

Family Support Services Event “Painting with the Plants” Delights Families Through Art and Nature

Dec 16, 2024



Nature-inspired Painting with the Plants, recently took place at the Nicholas Conservatory in Rockford. Participants explored painting using conservatory plants, while also learning about the trees and greenery featured in the activity. Tactile in nature, the afternoon was an opportunity to invite children and their parents and caregivers to interact with natural materials, all while enjoying the lush, tropical environment of the conservatory. Our Family Support Services (FSS) feature community-focused programs and activities designed for

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One such event, the nature-inspired Painting with the Plants, recently took place at the Nicholas Conservatory in Rockford. Participants explored painting using conservatory plants, while also learning about the trees and greenery featured in the activity. Tactile in nature, the afternoon was an opportunity to invite children and their parents and caregivers to interact with natural materials, all while enjoying the lush, tropical environment of the conservatory.

Cecilia Gonzalez, 34, attended with her 7-year-old son, Sebastian. She takes part in as many FSS events as possible, appreciating the variety of opportunities offered. A regular visitor of the conservatory's peaceful and quiet settings, she found this event especially appealing for her son. Gonzalez said:

“If he’s in nature, he’s a happy kid.”

She noted how her son was drawn to the sensorial nature of the art project and was also captivated by the fish in the koi pond.

Gonzalez values the broad range of annual events FSS provides, from local festivals to Trunk or Treats. “I definitely love the variety,” she said, adding how these opportunities are special in allowing her to involve Sebastian’s younger siblings, a two-year-old and an infant. “My husband and I enjoy events where the whole family can join in,” she said.

Elizabeth Benson, 37, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of community events that allow siblings to participate. She came to Painting with the Plants with her husband, Andrew, their three-year-old daughter, Alex, and nearly two-year-old son, Theo. Benson appreciated how the conservatory offered a safe, enclosed space for her family to explore.

“Being outdoors has always been grounding for Alex,” she said, and continued with:

“The conservatory felt like the perfect mix—an expansive but secure space for the kids to roam.”

Benson shared how the planned activity, combined with the opportunity to walk through the conservatory together afterward, made the event especially memorable.

“The painting and then walking around—we really enjoyed that—and also being around plants, being as close to nature as possible. It was a very calming yet interactive and centering experience for them.”

“When we walked away, my husband and I both said it was our most favorite Easterseals outing. We absolutely loved it.”

Painting with the Plants on November 6 was made possible by the Rockford Park District Recreation Support Program.

[Learn more](#) about Family Support Services.