a community leader who believes in the power of kindness and the capacity for kids to change our world? Let's talk!

SHARE YOUR SKILLS

Interested in becoming a leadership team volunteer, helping behind the scenes with supply prep, or contributing your talents in technology, photography, or another skill? Contact us.

MAKE A DONATION

Help us grow our capacity to empower thousands of young children — our future leaders — to work for the change they want to see. We have big plans for creating a brighter, better tomorrow — join us by making a generous donation, including us in your planned giving strategy, or providing an in-kind gift.

Visit www.seedsofcaring.org for more information on how to get involved with Seeds of Caring in any of these ways.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

2020 Lead Supporters

Lisa Ingram	Candace Klepacz	Purbi Sahai	Linda Cole
The Sullivan Family	Torie Selhorst	Kristin Labosky	Nick & Patricia Kervin
Matt Steciow	Peter & Julia Geldis	Cindy & Kevin Hackett	Ann Geldis
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Brenda Tobey	Martha Rockwell	Kristen Biller	Emily Smith

Community & Corporate Sponsors



A huge thanks to our 2020 Kindness Coalition members, each of whom raised \$1,000+ to pave the way for growing Seeds of Caring's impact and programs.

Colleen Davis	Marisa LaPalomente
Erin Johnson	Melanie Bryan Moon
Jen Diamond	Molly Barrington
Jen Kerns	Nancy Willis
Jennifer Meyer	Peter Geldis
Jerry Friedman	Sarah James
Julie Porr	Sheila Radcliff
Justin Parisi	Tiffany Berger
Keri Macwhinney	Tiffany Hannika
Lauren	Todd Walter
Krasnodembski	Torie Selhorst
Leigh Fullenkamp	Amanda Barcus
Lyndsey Dudley	



Caring Collective members are partners in kindness who contribute to Seeds of Caring on a monthly basis, allowing us to sustain and expand our impact far and wide. Many thanks to these inaugural members:

Kelli Traber	Brandy & Tomasz
Heather Shea	Jemczura
Julie Porr	Candace Klepacz
Becca Apfelstadt	Sarah & Jeremy
Torie Selhorst	Jorgenson
Kristen Johnson	Douglas Riggle
Jamee Parish	Jenny Graham
Shirley Brooks-Jones	Stacie Ware
Gurjeet Kaur	Brittany Beck
Shanda Welch	Matthew & Tegan
Phil Radliff	Lehman
Erin Brown	Jennifer Knotsmed
Stephanie Vulhop	Ritwik Chatterjee
Denise Burdette	Michelle Scantland



“I will be the first to admit I got a little emotional about how much your group donated! I have never seen anything like this before – it was so thoughtful, purposeful and individual to our families. Thank you will never suffice!”

–Jeremy Hollon, Community Refugee and Immigration Services



WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR OUR 2020 NONPROFIT PARTNERS!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Seeds of Caring’s goal of creating a kinder, more connected world, led by our youngest generation, would be impossible to imagine without the shared vision of so many incredible nonprofits. We’re honored by these partnerships and committed to lifting them as they lift us.

Together, we’re working to improve our communities and grow our children into community ambassadors and activists. Just some of the issues our caring kids and families are working to combat, right here in Central Ohio, include:

Homelessness & hunger

Systemic racism

Stigmas surrounding developmental disabilities and LGBTQ+

Senior isolation & loneliness

Environmental challenges

“Seeds of Caring embraced what 2020 brought in such a powerful, moving-forward-together way. I learned from and was inspired by it all.”

–Boo Krucky, Goodwill Columbus



SEEDS OF CARING

LEARN MORE AT
www.seedsofcaring.org

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