

Northshire Day School

# Growth Report

2022-2023 Annual Report



Part of a Greater  
Community

# Meet our Talented Team

## Board of Trustees

**Jon Comeau**, President, Building & Grounds Chair

**Jacquelyne Wilson**, Vice President

**Marissa Eustace**, Secretary

**Robyn V. Harrington**, Treasurer,  
Finance Committee Chair

**Molly Hemkens**, Member, Marketing  
Committee Chair

**Irene Nadler**, Member

**Danny Sawtelle**, Member,  
Development Committee Chair

**Mary Welford**, Member



*Where children grow and thrive*

## Staff

**Laurie Metcalfe**, Executive Director

**Jen Luty**, Development Director

**Jane Gras**, Curriculum Director

**Kelly Roemmelt**, Administrative Director

**Tammy Coulter**, Food Service Director

**Billie Jean Ackert**, Saplings

**Veda Bassett**, Multi-Classroom

**Lesley Burdick**, Willow

**Kimberly Capps**, Aspen

**Andrew Coler**, Evergreen

**Michael Cool**, Maple

**Valerie Coulter**, Kitchen Assistant

**Lucie Daley**, Evergreen

**Michelle Danforth**, Multi-Classroom

**Jayde Dufresne**, Aspen

**Ashley Eaton**, Willow

**Emma Gras**, Birch

**Karen Harrington**, Maple

**Megan Hewes**, Multi-Classroom

**Dani Jesmonth**, Substitute

**Julee Jones**, Sycamore & Willow

**Hope LaBatt**, Saplings & Birch

**Courtney Lynch**, Hickory

**Stephanie Muñoz Wells**, Multi-Classroom

**Nicole Nichols**, Sycamore

**Saranda Osmanovic**, Evergreen

**Annie Peters**, Substitute

**Jen Rodriguez**, Family Tree Coordinator

**Nadine Rorden**, Multi-Classroom

**Maggie Rubick**, Mentor Teacher

**Pearl Schramm**, Maple

**Lauren Smilovich**, Birch

**April Strock**, Aspen

**Molly Watson**, Sycamore

**Sarah Whiteside**, Substitute

**Becky Wilder**, Hickory

Northshire Day School is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

## Our Mission

Northshire Day School cultivates a nurturing and inclusive community where children grow and thrive.

Northshire Day School has earned 5 STARS in the Vermont Step Ahead Recognition System.



## Defining our Work

Northshire Day School is a member of the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VTAEYC), which defines our profession as early childhood education, and our teachers as early childhood educators.

According to VTAEYC, “this helps people in our communities understand the importance of providing high quality early experiences for young children, and it helps people learn to view early childhood educators as the professionals who do this work.”

We value the work of our early childhood educators, because our children deserve high quality early childhood education.

*Instead of “daycare,” we say:*



**School!**

*Why?*



**Because we’re  
here to learn!**



Whether you call it “school,” “preschool,” “playschool,”  
teacher’s class or house, or by its program name...  
**early childhood education is education!**



Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children



## From our Families

"I love that teachers share small stories about my children's day. They are able to tell me something fun or positive that my child did or said. I feel both **my children are genuinely cared for and respected at Northshire Day School.**"



"The early childhood educators are great! Our daughter loves coming to school and **her teachers are very caring and involved in her development.**"



"**My child's teachers are incredibly knowledgeable and supportive** when I have a concern or need help navigating behavioral struggles, like getting out the door on time!"





## From the Desk of the Executive Director



As a community-based non-profit organization, Northshire Day School is committed to serving the community who has generously invested in us. Together, we create an enriching environment for local families and I am excited to share our annual report with you.

Our mission to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive community where children grow and thrive has become even more rewarding this past year. Our community's investment in Northshire Day School has allowed us to go further by working together to meet the needs of children and families.

This past year included the development of family services at NDS. Knowing children don't grow up in programs, they grow up in families, it is important that we are able to provide comprehensive support. The significant addition of our NDS Family Tree Program promotes protective factors and provides resources including tuition relief, service coordination and support to help all families thrive during everyday circumstances as well as persevere during times of stress or crisis.

