



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: January 15, 2021  
Contact: Carrie Dittman, Centerville-Washington Park District, [cdittman@cwpd.org](mailto:cdittman@cwpd.org)  
Subject: **Park District Recognized for COVID-19 Program Innovation**

**CENTERVILLE, OH:** *Ohio Business Magazine* awarded the Centerville-Washington Park District (CWPD) a 2021 Ohio Success Award. The award honors organizations across the state who rapidly responded and innovated when faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most of the places the community goes for recreation, relaxation, exercise and rejuvenation were closed or extremely limited by the pandemic. With outdoor recreation one of the few remaining options, CWPD actively focused their attention on encouraging the community to get outdoors safely. CWPD quickly pivoted away from their existing spring program plan. Instead, they generated dozens of self-guided, family and adult recreation alternatives with kits, videos and social media based instruction within weeks of the early spring shutdown. Staff created an abundance of self-guided challenges to give park visitors the chance to solve a mystery, try geocaching, see all 51 CWPD parks, and even spot Bigfoot lurking in the forest! Families could participate safely and on their own schedule.

The Park District modified their popular summer nature day camps to practice COVID-19 safety protocols. Children enjoyed the outdoors without a single case of COVID-19 reported by participants or staff. Hot on the heels of summer camps, CWPD worked tirelessly with local youth sports organizations to comply with State of Ohio guidelines. Soccer, football and baseball programs went off without a hitch in the fall.

CWPD Program Manager Kristen Marks said, “We are proud to offer many park amenities to the community, such as playgrounds, sports fields and multi-use trails. However, we know variety and encouragement is important. Self-guided programming gave hundreds of community members the opportunity to beat isolation and safely get outdoors. We hope that the creativity and determination of staff to continue to be of service contributed to the ongoing physical and mental health of our residents.”

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**The Centerville-Washington Park District** operates eight community parks, nine nature parks, and 34 neighborhood parks encompassing more than 1,030 acres in Centerville and Washington Township. For more information about the Centerville-Washington Park District, please call (937) 433-5155 or visit [www.cwpd.org](http://www.cwpd.org).

937.433.5155   
[www.cwpd.org](http://www.cwpd.org)   
[mail@cwpd.org](mailto:mail@cwpd.org)   
221 N. Main Street   
Centerville, Ohio 45459