



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Jennifer Wilson
Director of Marketing and Visitor Experience
Office: 614-715-8150s
Cell: 740-398-8371
jwilson@fpconservatory.org

THE SCOTTS MIRACLE-GRO FOUNDATION CHILDREN'S GARDEN TO OPEN MAY 19

Grand Opening Ceremony at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens Begins at 9:30 a.m.; General Admission Visitors, Conservatory Members Encouraged to Attend

Columbus, Ohio (May 16, 2018) — Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens today announced the much-anticipated opening of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children's Garden, a two-acre immersive experience designed to connect children with nature. A brief opening ceremony will take place on May 19, beginning at 9:30 a.m., before the Children's Garden gates open and area children experience the garden's myriad of galleries for the first time. The event is open to the public. Admission rates apply.

The average American spends 93 percent their life indoors, making spaces that connect people with nature more important than ever. Studies show a healthy dose of the outdoors reduces stress, increases physical activity and has long-term benefits to a person's wellbeing, especially children. In addition to health benefits, time spent outdoors also improves social relationships and builds self-confidence.

"At Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, we strive to create a world that celebrates nature as essential to the human experience," said Bruce Harkey, president and CEO of Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. "The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children's Garden brings this vision to life in a practical but also compelling way, providing a foundational connection for children with the outdoors. We believe this connection should also be inclusive and are thrilled to announce Community Days at the Conservatory. On the first Sunday of each month beginning in June, the Conservatory will be free for residents of Franklin County and the City of Columbus during regular operating hours of 10am to 5pm."

The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children's Garden offers families active experiences in nature that are unique and memorable. With a focus on Ohio's landscape and geology, the Children's Garden showcases 16 different garden galleries that nurture creativity, hands-on exploration and loads of unstructured play.

"Our work at The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation has allowed us to see firsthand the magical moments that happen when children connect with nature in a hands-on way," said Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation President Jim King. "This Children's Garden is truly a remarkable and beautiful outdoor space, unlike any other in the country and thoughtfully designed to engage children with the natural world. We look forward to seeing the young lives that will be made better through the benefits of this garden."

Just a handful of the unique experiences offered in the Children's Garden include:

- **Getting a Bird's Eye View:** Atop a Canopy Walk, 13 feet in the air, children can locate Ohio's state amphibian, the spotted salamander, in the garden below. They can also pretend to be a cardinal in the human-sized bird nest or take in the sights and sounds of nature from the hammock perched high up in the treetops.
- **Sparking Creativity Through Art:** Nine different art installations, created by local and regional artists, are included in the Children's Garden. One of the installations is the Sunrise Celebration Arch, which welcomes guests as they enter the garden. It is comprised of 56 individual stained glass pieces that depict sunrise to sunset. Embedded in each piece of stained glass are Swarovski crystals that, on sunny days, cast rainbows on the ground. These pieces are designed to spur the imagination. In the Nature Art Studio children are encouraged to become artists by creating their own art using sticks, rocks, leaves and other natural materials.
- **Hands-On Gardening:** In addition to visually experiencing nature's beauty, children can actually plant a garden in raised flower beds and learn how to tend to it. At harvest time, kids can pick the produce and even learn how to prepare the food to eat.
- **Exploring Nature:** Kids and parents can take off their shoes and walk through the 150-foot Sandstone Creek while locating different animal tracks and fossils embedded in the walls of the Sandstone Bluff.

The Children's Garden is the single largest botanical undertaking by the Conservatory to date. It includes 19,000 plants that have been added to the Children's Garden's existing tree line, creating a lush setting that engulfs visitors in nature.

The garden was made possible by kind gifts from The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation, Nationwide Foundation, American Electric Power Foundation, L Brands Foundation, Cardinal Health Foundation and numerous other donors. The Children's Garden is the capstone project of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation's **GRO1000** program, which has supported the creation of 1,000 gardens and greenspaces from 2011 through 2018, in honor of the Company's 150th Anniversary.

"The Children's Garden builds on a long-standing partnership between The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company and the Conservatory," adds Harkey. "We're very proud of how our organizations are connecting people with the natural world."

For more information on The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children's Garden at Franklin Park Conservatory please visit FPConservatory.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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About Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens offers botanical collections, art and nature-based exhibitions, plant shows, and educational programs for all ages. Situated in an 88-acre urban park, the Conservatory features the historic 1895 John F. Wolfe Palm House and 83,000 square feet of glasshouses, classrooms, and meeting and event spaces. The Conservatory owns a signature collection of glass artwork by Dale Chihuly. Light Raiment II, a permanent installation by internationally recognized light artist James Turrell, illuminates the John F. Wolfe Palm House every evening from dusk until dawn.



About The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation

The mission of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation is to inspire, connect and cultivate a community of purpose. The Foundation is deeply rooted in helping create healthier communities, empower the next generation, and preserve our planet. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that funds non-profit entities that support its core initiatives in the form of grants, endowments and multi-year capital gifts. For more information, visit www.scottsmiraclegrofoundation.org.