With the support of our community partners through grants and donations, we were also able to be culturally and linguistically responsive to families by offering regional educators a 12-week training series, *Spanish Language in the Early Childhood Classroom*.

NDS employs a highly qualified workforce with 94% of our educators credentialed to lead an early childhood classroom. 65% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher and we have eight full-time licensed teachers with several others currently working on licensure. With the investment from our community, we are able to pay more competitive wages to better retain and attract early childhood educators to Northshire Day School. We also have educators leading regional initiatives and being recognized for their leadership in early childhood education.

These are just a few things highlighted in this year's annual report. I hope you enjoy learning more about all the wonderful things NDS has accomplished this year with your support.

We are very grateful for our partnerships with other local early childhood education programs, our area schools, our local library, our first responders, local businesses and the numerous people who support NDS with their time, talent and treasure. The work we do together as a community matters. I am grateful to lead our NDS team surrounded by immense support. Thank you for helping us build a strong community where children grow and thrive.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Metcalfe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "L" and "M".

Laurie A. Metcalfe, M.A. Ed.

NDS Executive Director

# From the Board of Trustees President



In 2023, NDS celebrates 55 years of providing exceptional early childhood education to area families. Investing in young children offers the best return of any investment made in their lifetime. As you read through the 2023-2023 Growth Report, notice the mutually beneficial partnerships NDS has formed to make our learning community more vibrant.

As a board, we strive to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability so that Northshire Day School will always be able to serve our greater community. Our Treasurer Robyn Harrington organized a Board Meeting ensuring that all trustees have a strong understanding of our financial position.

In 2000, our capital campaign focused on “building our future.” Today, we are “sustaining our future.” In the past year, with generous investment from The Irene and James Hunter Charitable Fund, we broke ground on much needed repairs to our roof, began a three-year pilot of our Family Tree Program, and established the endowed Hunter Family Scholarship Fund. This investment lays the groundwork to offer accessible early childhood education for years to come.

We celebrate the passing of Act 76, the 2023 Child Care Bill, which expands access to Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP) to an estimated 7,450 more children, increases state funding to bolster staffing capacity, and sustainably funds increased investment in Vermont’s early childhood education workforce. Our entire team worked closely with our state legislators to effect this legislation that will build a firmer financial foundation for NDS.

We are grateful to the residents of Town of Manchester, Town of Dorset, and Town of Sunderland for appropriating town funds to Northshire Day School to provide early childhood education for local children.

The Board of Trustees accepted a new mission statement, formed with our staff and educators: Northshire Day School cultivates a nurturing and inclusive community where children grow and thrive. We are focused on building an inclusive, nurturing, and caring community that is accessible to all, regardless of ability to pay. With that in mind, the Board formed a Gala Committee and organized a successful fundraising event. We are especially grateful to the Family Committee volunteers who ensured our success.

I enjoy the opportunity to witness the impact NDS has as part of our greater community. I am deeply grateful to all of our stakeholders, community partners, educators, staff, and donors who come together to make a critical impact in the lives of children and families.

With Heartfelt Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jon Comeau". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Jon Comeau  
President, Board of Trustees

## Children Become Lifelong Learners Through Play

Fred Rogers said “Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning.”

