CHILDREN’S GARDEN
Garden Collection

The front of the Children's Garden greets visitors with a flush of color. The mural on the fence was designed and painted by Tollgate volunteer, Irene Fahey. Annuals are planted in an "eye brow," arc to represent a rainbow. The rainbow colors compliment the mural.

Water Feature
The constructed pond is lined with a rubber membrane to hold the water. The many rocks around the edge of the pond hold the liner in place and add to the esthetics of the pond. The umbrella water feature is fun for the kids to stick their hands into and get wet but also serves the purpose of circulating water through a filter box at the bottom of the pond to remove debris from the water and provide aeration.

Shade Garden
Looming over the Shade Garden is "Rasper, the Buzzard". This wonderful metal sculpture was created for the Tollgate Gardens by artist Laura Steiner.

Butterfly Garden
The symmetrical butterfly-shaped garden was planted to attract local butterflies. Some plants provide habitat for caterpillars, and others provide nectar for the butterflies. Butterflies are attracted to particular shapes and colors, such as purples, yellow, orange, red, and white with yellow centers. They like clustered flowers with short, tubular blossoms, such as lantana. The sedums, liatris, coreopsis, purple coneflowers, fennel, parsley, pentas, cosmos, Profusion zinnias and purple salvia provide for their needs and are supplemented by the orchards, grassy fields, and native plants in nearby areas. The garden is situated in a sunny location with a nearby open water source. Pesticides are not used in the garden's care.

Tollhouse Garden
Many of the Tollhouse plants were from the original Children's garden. These plants include: the peonies, phlox, bearded and mini irises, amsonia, baptistia (false indigo), purple coneflower, coreopsis, false sunflowers, turtlehead, obedient plant and rudbeckia. A new addition has been Clematis ‘Betty Corning’.
**Native Prairie Garden**

The children’s prairie garden was planted in June of 2006 from plants purchased from Wildtype Nursery in Mason MI. The prairie contains a variety of native grasses and wildflowers that were found in Michigan and the Midwest before the Europeans arrived in the Americas. All of these grasses and wildflowers are low maintenance and drought tolerant plants.

When visiting the prairie in the spring, you will find red-yellow blooming columbine, pink nodding wild onion, and pink ground cover Prairie Smoke. The rest of the grasses and wildflowers in the garden bloom from mid to late July through the fall when they really put on a show. The seed heads of the short native grass, Prairie Dropseed, smell like buttered popcorn. Really they do, bend down and smell. The rest of the grasses are Little Bluestem and Big Bluestem, Indian grass, a switch grass. While walking the path, can you find the metal snake hidden amongst the grasses and flowers?

**Pizza Garden**

What do you put on your pizza? In this garden we plant some of the typical toppings: tomatoes, onions, peppers, herbs and garlic. Some years we even have a pineapple plant.

**Smelly Feely Garden**

Every year a new variety of plants that have an aroma or feel interesting to the touch are planted. Some favorites are sage, lavender, rosemary, oregano, and lemon balm.

**Peter Rabbit Garden**

Peter Rabbit and family are very happy here at Tollgate. They love to eat kale and clover from the garden.

**Vine Maze Garden**

The vine maze displays many vine options for the garden. It also serves as a unique playground for children.

**Sparty and His Dog House**

At the rear of the Children’s Garden you will find, Sparty, another creative metal sculpture by Laura Steiner. Sparty’s dog house has a “living” or “green roof” using hardy succulent plants.

**Gourd Trellis**

Behind the Sparty House is a gourd trellis. This sturdy trellis will ensure quality gourds without the pest, moisture and distortion that comes with growing gourds on the ground. It will be an interesting passage-way for visitors.

**MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center**

28115 Meadowbrook
Novi, MI, 48377-3128
www.tollgate.msu.edu
Contact Roy Prentice:
248-347-3860 ext. 251