

Press Release

Bailey's Heartprints Installs Bailey's Buddy Bench in Somers Memorial Park

Bailey McCollum is remembered through his legacy of kindness.



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October 7, 2026 Bailey's Heartprints installs another Bailey's Buddy Bench!

Bailey always included kids that may otherwise have been ignored, and that is why his family knew that installing buddy benches was a terrific way to continue sharing his positive energy. While Buddy Benches have been around for a long time, it was Bailey's kind spirit that brought them to Kenosha. The concept is simple, a child who does not have anyone to play with sits on the buddy bench, and other kids understand that if someone is on the bench, they are looking for friends to play with so they go ask them to join in. Buddy benches have been shown to decrease social anxiety and increase positive interactions among elementary age children. Bailey's Heartprints is excited to put one more bench on the map in honor of Bailey.

Bailey had just started Kindergarten and was weeks away from turning 6, years old when he was killed by a drunk driver on the way home from an afternoon at the park. In an effort to move through their grief, his family decided the best way to remember him and create a positive legacy, was to fill the world with more kindness on his behalf, thus Bailey's Heartprints was created. When you do something kind for someone else, you leave your heartprint on them. Since its inception, the organization has gifted numerous scholarships and installed buddy benches in their community. The spirit of kindness has also continued with Bailey's kindness cards as a way to pay it forward and Heartprint Heroes which supports elementary students in tracking their own acts of kindness.

Bailey's Heartprints initiatives have come to fruition through the support given to the annual Bailey's Spooktacular Ball. This family-centered Halloween party has grown over the past 13 years to become a fall tradition for many families. Starting with Trunk or Treat and ending with the Costume Contest, It is packed full of fun for all. The ball includes a magic show, photo booth, crafts, games, prizes, snacks and raffles. Bailey's Spooktacular Ball brings joy to all who are involved.

Bailey would love for you to go to Somer's Memorial Park and check out Bailey's Buddy Bench. Bailey's Heartprints would love to hear your ideas as to where the next bench should be installed. You are invited to come to this year's Bailey's Spooktaclar Ball on Sunday October 18th, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Kenosha Public Museum, 5500 1st street. Join in the fun, experience the joy, and help continue spreading kindness in Bailey's honor.

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