## How Families Describe Northshire Day School

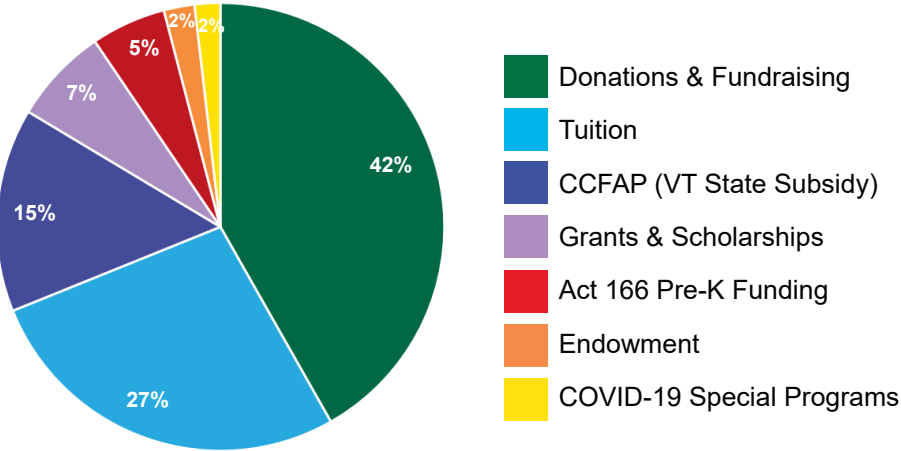
Here are the words that families used to describe NDS in our 2022-2023 Annual Program Quality Survey.



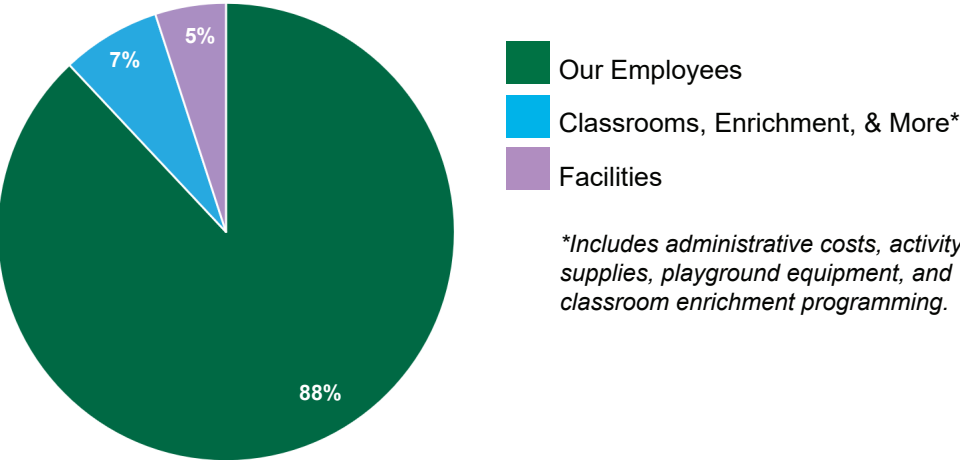


# 2022-2023 Financial Review

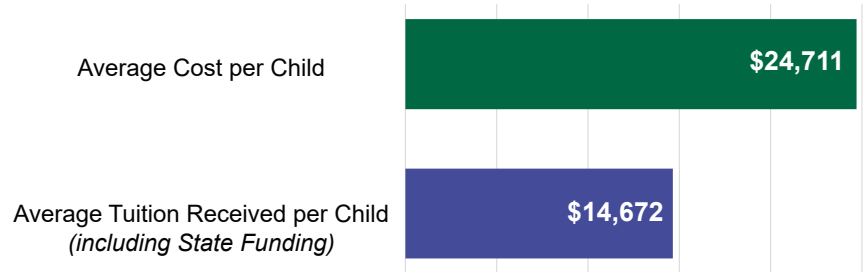
## Annual Revenue



## Annual Expenses



## Average Annual Cost per Child vs. Annual Tuition Received



### Enrichment Showcase: VINS

The Vermont Institute of Natural Science provides opportunities to incorporate science discoveries, nature play, and investigations into our classrooms.

In June, activities, guided play, and materials were all about beavers. Songs were accompanied by a ukulele and hand puppets to bring the topics to life!



### NAEYC Week of the Young Child

Stewart's Shops sponsored activities at NDS that develop early skills in literacy, math, science, creativity, and more!

On Artsy Thursday, each pod created open-ended murals offering the opportunity to make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands.



### Literacy Week

We promoted literacy in our classrooms with a theme for each day. We installed a lending library in the NDS lobby for families to borrow books.

Families shared their favorite books with their classrooms and two local librarians joined us to read to our children.



