



New playground unveiled at Heritage Court

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Several toddlers were ready to play Monday afternoon as soon as several local agencies concluded an official ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil a new playground at Heritage Court Apartments.

Many additional children living in the neighborhood also will benefit from the \$30,000 playground project that was made possible by a local ministry foundation and funding from the Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services Board of Logan and Champaign Counties and Logan County Children's Services.

During the past several months, crews from Link Construction helped to design and build the fenced space that includes a mulched area with playground equipment. The other end of the recreational area contains picnic tables and also plenty of space for children to play soccer and other games with kickback boards.

Property manager Becky Morgan said the new playground will be a huge asset for those living in the community.

"This is a wonderful thing that happened. We're very excited and very thankful for everyone who pitched in to make this playground. We've had a lot of helpers for the project.

"It's going to be so nice for our moms and little ones to be able to come out here in their own backyard to play. This is definitely appreciated."

Representatives from the local MHDAS board and also children's services said they were happy to fund the project that will have a positive impact on local youths.

"There is a definite relationship between mental health and physical health, and we believe that it's good for the children to be able to get outside and run and play," said David Higgins, MHDAS executive director.

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ABOVE: Andrew Gruss, 2, makes his way down a slide to his mother, Corrina, during the unveiling Monday afternoon of a new playground at Heritage Court Apartments. FRONT PAGE PHOTO: David Higgins, executive director of the Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services Board of Logan and Champaign Counties, and Vincent Ciola, Logan County Children's Services supervisor, cut a ribbon Monday for the unveiling of a new playground at Heritage Court Apartments that both of their agencies helped to fund. Holding the ribbon are Molly Smith, left, and Tammy Nicholl from the local MHDAS. (EXAMINER PHOTOS | MANDY LOEHR)

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