

BREAKING

NEW

GROUND



SEEDS of CARING

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



This time last year, we were preparing for our biggest year yet. We knew 2023 would bring newness and growth, and we knew it would hold both challenges and celebrations. Most of all, we knew it would require tenacity, bravery, and the support of our whole Seeds of Caring family.

And what a truly tremendous year it turned out to be! New programs, new places, new participants — all leading to an abundance of new opportunities.

We may have started as a small seed, but from our very beginning we've had grand plans. As we've grown year by year, we've stayed steady, focused, and true to our mission: to empower our youth to create a kinder community with their hearts, hands, and minds. And now, more than ever, it's about strengthening our root system to support our growth. Because, after all, it's our roots that enable us to stretch upward and reach higher.

As we share 2023's success stories and statistics, we hope each and every one of you will take a moment to commemorate them with us. The collaboration and dedication shown by our families, kids, educators, nonprofit partners, funders, donors, volunteers, community leaders and more have provided this small seed with the nourishment and encouragement needed to make a real impact.

We simply could not do it without you.

Warmly,

Brandy Jemczura, MSW, LSW
Founder & Executive Director

Candace Klepacz
Current Board Chairperson



2023 Board of Directors

Candace Klepacz, Pepper Construction,
Board Chair

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Melanie Moon, Community Volunteer

Kobe Osei, KPMG

Justin Parisi, Fidelity Investments

Victoria Selhorst, JPMorgan Chase

Brandy Jemczura,
Founder & Executive Director

The volunteer team that makes it all possible:



Our team of more than 100 grown-up volunteers poured their hearts and their time into Seeds of Caring programs in 2023, helping to organize and lead projects, serve as porch drop sites, deliver donations to nonprofit partners, prep supplies, and so much more. This talented, dedicated team delivered a volunteer value of \$35,000+ (as calculated by Independent Sector), significantly reducing our program expenses. To each of you, thank you! Together, we make the difference.

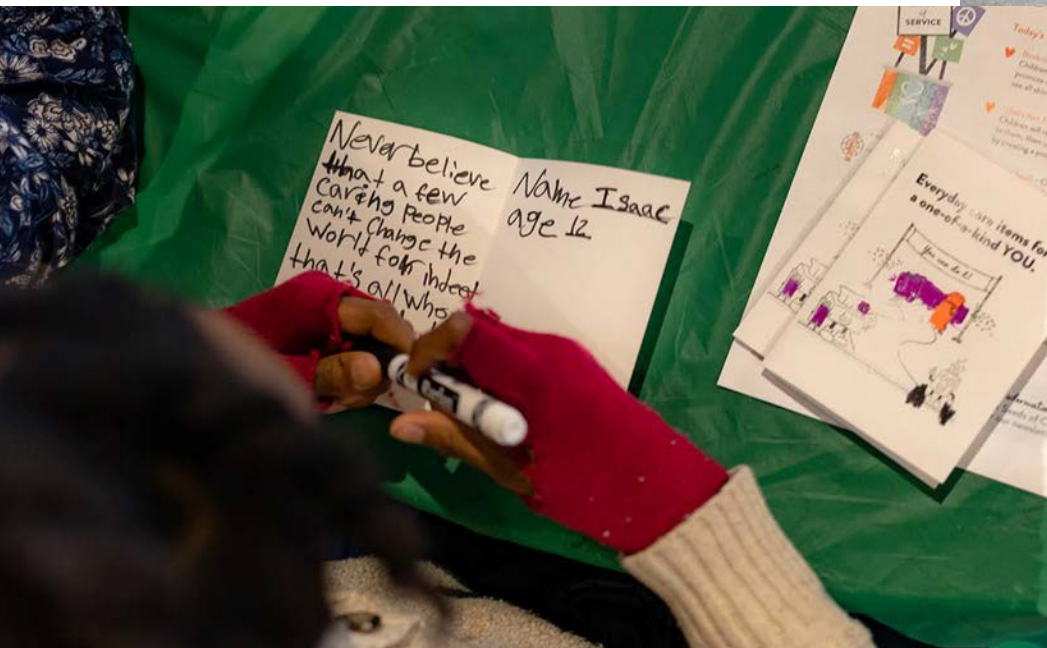
OUR MISSION

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

In 2023, kids provided **\$150,928** in material donations to our nonprofit partners!

