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Rumford Family Center Garden

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At the Rumford Family Center, a 12 bed emergency shelter for homeless families, we were busy this spring planning our garden. We had a successful smaller garden last season, but really wanted to expand it so our guests could access more fresh vegetables. Thanks to Kitchen Gardeners International's Sow it Forward Grant, we were able to accomplish our mission of expanding the garden and adding more of a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables for our guests to try! Thank you KGI!

This spring, we planned out our garden and decided what we would want to plant. We designed the layout of the garden and purchased needed supplies and gardening tools with the gift certificate provided by KGI. We had to put in a lot of work to prepare the soil and start the seeds. All of our shleter guests participated in the process, especially the children. We watched the seedlings grow day by day, prepared the soil, and finally were ready to plant. We held a "planting party" where everyone rolled up their sleeves to help. The children were given small trowels and child-sized wheelbarrows. They helped so much and enjoyed the afternoon. All of the parents and staff pitched in too. It was a great opportunity for many of the families we support to learn a new skill.

Now, the plants are coming up, the garden is being maintained by guests at our shelter, and the children are eagerly awaiting the day when they can pick vegetables. Every day the children ask us if it is ready yet. They help pull weeds, water, and look after our garden. The strawberries were a huge success and we can't wait to harvest.

This project brought everyone together at our shelter and is a source of pride for our guests and staff. With a little effort and a lot of help from KGI, we have built something together to be proud of! We are so appreciative of the Sow it Forward support.

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