

MindLeaps Media Kit



Credit: Steve Organ



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Mission

MindLeaps is a not-for-profit organization using an innovative model to reduce the number of street children and out-of-school youth in post-conflict and developing countries.

MindLeaps combines a dance program to improve cognitive development with vocational training to prepare youth for a stable life in school or in the workplace.

About MindLeaps

Founded in 2005 (as RDDC: Rebecca Davis Dance Company) by social entrepreneur Rebecca Davis, the company was originally based in Philadelphia with the goal of building awareness of social justice issues through professional performance in the USA. In 2010, Rebecca and the organization decided it could do more to affect social change by working in post-conflict countries directly with traumatized youth. In 2014, the organization changed its name to *MindLeaps* to reflect its international orientation.

Working predominantly in Rwanda and Guinea, MindLeaps has locally-based staff and carries out its programs in conjunction with local partners. Teams of international instructors and volunteers support the programs through "train the trainers" projects year-round.

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MindLeaps Model: 3 Phases From The Street To School

Phase I: DANCE

- MindLeaps uses dance as an entry point to the development of a street child's mind in countries where there is a cultural love of movement
- A kinesthetic-based curriculum focuses on 7 cognitive and non-cognitive skills
- Software developed by Carnegie Mellon University Rwanda collects data and charts the learning impact of youth
- Within 3 months, there is a measurable change from a child's state of aggression and desperation to discipline and resiliency
- Students are now ready to enter more structured learning environments



Phase II: VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- When the youth reach an average of 70-80% in their core skills, they move into vocational training
- Literacy and English language classes are led by Fulbright scholars
- Computer Skills & Job Training is offered for children to become competent in MS Office, Google Search, Email and Skype



Phase III: YOUTH ADVANCEMENT

- Youth who continue to thrive receive support to go to local boarding schools or help securing jobs
- Other youth are offered work-study positions in English, IT or Dance



Our Impact



Rwanda, 2014

- 415 Youth Served
- 300 hours of Computer & IT Training
- 600 hours of Dance Classes

Guinea, 2014

- 205 Youth Served
- 256 hours of English Language & Literacy Instruction
- 1,920 Rice Meals Served

<http://report2014.rebeccadaviddance.com/>

How Much Does It Cost?

It can be surprising how far \$1 – or less – will go to provide the basic needs of life to children around the world.

| Program Costs in 2015 | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PROGRAM | DANCE | MEALS | COMPUTER SKILLS | HEALTH SUPPORT | BOARDING SCHOOL |
| COST/YEAR | \$60/child | \$132/child | \$180/child | \$84/child | \$1800/child |
| DESCRIPTION | Six hours of dance classes per week | Hot meal, clean drinking water daily | Four hours of computer training per week | Towel, soap, toothbrush, daily shower, ability to wash clothes, uniform, medical insurance | Three meals/day, dormitory for sleeping, school uniforms, tuition fees, full education |

Long-Term Vision

The future of MindLeaps lies in growing its model to rehabilitate and re-integrate out-of-school children through multiple sites in Rwanda, followed by replicating the model in other post-conflict and developing countries – especially across the continent of Africa where dance is often a huge part of local culture and loved by boys and girls.

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Recent Press:

Dance Studio Life Magazine, *An artistic director does good by kids in genocide's aftermath*

<http://www.dancestudiolife.com/january-2015-change-in-direction/>

Rebecca Davis receives Dance Studio Life Magazine "Generous Heart" Award

<http://www.dancestudiolife.com/the-second-annual-dance-studio-life-generous-heart-awards/>

Voice of America, *Dance Offers Path to Education for Street Children, Orphans*

<http://www.voanews.com/content/dance-offers-path-to-education-for-street-children-orphans-/1854013.html>

Video:

About MindLeaps:

https://youtu.be/VfVlxBen_9o

Discovering YOU matter: Rebecca Davis at TEDxFulbright:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxdZPdiaoSO4>

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