OUR VISION

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



2023 IMPACT



93 LOCAL SCHOOLS MOBILIZED

to celebrate World Kindness Day in partnership with The Columbus Foundation's Center for HumanKindness



1,018 STUDENTS INSPIRED

to help their community through our 6-unit Kindness Corps program



1,356 BUDDY BOXES

of food packed for local children experiencing food insecurity



\$150,928 IN MATERIAL DONATIONS

to meet critical community needs



8,598 CARDS AND CRAFTS

for local seniors to combat social isolation



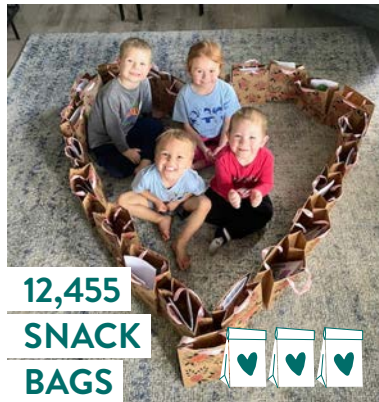
31,819* CHILD PARTICIPANTS

empowered to create a kinder community



50,752 VOLUNTEER HOURS

contributed to the community by kids, groups, and families



12,455 SNACK BAGS

for local shelters and food pantries



6,898 BOOKS

collected to support youth literacy efforts

and much more!

97% of grown-up participants say Seeds of Caring programs **increased their kids' knowledge and understanding of community needs**

94% of grown-up participants say their kids **demonstrated empathy more frequently for others** after participating with Seeds of Caring

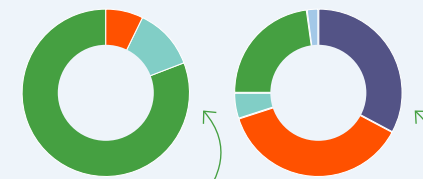
91% of grown-up participants say their kids **showed more initiative in making a difference in their community** after participating with Seeds of Caring

92% of nonprofit partners said Seeds of Caring **meets a real need for their organization**

*number tracks meaningful program touchpoints with child participants, not unique number of kids



FINANCIALS



Expenses (\$628,958)

PROGRAM SERVICES	\$507,048
DEVELOPMENT	\$75,652
ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL	\$46,588

Revenue (\$743,869)

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$245,454
FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS	\$274,661
EARNED INCOME	\$35,276
CORPORATE DONATIONS	\$173,236
OTHER	\$15,242



WE CAME.
WE LAUNCHED.
WE GREW!



“It is so important that children learn to serve others. Seeds of Caring does the heavy lifting for parents by connecting with community needs, curating appropriate projects, and creating educational materials that are digestible for kids. I’m so thankful Seeds of Caring chose Indianapolis to help us create a kinder community through the next generation.”
—Marci, Indy resident and parent participant



For more than seven years, Seeds of Caring has been rooted in Columbus, Ohio, where we’ve watched what kindness can do in the hands of a child. And now, thanks to homegrown support and some hearty Midwestern change-making, we’re spreading the love in our first expansion city: hello, Indianapolis!

As we got to know our new home, along with a bunch of caring kids and grown-ups, we worked together toward creating a kinder, more connected world. Under the guidance of nine devoted Indianapolis launch board members and 40 family ambassadors, each of whom lent their unique expertise to help facilitate our expansion, we made a smooth landing into the Indy community.

In our inaugural project, 340 kid participants – WOW! – created 1,799 snack packs for Ascension St. Vincent House and Ronald McDonald House Charities, far exceeding our expectations. And we were just getting started.

It seemed everyone was ready to roll up their sleeves and dig in. Families and educators alike were thrilled to have turnkey ways to involve young people in meaningful service to the community. And so many incredible kids were eager to take part, even recruiting their friends, neighbors, and families to help.



Our growth into 2024 will surely build on this momentum. To facilitate that growth, we’ll be introducing in-person programs to the community so we can be face-to-face with our volunteer families, and we will continue to grow and deepen our alliance with 20+ nonprofit partners around the Circle City. We can’t wait to see where we go from here!