# Celebrating Growth

## Emerging Leader

The Southern Vermont Young Professionals and Shires Young Professionals named Stephanie Muñoz Wells as a 2023 Emerging Leader at the 6th Annual SoVermont Economy Summit: “Forging Our Future” at the Hermitage Club at Haystack Mountain in Wilmington, VT.

Stephanie was recognized for her professional accomplishments and for commitment to serving the region.



## Endowed Tuition Relief Fund Honoring Irene M. Hunter

Irene M. Hunter was a devoted mother, grandmother, philanthropist and civic leader who was much beloved by the NDS Family.

The Hunter Family Scholarship Fund, established in August 2022, ensures that every family can attend NDS, regardless of their ability to pay.

## Outstanding Executive Director

Executive Director Laurie Metcalfe earned a Step Three Program Director Credential, demonstrating quality and leadership in the world of early childhood education.

At Vermont’s annual Early Childhood Education Conference, Laurie received an Outstanding Member Award from the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children.

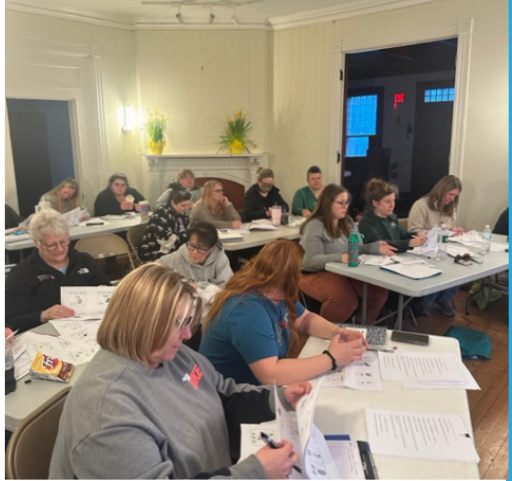




### Spanish in the Early Childhood Classroom

Northshire Day School offered a free twelve-week Spanish language course to early childhood educators at the Arlington Common.

This course was made possible by the Sunrise Direct Service Community Grant, the Heritage Friends 4 the Community Grant, and the NDS Irene Hunter Professional Development Fund.



### Community Supported Agriculture Grant

The NDS Farm to School Committee received a Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets Community Supported Agriculture Grant.

This gives our kitchen access to a farm share with Earth, Sky, Thyme in Manchester, bringing more locally sourced foods to our children.

### Storytelling with Marv Klassen-Landis

CLiF storyteller Marv Klassen-Landis engaged children in interactive folktales and poems. Each child selected two new books to keep from hundreds of titles.

As recipients of the Children's Literacy Foundation At-Risk Children Grant, NDS also received children's books for classroom use.



# July 2022- June 2023 Leadership Giving

## Growth Society

The Irene and James Hunter Charitable Fund  
Danny and Meghan Sawtelle

## Leadership Branch

Keith Cahill and Joanna Lodzinski  
Laura Chmielewski *in honor of the toddler room teachers*  
Jon and Kristen Comeau  
Brandon and Marissa Eustace  
Roby Harrington, III  
Robyn V. Harrington  
Molly and Steven Hemkens  
Susie Hunter and Doug Watson *in honor of Irene Hunter*  
Kathryn Kirwan and Trevor Neal  
Maciek and Lili Kobielski  
Seth and Jennifer Luty  
Lauren and Scott Magrath  
Doug and Lindsay Melzig  
Laurie Metcalfe  
Greg and Linda Millert *in honor of Henry and Finley Melzig*  
Irene and Marty Nadler  
Nadia and August Pabst  
Karen Rinaldi  
The Sarah H. Wichert Revokable Trust  
Maeve Webster  
The Weiss Family Charitable Fund  
Jackie and Jeff Wilson

## Flourishing Buds

Scott and Heidi Bourhill  
William and Linda Drunsic  
Jonathon Hawton and Anne Hatfield  
Julie and Tom Mackey  
Keith and Patty Michl  
Jenn Moore  
Philip and Kathryn Pabst  
Ryan and Jennifer Price  
Sarah Whiteside

