



Who we are

Generation Wild is a movement connecting Colorado kids to the outdoors.

Launched by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) in 2015, Generation Wild connects youth and their families to outdoor experiences. The movement was inspired by a University of Michigan study revealing that, on average, today's children spend less than 7 minutes a day outside in unstructured play. That's less time than any generation before them. This phenomenon is having negative effects on kids' mental and physical well-being, self-confidence and happiness. Generation Wild is working to change that.

The Generation Wild movement is made up of two parts: a statewide communications campaign designed to inspire and activate Colorado families and a network of 12 Generation Wild communities engaging more than 270,000 youth participants with outdoor programs and activities. (goco.org)

Generating impact.

Since 2015, Generation Wild communities have delivered **7,649 programs and pathways** to more than **270,068 participants**. (goco.org)

Middle school youth spent more days outside and reported greater confidence after participation in Generation Wild programs. **The number of middle school-aged youth spending 5+ hours per week outside increased by 27%.**

Middle and high school youth reported more interest in outdoor activities after participation in Generation Wild programming.

Generation Wild encourages basic outdoor stewardship by sharing Leave No Trace principles that can be applied anywhere, from the backyard to the backcountry.

Kids grow better outside.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children and teens who spend time playing outside are:

♥ **Physically healthier**

More outdoor time is linked with better sleep, improved motor development, lower obesity rates and lower risk for nearsightedness caused by a lack of exposure to outdoor light.

♥ **Mentally healthier**

Stress and depression are lower for children (and adults) who spend time in nature. Children also show increased focus and reduced symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

♥ **Less likely to act out**

Research shows that when children spend time in natural settings, they have less anger and aggression, and their impulse control improves.

♥ **More engaged in learning**

Playing outside promotes curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. Studies have found that children who spend more time in nature exploration have improved learning outcomes.

(American Academy of Pediatrics & HealthyChildren.org)

Did you know?

On average, children spend only 4-7 minutes per day outside in unstructured play.

(University of Michigan)



Generation Wild initiatives.



100 Things to Do Before You're 12

Generation Wild created a list of 100 outdoor activities that every kid needs to experience before they turn 12 and, to date, has distributed more than 500,000 copies of it throughout Colorado. As of a 2018 longitudinal study, 65.9% of moms had or used the list, and 60% of moms indicated their child had engaged in 31+ list activities.



Meet Wilder!

Wilder, Generation Wild's popular part-goat, part-yeti, and all-friend spokescreature makes appearances at events and gatherings around the state. Wilder also stars in a three-minute short film, *Wilder, A Tale of Love for the Outdoors*, that has won hearts and awards from across the country.



World Record Hopscotch

In 2022, Generation Wild earned the Guinness World Record title for the longest hopscotch. Generation Wild volunteers built the 4.37-mile, 21,871-square course at Chatfield State Park in Littleton, Colorado. Three volunteers hopped the entire course and celebrated with the community at the finish line, where a Guinness World Record official awarded the record.



#SayHiWithASnowman

Generation Wild and Children's Hospital Colorado have teamed up to build snowmen for kids at Children's Hospital Colorado. Since 2021, 421 families from 18 states and four countries have volunteered to build snowmen for the kids. This program launches again in January 2024.

Real-life success stories.

Brayhan Reveles

In high school, Brayhan joined a group of students working to find healthy and safe activities for youth in Leadville. His work looped him into the region's Generation Wild community, Get Outdoors Leadville! (GOL). He went from researcher to camp counselor to a member of GOL's youth advisory committee, supporting community engagement, safe places to play, outdoor programs, and much more. His passion made him a shoo-in for his eventual role as community programs manager at GOL! and, most recently, the organization's deputy director. Now, he's focused on building pathways for youth and their families to achieve their aspirations through the outdoors, just like he did.

Kianna Jones

Kianna's life was changed after a naturalist internship with the City of Aurora, Generation Wild's Northeast Metro community. Through educating the public about the environment and how to sustain it, she discovered her interest in a career serving both animals and kids. She also overcame some fears—snakes and spiders—and learned to appreciate the diversity of Colorado's ecosystems. More than a job, this role provided learning and inspiration for the years ahead.

Jose Dominguez

Jose never imagined he could enjoy the outdoors and get paid for it. But through the Colorado Springs-based nonprofit Catamount Institute, a Generation Wild community partner, he landed an internship facilitating summer camps. The experience helped him find his voice and confidence as a Latino leader in the southeast part of the city. When asked by his community to speak on a panel of local leaders, he shared the value of his outdoor experiences and the challenges he faced in getting there. Along with inspiring others with his story, he hopes to start a nonprofit someday to help youth achieve their goals.

Media Highlights



Created by voters in 1992, GOCO invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO has committed more than \$1.4 billion in Lottery proceeds to more than 5,700 projects in all 64 counties without a single dollar coming from taxpayers' pockets.

GenerationWild.com

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