



Garden Yields Growth on Many Levels

The health benefits of eating nutritious food have long been understood, but more people are beginning to see equally positive results from growing it. As [this article from The Guardian](#) reports, interest in gardening therapy is growing “thanks to the increasingly well-documented value of the outdoors for people’s mental health and wellbeing.”

We’ve seen this value first-hand at the garden we operate at our Domestic Violence Center. The garden is maintained by volunteers, staff and families staying at the DVC. Tara Syndergaard is Synergy’s volunteer and operations manager at the DVC and oversees the garden. She says the women and children in shelter enjoy helping to tend the garden, harvest produce and play in the space.

“Children are fascinated by the garden and kids of all ages love to play in the dirt, water plants and eat tomatoes right off the vines,” she said. “Adults often go to the garden to calm down, reflect on their situation and distract themselves from all the chaos in their lives.”

In addition to the calming environment, the garden offers clients a chance to connect, build practical skills and increase confidence. One mom in shelter says, “I love the garden because my daughter loves playing in the garden.” She added that learning about the garden has inspired her to grow her own food once she gets her own place. Even if it’s just a few containers, she knows she can grow things like tomatoes and herbs no matter where she lives.

The benefits don’t stop there. Produce from the garden, along with weekly produce donations from [Atkins Johnson Farm](#) are enjoyed at all of Synergy’s shelters. Your support of programs like Synergy’s garden is

just one way your support is making a difference every day by nurturing mind, body and spirit, and equipping clients of all ages with practical skills.



News & Events



Art with Heart

Art from Synergy youth clients was on display at The Loft on First Friday this month. The display was part of the “Heart to Art” event, telling stories through words and art. Art is a powerful and therapeutic way to deal with trauma for clients of all ages.



Tables Filling Fast

Just a few tables left for Stand up for Synergy! Don't miss this stand-out event with headliner Norm Macdonald at Argosy Casino Hotel & Spa. It's a memorable night that makes a huge difference for the people we serve. **Reserve your spot today!**



Back to School with Smiles

We are grateful to all who supported efforts to get kids in our shelters back to school with a smile! Special thanks to **eShipping**, whose work teams each adopted a child in shelter and provided them with a gift card to pick out a new outfit and a backpack filled with needed supplies. Thanks also to **The Apartment Association of KC** who ensured our school-aged clients all had new socks and shoes so they could put their best foot forward as they began the school year. And we can't forget **Assistance League of Kansas City** and **KC Raider Nation** who also got in on the action with huge donations of supplies. This generosity and kindness really makes a huge difference for our young clients—many of whom were facing their first day in a new school!



Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

Thanks to the **St Teresa's Academy** volleyball team for their help sorting and stocking clothing for our shelter clothing closets! Since the children, teens and adults at our shelters often arrive with just the clothes they are wearing, we are always in need of clothing donations. Donations can be dropped off during normal business hours at our Children's Center, **2501 NE 46th Street, Kansas City, MO**. Our greatest needs are all sizes of pajamas; new socks, underwear and bras; new and gently used shoes; school uniform clothing (khaki pants and shorts, blue or white polo shirts); and comfortable clothing including t-shirts, jeans, sweat pants and sweatshirts.



Swing fore Synergy

Check out **photos from Swing fore Synergy** presented by **American Century Investments!** Many thanks to all our sponsors and the golfers who came out to enjoy the beautiful day at Nicklaus Golf Club at LionsGate. Because of their generous support, a record-breaking \$38,000 was raised for our street outreach services. A special shout out to Synergy board members Jason Bennett and Park Ulrich for their leadership in making the day a winner for all those who benefit from our **street outreach program!**

Sharing Best Practices

Shout out to our Abuser Intervention program staff who led their first state-wide training on how to utilize the Emerge curriculum in counseling abusers. Emerge is the oldest and most widely used model for counseling abusers nationwide. **Synergy's program** uses this model and has been holding offenders accountable and changing behavior since it launched in 2000. Sara Brammer, Ph.D. and Tony Dishman lead the program at Synergy and now are training others in the field to achieve the same positive results.

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