Places to Hike with Kids in Columbia, Missouri

Scott's Branch Trail at Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary
Address: 3300 W Rollins Rd, Columbia, MO 65203
Trail Miles: 1.7 miles, Concrete
Description: This sanctuary is dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and history of Columbia and providing an urban wildlife sanctuary for native plants and animals.
Parent Recommendation: "Bonnie View Nature Sanctuary is a lot of fun, my kids love the extra-long bridges on the trail."

Creasy Spring Rd. Trailhead on Bear Creek Trail
Address: 3201 N Creasy Springs Rd, Columbia, MO 65202
Trail Miles: 4.8-mile, Gravel
Description: This section of Bear Creek trail from Creasy Springs to the Garth Nature Area includes a bridge over Bear Creek that provides a spectacular view of the creek below and a close-up view of the beautiful flora that grows on the Missouri limestone bluffs.
Parent Recommendation: "This section of the Bear Creek is great for the up-close creek along the trail and the boardwalk. My little ones think this trail is super fun and always gorgeous."

Pinnacles Youth Park Trail
Address: 850 E Pinnacles Rd, Sturgeon, MO 65284
Trail Miles: 0.9, Natural
Description: Pinnacles is a geological oddity formed by two rivers carving out a mass of limestone on both sides. This trail is 15 miles north of Columbia and worth the trip.
Parent Recommendation: "This trail is the prefect length for little legs, plus there's bridges, creeks and sandy areas to apply"

Shooting Star Trailhead at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park
Address: 5499 E Bonne Femme Church Rd #5411, Columbia, MO 65201
Trail Miles: 2.4 Miles, Natural
Description: This scenic trail makes it hard to believe you are near the city of Columbia. There is a nice flat stretch and views from bluffs which makes for a varied hike experience.
Parent Recommendation: "We love Shooting Star trail because sometimes my kids get to see horse riders on the trail."

Sinkhole Trail at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park
Address: 5901 South Highway 163, Columbia, MO 65203
Trail Miles: 1.4 Miles, Natural
Description: After leaving the trailhead in the Devil's Icebox parking area, the trail follows an old road to a spring with a concrete pad and pipes left over from the early 1900s
Parent Recommendation: "We love this trail, sometimes my son likes to ride his balance bike on this trail."

FINGER LAKES STATE PARK*

Location: 1505 Peabody Rd, Columbia, MO 65202
Distance from Columbia: 10 Miles, 15 Minutes
Description: Built in a former coal mining area, Finger Lakes' trails and motocross track are popular with users who come for the day, but often fall under the spell of the spacious campground, leafy trees and hilly terrain. The park is also the site of the challenging 2.75-mile Kelley Branch Mountain Bike Trail and a 4.5-mile water trail.

ARROW ROCK STATE PARK*

Location: 39521 Visitor Center Drive, Arrow Rock, MO 65320
Distance from Columbia: 42 Miles, 40 Minutes
Description: Stroll through the history of a once-bustling river town that's now the serene village of Arrow Rock. You'll walk streets lined with the architecture of the historic "Boone's Lick Country." The historic site is part of the larger Village of Arrow Rock, which features quaint stores and several antique shops.

GRAHAM CAVE STATE PARK*

Location: 217 State Hwy TT, Danville, MO 63361
Distance from Columbia: 47 Miles, 45 Minutes
Description: A walk in Graham Cave State Park is a walk-through ancient history. Artifacts uncovered in Graham Cave reveal that people occupied the cave 8,000 to 10,000 years ago. Graham Cave State Park is a prime hiking location, and the campground is perfect for get-togethers in a quiet place.

CUIVRE RIVER STATE PARK*

Location: 678 MO-147, Troy, MO 63379
Distance from Columbia: 95 Miles, 1 hr. 30 Minutes
Description: Cuivre River State Park lends a wilder, Ozarkian flavor to the otherwise predominately agricultural landscape of northern Missouri. Although not far from St. Louis, the park is a nature lover's paradise. Lake Lincoln offers swimming, boating and fishing. Try one of the park's family campsites for a little extra space or a platform tent site for a unique experience.

LANE SPRING RECREATIONAL AREA

Location: Mark Twain National Forest, Rolla, MO
Distance from Columbia: 104 Miles, 2 Hours
Description: Lane Spring Recreation Area provides a peaceful setting along Little Piney Creek and a scenic patio overlooking beautiful Lane Spring. A variety of outdoor recreation opportunities are in the area. The campground has 18 campsites. Campsites cannot be reserved and are available on a first come basis.

Reservations can be made by calling toll free 877-ICampMO (877-422-6766).