Realizing many youth lack access to healthy food and have limited opportunities to spend time outdoors, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation, the philanthropic partner of Hawthorne Gardening Company, a CSG Associate, is partnering with the National Head Start Association, or NHSA, to improve access for a million children. Its multiyear partnership seeks to bring the powerful, life-enhancing benefits of gardens to one million at-risk Head Start children and families across the country each year through the development of edible gardens and hands-on garden education.

The foundation will make garden grants, garden kits, educational curriculum, and garden training available to all Head Start programs in the United States with the goal of creating more edible gardens and interactive learning experiences for young children and their families, ultimately teaching them how to grow their own healthy food—for life.

“All children benefit from spending time in nature and learning to enjoy fresh, healthy foods, and this partnership will provide many of America’s most vulnerable kids with those valuable opportunities,” NHSA Executive Director Yasmina Vinci said. “This initiative is part of NHSA’s Year of Whole Health, where we will bring a renewed focus to specific areas of health to improve the wellbeing of Head Start children, families and staff. NHSA is grateful to The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation for partnering with us to find new ways to support Head Start programs in their mission to prepare children for success in school and life.”

The parent company of Hawthorne Gardening Company, ScottsMiracle-Gro has a rich history of giving back to local communities and recently supported the creation of more than a thousand community gardens and greenspaces in every state. From edible gardens addressing food insecurity to green schoolyards providing natural places for children to learn and grow, the positive effects gardens can have on young children are evident.

“Gardens have the ability to improve people’s lives,” said Brian Herrington, government relations director for Hawthorne Gardening Company. “Far too many children have never seen, tasted, or eaten fresh, healthy food straight from the garden. I’m proud to be a part of the ScottsMiracle-Gro family and their work to bring this benefit to the children who need it the most.”

Associates in Action articles highlight CSG Associates’ philanthropic efforts and public-private partnerships throughout the states.