Throughout 2023, our Indianapolis accomplishments included:

- 17 service projects** completed
- 3,276 child participants** engaged in making a positive difference

INDIANAPOLIS LAUNCH BOARD

- Abigail Coleman, Johnson, Grossnickle, and Associates**
- Brandi Allen, United Way of Central Indiana**
- Candycce Offett, AES Corporation**
- Drew Sherman, State of Indiana**
- Evan Kreutzer, Ascension St. Vincent Hospital**
- Fabiha Islam, United Way of Central Indiana**
- Kylie Conway, Broadcast Journalist**
- Lade Akande, University High School of Indiana**
- Meghan Ward-Bopp Paden, MySherri**
- Zachary Jacob, Benesch Law**

3,350 volunteer hours provided to the community

18 nonprofit partners served



PEER-TO-PEER POWER



“Beyond letting my kids experience the value of service and helping others, I also use the Seeds of Caring service experiences to build community within my school. I partner my middle school students with grades K-5 and allow the middle school students to lead and guide the younger students through the projects.”

— Mike, Our Lady of Peace teacher



Grown-ups are okay, but what’s cooler than getting to see a fellow kid do something great? Throughout 2023, we watched peer leadership in action. We introduced our Peer Leaders Aspiring for a New Tomorrow (PLANT) Cohort, a group of more than 70 kids, ages 11-14, who are busy learning how to lead events, and each other. With high-fives always on hand, our Peer Leaders remind our youngest participants what a huge difference they’re making in their communities.

dedication of principal Jim Silcott and teacher Mike Kaylor — and provided more than \$900 in material donations to benefit nonprofit partners. **St. Mary School’s** fifth graders Connor and Chase made dog toys and treats for the Franklin County Dog Shelter, just one of the projects they spearheaded this year. Along with their classmates, the twins worked hands-on with their kindergarten buddies to lead them through the projects, having a huge ripple effect of giving and impact on our community.

In two central Ohio Catholic schools, we saw more stellar examples of how peer leadership can work to mobilize hundreds of kids in service. Students at **Our Lady of Peace** completed eight different service-based learning projects for us in 2023 — thanks to the

Watching our older Seeds of Caring kids lead their younger peers in service has been extraordinary. For the youngest among us to see their big-kid role models prioritize and commit to this work is a powerful example.



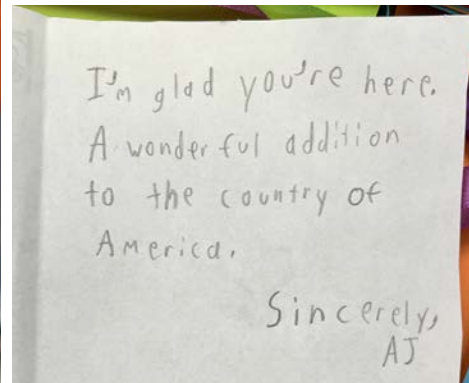
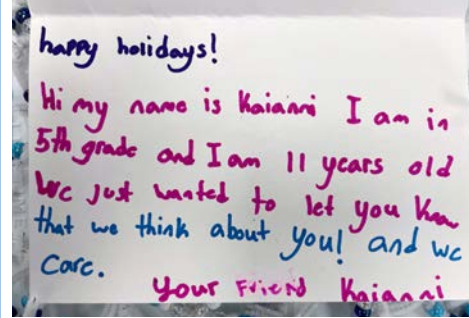


MAKING THE CASE FOR CARING



“When volunteer opportunities are provided appropriately and with respect for the sensitive backgrounds and situations of participants, it becomes possible to eliminate the historically dangerous ‘us versus them’ mindset.”

— Researcher Chris Jarvis



Research shows parents whose kids volunteered were **33% more likely to say their child was in “very good” to “excellent” health** compared to parents whose kids did not volunteer. They were also **18-35% less likely to say their child had battled depression or anxiety** in the past year.

(UTHealth Houston School of Public Health)

One longitudinal study tracked 753 students from the ages of 5-25 and found that those students who possessed **skills like kindness, cooperation, and empathy at a young age** had higher rates of academic success, lower rates of drug use and criminal activity, and **better mental health in adulthood.**

(American Journal of Public Health)

Did you know that children as young as two can benefit from practicing kindness and empathy? And that it can lead to everything from greater physical and emotional health, to increased civic engagement, and improved academic performance?

