



## What is the Children's Grove?

It is a symbol of love, hope and commitment to support the safety and nurturing of youth.

### The Story...

The tragedy of Sandy Hook so moved MMHF Board Member, Anne Deaton that she decided something needed to be done in her local community to both honor the memory of the children lost and to prevent future tragedies. Anne approached Columbia's mayor, Bob McDavid and other community members and found that they also shared her desire to encourage education and conversations about mental wellness in the community. They partnered with the Putting Kids First organization and Columbia Parks and Recreation and created the Children's Grove – "a place of beauty and peacefulness, a place for joyful activity and commemoration, and a constant impetus for education and outreach to enhance the mental, physical, and social well-being of our youth – and always a reminder to reach to others with acts of kindness."

The Children's Grove is located within Stephens Lake Park in Columbia, Missouri and contains 41 trees. The dedication of the Children's Grove was held Saturday, May 3, 2014 with a ribbon cutting, musical performances by local youth and many children's activities put on by sponsors of the Children's Grove.

The event was so successful that plans are underway for a Children's Grove Festival for next year!

### The Future Goals for the Children's Grove include:

- Promoting mental health awareness and education programs throughout the community.
- Supporting youth activities in the arts and education that promote acts of kindness and that positively impact the physical, social, and mental wellness of our youth.
- Encourage the plantings of the signature Children's Grove tree throughout Boone County as a symbol to reach out with "Acts of Kindness" to remind that as a community we need to keep conversations regarding mental wellness at the forefront.
- Provide encouragement and counsel to other towns and communities interested in starting a Children's Grove in their community.

The Missouri Mental Health Foundation is proud to be a part of the Children's Grove as both a donor and sponsor/participant of children's activities at the dedication celebration.

For more information on The Children's Grove, contact [thechildrensgrove@gmail.com](mailto:thechildrensgrove@gmail.com) or follow them on Facebook at [facebook.com/thechildrensgrove](https://facebook.com/thechildrensgrove)

*"A Single Act Of Kindness Can Change A Life Forever"*