## Seeds of NDS

Kathleen Avery  
Seth and Christine Bongartz  
Lesley Burdick  
Jamie Dufour  
Melinda Egan *in honor of Irene Nadler*

Molly and Derek Frome  
Kasey Greene and Jason Jones  
Nancie Heinemann  
Stephen and Ginny Houseman  
Erica Lin  
Gordon and Ruth Metcalfe  
Maureen K. and Fred Molinari Family Trust  
Jenn Moore  
Zoraida and Andrew Olson *in honor of Piper Bushee*  
Justin Rank and Caitlin Healey  
Parker and Karen Rice  
Sharry and Chris Rutken  
Michael and Lauren Smilovich  
Mary Welford and Brian Sawyer

Every gift to the Growth Fund supports our children, families, and educators. Thank you for investing in our community and inspiring our mission!

## NDS Champions

NDS Champions is a monthly giving club that supports our mission through recurring donations to provide our school with steady, reliable funding for early childhood education.

This is a special group of people reaching out each month to provide affordable and quality early childhood education for southern Vermont families.

Anonymous (1)  
Lesley Burdick  
Kimberley Capps  
Tammy Coulter  
Lucie Daley  
Ashley Eaton  
Jane Gras  
Hope LaBatt  
Erica Lin  
Laurie Metcalfe  
Jenn Moore  
Maggie Rubick  
Sarah Whiteside  
Becky Wilder



# Thank you, Businesses & Organizations

## Community Partners

Anonymous (1)  
Bank of Bennington  
C4zzi Art  
Charlie's Coffee House  
Children's Literacy Foundation  
Earth & Sea Fish Market  
Equipe Sport  
The Fausett Foundation for the Preservation and Protection of Green Mountain  
Boys History  
The Green Mountain Girls Association  
Gubb & Bongartz Nonprofit Consulting  
Heritage Family Cares for You Foundation  
Hearst  
High-Tech Plumbing & Heating, Inc.  
J. Wilson Consulting LLC  
James D. Sawtelle, CLU, ChFC  
Manchester Avocado Pit  
Manchester Capital Management  
The Mt. Laurel Foundation  
The National Development Council  
Northshire Bookstores  
Northwestern Mutual Foundation  
October Mountain (D.J. St. Germain Company, Inc.)  
The Orvis Charitable Foundation  
The Perkins Charitable Foundation  
The Right Track Foundation  
rk MILES, Inc.  
The Robert T. Keeler Foundation  
Scott Bourhill Builders  
The Stanley & Sylvia Stroup Family Foundation  
The Stratton Foundation  
The Town of Dorset  
The Town of Manchester  
The Town of Sunderland  
The Vermont Country Store  
The Vermont Store Fixture Corporation  
VermontVacation-Rentals.com  
The William J. & Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation

Thank you to all who invest in our community by supporting the workforce behind the workforce!

## Friends of NDS

Anonymous (2)  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
American Express Foundation  
Downtown Window and Design  
Green Mountain Excavating  
Green Mountain Veterinary Hospital  
HITS  
H.N. Williams Store  
Keith Michl, MD  
The Kitchen Store at J.K. Adams  
Manchester Community Library  
Manchester Country Club  
Manchester Physical Therapy, PLC  
Price Chopper  
Spring & Harbor  
Shaw's Supermarket  
Stewart's Shops  
Stratton Mountain Resort  
Stifel, Nicolaus & Company  
The Richards Group  
Wilburton Inn  
Woodlawn Farmstead  
Ye Olde Tavern  
Zippy Chicks

## The President's Fund

The President's Fund was established in 2021 by outgoing NDS Board President Lauren Magrath. Lauren has volunteered on the NDS Board of Trustees for six years and also enjoyed eight years as an NDS parent.

Donors to the President's Fund are building a stronger foundation for longevity and sustainability at NDS. Thank you!

