

Children's Fund announces new program with “Botanical Benefits”

Nonprofits partner to provide experience in nature



A variety of color, form, and texture draws visitors into the 47-acre garden by the sea.

FORT BRAGG, CA — (March 23, 2021) — Hundreds of underserved families will soon receive free access to the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens.

The Mendocino Coast Children’s Fund (MCCF) is providing 200 local families with memberships to the Botanical Gardens. The “Botanical Benefits” program will increase access to the healing power of nature for our community’s hard-working families in a safe and beautiful space.

The memberships will be distributed through MCCF partners including local schools, agencies, and programs serving underserved communities. Families for this program will be selected from the geographical area of Westport to Elk and inland to Comptche. Families are chosen confidentially by professional medical and school staff.

"One year into our community experience with COVID, we know that it is essential for families to have access to safe outdoor spaces that allow children to play and explore the natural world freely," says Annie Liner, Executive Director of MCCF. "We are delighted to partner with the Gardens in providing this opportunity to local families so they can share time with their children that enhances their well-being."

Visiting the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens on a regular basis gives families a chance to spend quality time together outdoors in a safe and beautiful space. Doctors tell us this is a key way to maintain mental health and reduce stress. A recent article links time spent in nature to a multitude of health benefits. “As people spend more time indoors,” states Betsy Morris, Senior Writer for the [The Wall Street Journal](#), “a mountain of scientific research says spending time in nature is critical to health and increases longevity.” Research suggests just two hours spent

“being in fresh air, under trees and away from cars and concrete” can provide an array of therapeutic effects.

By joining together, MCCF and the Gardens hope to expand this program so that more children can chase butterflies and smell flowers. "We are very happy to be partnering with the Children's Fund, it's truly a win-win-win. MCCF will be able to further their mission in a new and exciting way, the Gardens will reach a new audience, and those families will benefit from our healthful and inspiring environment," says Gardens' Executive Director, Molly Barker.

The initiation of the Botanical Benefits program was made possible through the support of MCCF donors and the Community Foundation of Mendocino County. You can support these efforts by donating to either the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund or the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, please mark "Botanical Benefits" on your donation.



Mendocino Coast Children's Fund is the oldest grassroots, nonprofit advocate for low income and at risk children in Mendocino County. From Westport to Gualala (and inland to Comptche), the volunteer-run organization provides children with essentials and necessities, hopes and dreams, opportunities and activities. For more information call 707-937-6111, or visit www.mccf.info.



Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens is a unique natural treasure located on the bluffs of Northern California. Over the past 60 years, the nonprofit botanical garden has cultivated a wide array of plants that are both sustainable and beautiful. The Gardens are located at 18220 North Highway One in Fort Bragg, California. For more information call 707-964-4352, or visit www.gardenbythesea.org.

Morris, B. (2021, February 14). "For Better Health During the Pandemic, Is Two Hours Outdoors the New 10,000 Steps?" *The Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/for-better-health-during-the-pandemic-is-two-hours-outdoors-the-new-10-000-steps-11613304002>