These are the skills we seek to foster in our Seeds of Caring kids. Because their service is no small thing — research tells us why, and just how much, it’s needed: For every \$1 spent on effective social-emotional learning programming, the return on investment is \$11 in long-term benefits to our students, schools, and communities.

And while social connection is as essential to our well-being as food, water, and shelter, loneliness is unfortunately at an all-time high according to a 2023 Public Health Advisory issued by the U.S. Surgeon General. Volunteering can provide a protective salve, playing a key role in addressing bias and acting as a positive force for uniting communities across socioeconomic barriers.

The 2023 holiday season gave us plenty of positive proof. Our Indy kids showed up in a big way, making crafts and cards for more than 1,000 seniors. And as our Columbus families sang carols for a senior living facility,

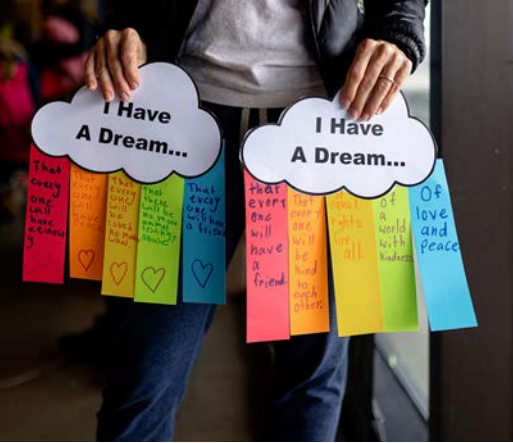
a resident cried happy tears. Afterward, one of our kid carolers reflected, **“Wow! I didn’t realize how much me being here would matter to the people who live here.”**

Every day we’re building bridges offering meaningful social connection, and bringing people together. The research shows us this work is critical for our young people and our communities. We couldn’t agree more!

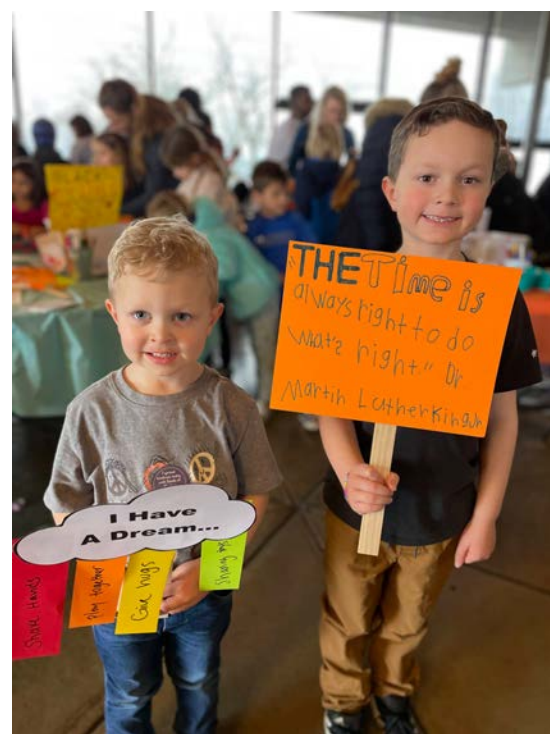
“Seeds of Caring helps families to talk about how we are both similar to and different from others, creating a sense of common ground and shared community. It also helps us with perspective-taking and empathy.”

— Louise Chan, a child psychologist whose own children participate with Seeds of Caring

Sources: Mayo Clinic, National Institutes of Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Columbia University



Our 2023 MLK Day of Service in partnership with The King Arts Complex was the biggest one yet, drawing 1,051 kids to the Ohio History Center to honor the work of Dr. King through service and speaking out.



Every day Seeds of Caring works to shape a better, brighter tomorrow. When we see kids hard at work like at our 2023 MLK Day of Service, we are reminded that the future is bright. Imagine the world that is possible with kind, thoughtful, empathetic kids leading the way.



“When you help others, it makes you feel good and it makes others feel good too. Sometimes helping other people makes those people want to help others. And kindness keeps spreading.”