Julie Mackey  
Lauren and Scott Magrath  
Lindsay Melzig  
Jenn Moore  
Karen Rinaldi *in honor of Lauren Magrath*

# Thank you, Volunteers!

## Volunteers

Clara and Sophie Adams

Melissa Bell

Heidi Bourhill

Jon and Emma Comeau

Jane Gras

Lindsay and Poppy Isaac

Seth, Jennifer, Walter, and Mikayla Luty

Laurie Metcalfe

Irene and Marty Nadler

Andrew, Jen, Libby, and Sal Rodriguez

Carolyn Rohde

Maggie Rubick

Pearl Schramm

Andal and Pranava Sharma

Michael, Lauren, Weston, and Parker Smilovich

Jim and Kate Wachala

Michael, Kayte, and Harper Waters

Jack and Sarah Whiteside

Becky Wilder

Jackie and Jeff Wilson

Thank you for volunteering your time to benefit Northshire Day School! Your commitment enriches our community.

## Join Our Leadership Giving Club

Leadership gifts fulfill some of the most immediate needs of our children. Gifts at this level show your investment in helping children grow. Members are invited to special events and have special recognition in our annual report.

### **Seeds of NDS**

\$250-\$499

### **Flourishing Buds**

\$500-\$999

### **Leadership Branch**

\$1,000-\$9,999

### **Growth Society**

\$10,000 and beyond



## Town Funding

The early childhood educators and staff at Northshire Day School are deeply grateful to the residents of the Town of Dorset, Town of Manchester, and Town of Sunderland for appropriating support to our program.

Your support benefits our entire community by providing a nurturing and inclusive place where children grow and thrive while their families serve our community as bakers, builders, landscapers, cleaners, lawyers, electricians, mechanics, teachers, volunteers, veterinarians, firefighters, doctors, and so much more.

## Partnering Locally

Northshire Day School is a member of the Manchester Business Association and the Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce. The Manchester Business Association promotes Manchester, the Village, and member businesses as the premier destination to live, work and visit. The Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce promotes a unified effort to to maintain and improve a healthy business climate and rewarding quality of life for the entire Shires of Southwestern Vermont region.

## Annual Family Wellness Fair

In September 2022, NDS hosted our seventh annual Family Wellness Fair. Families enjoyed Yoga with Dianna Scott, Hullabaloo with Alexandra Langstaff, an Art Project with Erin Kaufman from SVAC, Face Painting, a Bounce House, and more! Table presenters included Children's Integrated Services, The Collaborative, Battenkill Valley Health Center, UCS/Head Start, Manchester Community Library, NDS Farm to School, Essential Oils, and Early Literacy.



# You Make a Difference Award & Staff Recognition

## Stephanie Muñoz Wells

In 2023, Stephanie celebrates 5 years of service at Northshire Day School. Stephanie double-majored in elementary education and special education, with a certification in Autism Spectrum Disorder, and will be entering into a Master's in Social Work (MSW) program this fall at Rutgers University. She is a VTAEYC Board Member, a past VTAEYC Exchange/Social Justice Fellow, and belongs to the NDS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, VECAA, Let's Grow Kids Action Team, and is a Migrant Justice supporter.



Stephanie has also been nominated by her peers for the You Make a Difference Award for making a difference in the lives of young children, their families, and fellow professionals.

Stephanie is a leader in our program who inspires all of our staff as she brings a warm, welcoming smile every day. She consistently demonstrates professional engagement and compassion while working with our educators on their own professional development, going above and beyond to ensure that all documents are in order.

Stephanie shows patience, respect, and love for the children, families, and staff in our program. She is generous in giving her time and energy to our program. Her professionalism and commitment to equity and advocacy are admirable. Stephanie has an exceptional level of commitment to her own ongoing learning and to our Vermont early childhood educator community. Congratulations to Stephanie!

## Bing and Irene Hunter

Bing and Irene Hunter raised their four children to take care of their community, making a lasting mark on the Northshire community and beyond. Irene was devoted to Northshire Day School in the early 2000s, serving as Chair of the Development Committee and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee for the Capital Campaign “Building our Future”.

In 2022, the Hunter Family made a gift to Northshire Day School to establish the endowed Hunter Family Scholarship Fund, cover a three-year pilot of the Family Tree Program, and invest in a sustainable standing seam metal roof.