— Gabriella, age 7



KINDNESS KEEPS SPREADING

One child’s dedication to helping her community can be an inspiration to us all. Gabriella and her mom, Syreeta, participated in more than 40 volunteer projects with us in 2023 — even two in one day! What a wonderful example of how choosing kindness over and over again makes a real difference.



WHY OUR DONORS GIVE

There’s no question that the generosity of our donors and funders has propelled our growth in huge ways. We’re humbled by and grateful for their support, and want to shine a light on why they’ve chosen to contribute to the work we’re doing.

“While reading, writing, and math are vital, the skills that Seeds of Caring teaches — empathy, tolerance, sharing, concern for others — improve the fabric of our society.”

— Tim, volunteer and donor

“As a mother of biracial children, there are tough conversations in our future. Seeds of Caring helps me find the words and helps my kids understand them.”

— Markita, parent participant and donor

“Amazon Web Services is committed to supporting our future generations, and the positive impact Seeds of Caring makes is changing lives. Their care and focus on equitable access are primary reasons AWS InCommunities will continue to support the wonderful work Seeds of Caring delivers in our neighborhoods.”

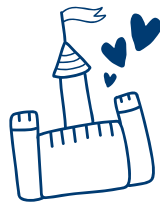
— Tim Harman, Community Engagement Manager, Amazon Web Services (AWS)

Seeds of Caring was able to double the amount of environmentally-focused programming offered in 2023, thanks to the support of AWS InCommunities.



KINDNESS RULES IN THE CASTLE

Corporate partners are critical to our impact here at Seeds of Caring, and for the past five years, White Castle has helped drive our growth forward with the power of their partnership. They've worked diligently alongside us to create a kinder, more connected world, supporting and sponsoring our annual MLK Day of Service in Columbus, as well as our inaugural MLK event in Indy. Their foundation has funded our Kindness Corps program for four years, helping us increase our Columbus City School partner classrooms by more than 60% in 2023. White Castle is committed to building strong, thriving communities and they understand that every child, regardless of circumstances, deserves to know their power to be a change-maker. We are truly grateful for their support.



“As a family-owned business, meaningful volunteerism is a large part of our culture. Our relationship with Seeds of Caring has allowed us to extend timely, wide-ranging and relevant projects to our team in a turnkey format.”

— *Bozana Byers, Senior Director of People and Culture, White Castle, and Seeds of Caring Board Member*

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

2023 Lead Supporters

Tim & Natalie McCarthy	Ray Crook	Pam & Ed Reik	Stephen Gibson
Dana & Forrest Schwartz	Mike LaRocco	Melanie Moon	Emily Smith
The Tim & Marge Heron Family	Alan & Peg Scantland	Gretchen Taylor	Laura Baker
Sandy Pond	Sara Leech	Brenda Tobey	Nikhil Hunshikatti
Jennifer & Jason Meyer	Matt & Emily	Nancy Curley	Sonali Kandhari
Aaron McGreevy	Del Monaco	Aaron & Stacie Ware	Kurt Thomas
	Jenny Graham	Cindy & Kevin Hackett	Candace Klepacz

2023 Community & Corporate Supporters



A huge thanks to our 2023 Kindness Coalition members and matching gift donors. Together, they raised \$57,089 to pave the way for growing Seeds of Caring's impact and programs.

Matching donors:

Bozana Byers
Ray & Phylis Crook
Nikhil Hunshikatti
Rob & Susan Littleton
Aaron McGreevy
Sarah & Doug Pirtle
Alan & Peg Scantland

Members:

Laura Baker
Nevin Bansal
Molly Barrington
Michelle Bath
Helen Cosner
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Laura Duffy
Lindsey Fischbach

Peter Geldis
Lindsay Harrison
Erin Johnson
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Emily McKenna
Kristin Memmer

Aimee Merino
Jamie Merz
Jennifer Meyer
Justin Parisi
Sheila Radcliff
Susan Stein
Markita Suttle
Chris & Colleen Hopkins



Many thanks to our 2023 Caring Collective members who are partners in kindness and contribute to Seeds of Caring on a monthly basis, allowing us to sustain and expand our impact far and wide.

Becca Apfelstadt	Pauline Crispin	Surjeet Kaur	Anthony Radcliff
Laura Baker	Blair Everett	Candace Klepacz	Phil Radliff
Brittany Beck	Lauren Flannery	Jennifer Knotsmed	Victoria Selhorst
Kristen Biller	Melissa Garrison	Sara Leech	Heather Shea
Skylar Blannin	Robin Gilbert	Tegan Lehman	Emily Smith
Stephanie Botkin	Heather Goss	Scott Leyshon	Markita Suttle
Shirley Brooks-Jones	Jenny Graham	Aromal Lilly	Gretchen Taylor
Erin Brown	Erin Huffman-Richard	Keri Macwhinney	Kelli Traber
Denise Burdette	Nikhil Hunshikatti	Melanie Moon	Stephanie Troiano
Ritwik & Anwasha Chatterjee	Brandy Jemczura	Jamee Parish	Stephanie Vulhop
Fred & Melanie Collier	Sarah & Jeremy Jorgenson	Alisa Paulsen	Phirunny Wang
Megan Collins	Noelle Juday	Julie Porr	Stacie Ware
Emily Cornett		Jocelyn Probasco	Shanda Welch

SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE!



AND THE AWARD GOES TO...



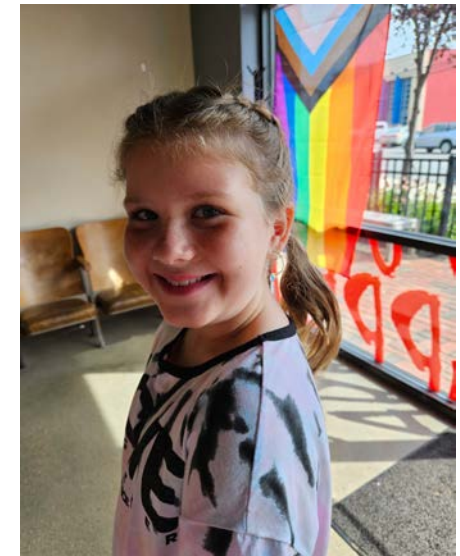
700+ central Ohio youth learned about inclusion and celebrated athletes of all abilities, packing 1,321 Good Luck Kits for Special Olympics Ohio to distribute at various state-level competitions throughout the year. We were honored to accept SOO's Community Partner of the Year award on their behalf because make no mistake: the 700+ kids are the true winners in this story.



NOT YOUR TYPICAL BIRTHDAY PARTY



To celebrate her 9th birthday, Rylan gathered her friends and family to make 34 Compassion Kits for their unhoused neighbors. She said, "I like to help other people and I thought my friends would like doing it. I got to show them that it's good to help and you should do that more when you can." The world could use a million more Rylans — that's why Seeds of Caring works so hard to provide kids like her a chance to thrive and grow.



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 kinder world. Join us by making a generous donation, including us in your planned giving strategy, or providing an in-kind gift. And don't forget, Seeds of Caring is now able to accept gifts of stock and other appreciated assets.



Visit www.seedsofcaring.org for more information on how to get involved.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR OUR NONPROFIT PARTNERS!

Columbus, Ohio Partners

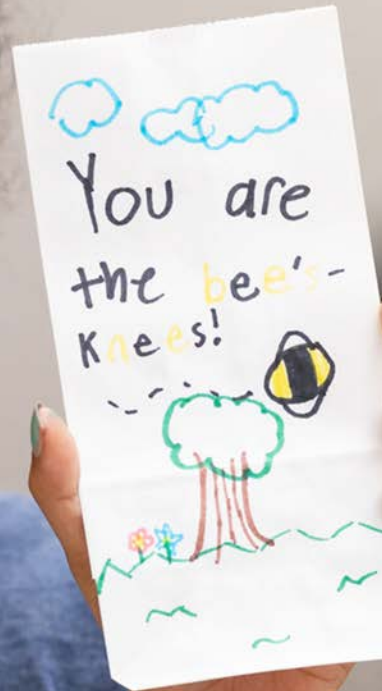


Indianapolis, Indiana Partners





LEARN MORE AT
www.seedsofcaring.org



“One idea I have is to have a group of kids at recess whose job it is to play with kids who are all alone. They could be called Kindness Growers.”

—Micah, child participant

“Seeds of Caring helps kids to see themselves as both someone who can receive love, kindness, and help — but also someone who can give those things as well.”

— Crystal, Seeds of Caring supporter