The Hunter Family Scholarship Fund recognizes that all children have promise and a place at Northshire Day School. The Family Tree Program promotes strong families, offering service coordination, and support to help all families thrive in everyday circumstances as well as persevere during times of stress or crisis. The new standing seam metal roof meets the original vision of the Building our Future Campaign started in the year 2000.

Bing and Irene inspired their family to invest in our community. The Community Partner Service Award acknowledges their efforts to enhance and promote children’s early learning experiences, provide support for families, and to enrich our Northshire Day School Community.





## Celebrating 55 Years

In May 2023, The Southwestern Chamber of Commerce presented Northshire Day School with a plaque in recognition of 55 years of outstanding service and leadership to the local community and regional businesses.



## Trunk or Treat

NDS hosted a Trunk or Treat for local families with children from ages birth to eight years old.

NDS educators, staff, and friends created festive displays for the youngest members of our community to celebrate Halloween.

## Run for Fun!

On October 1, 2022, NDS hosted a Run for Fun at the Dana L. Thompson Memorial Park in Manchester.

Categories included a Family Stroll, 50-yard dash, 100-yard dash, a full lap!



## Courage to Care Rally

In April 2023, NDS Trustees Danny Sawtelle and Irene Nadler, Development Director Jen Luty, and Early Childhood Educators Courtney Lynch and Molly Watson attended the Let's Grow Kids Courage to Care Rally in Montpelier to show support for public investment in early childhood education.



## Art from the Schools

Children created artwork inspired by Gee's Bend Quilting Collective to display at the Southern Vermont Arts Center.

Gee's Bend quilts carry forward an old and proud tradition of textiles made for home and family.

## Garden Work Day

On June 3, 2023, NDS Families joined the NDS Farm to School Committee for some light gardening in the corral and preschool garden spaces.

Other activities included a nutritious snack, story station, seed-starting station, and making labels for the garden.





## Preschool Celebration

In June, we celebrated our Preschoolers and their families in our front corral.

Children made a circle, danced, and had free choice to enjoy a snack, make a special t-shirt, and share memories with their friends and teachers.



## Dollar Skate & Bake Sale

Charlie's Coffee House sponsored a Dollar Skate at Riley Rink in January 2023 to benefit NDS.

The NDS Family Committee hosted a Bake Sale during the event, which was attended by about 100 children and their families!

## Basket Raffle

In June 2023, the NDS Family Committee hosted a Basket Raffle in the corral to raise Tuition Relief funds for NDS Families.



## Three-Year Pilot Program Begins at Northshire Day School

In December 2022, Northshire Day School expanded our early childhood education services to include family services and established our “Family Tree Program.” Our Family Tree Program is a three-year pilot program built on the strengths-based philosophy of the Strengthening Families framework and protective factors.

Made possible by a grant from the Irene and James Hunter Charitable Fund, the Family Tree Program promotes strong families and healthy development for children prenatally through age five, provides resources, service coordination and support to help all families thrive during everyday circumstances as well as persevere during times of stress or crisis.

This strengths-based program is available to all NDS families and promotes protective factors including parenting and child development knowledge, resilience, social connection, social-emotional competence and concrete resources.

“We know the importance of partnering with families with young children and providing support and services that are easily accessible, relevant and helpful. It is also important that services are geographically located in a family’s community and not dependent on specialized qualifying criteria. All families need support sometimes,” Executive Director Laurie Metcalfe said. “Within the next three years, we hope to extend the Family Tree to the greater Northshire community and offer support to families with young children beyond those enrolled in our classrooms.”

### Meet the Family Tree Coordinator

Jen Rodriguez is coordinating the Family Tree Program. Rodriguez has over 10 years of experience supporting children and their families.

Rodriguez is passionate about improving outcomes for children and families, stating that “caregivers are children’s first and most important teachers.”



# Harvest Moon Dinner

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Join NDS for a Farm to Table Dinner and Fundraiser!

*Details to follow.*

