



# GENERATION WILD IMPACT SHEET



**Think kids should spend more than seven minutes a day playing outside?  
You're not alone.**

Generation Wild exists to connect an entire generation of kids to the outdoors. Launched by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) in 2015, Generation Wild communities are breaking down barriers to the outdoors for youth and their families across the state. Coalitions offer locally led, culturally relevant and community-driven outdoor programming while creating pathways to outdoor leadership and careers. They have also built and enhanced welcoming outdoor places for kids to play and learn. To top it all off, Generation Wild is a communications effort—a statewide, integrated marketing campaign that provides youth and families with tips and inspiration to get outside more often.

**Because... Kids grow better *outside.***

This movement has come a long way, and that's why we're sharing results to date here—to celebrate Generation Wild and the partners making it happen.

## But what's GOCO?

Created by voters in 1992, GOCO invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds in helping protect and enhance the state's park, trail, wildlife, river, and open space heritage.



## What's in a Youth-and-Outdoors Movement?



A Community-Centered Approach



A Diverse Network of Partners



Positive Youth Development



Equitable Access to the Outdoors



Job Creation

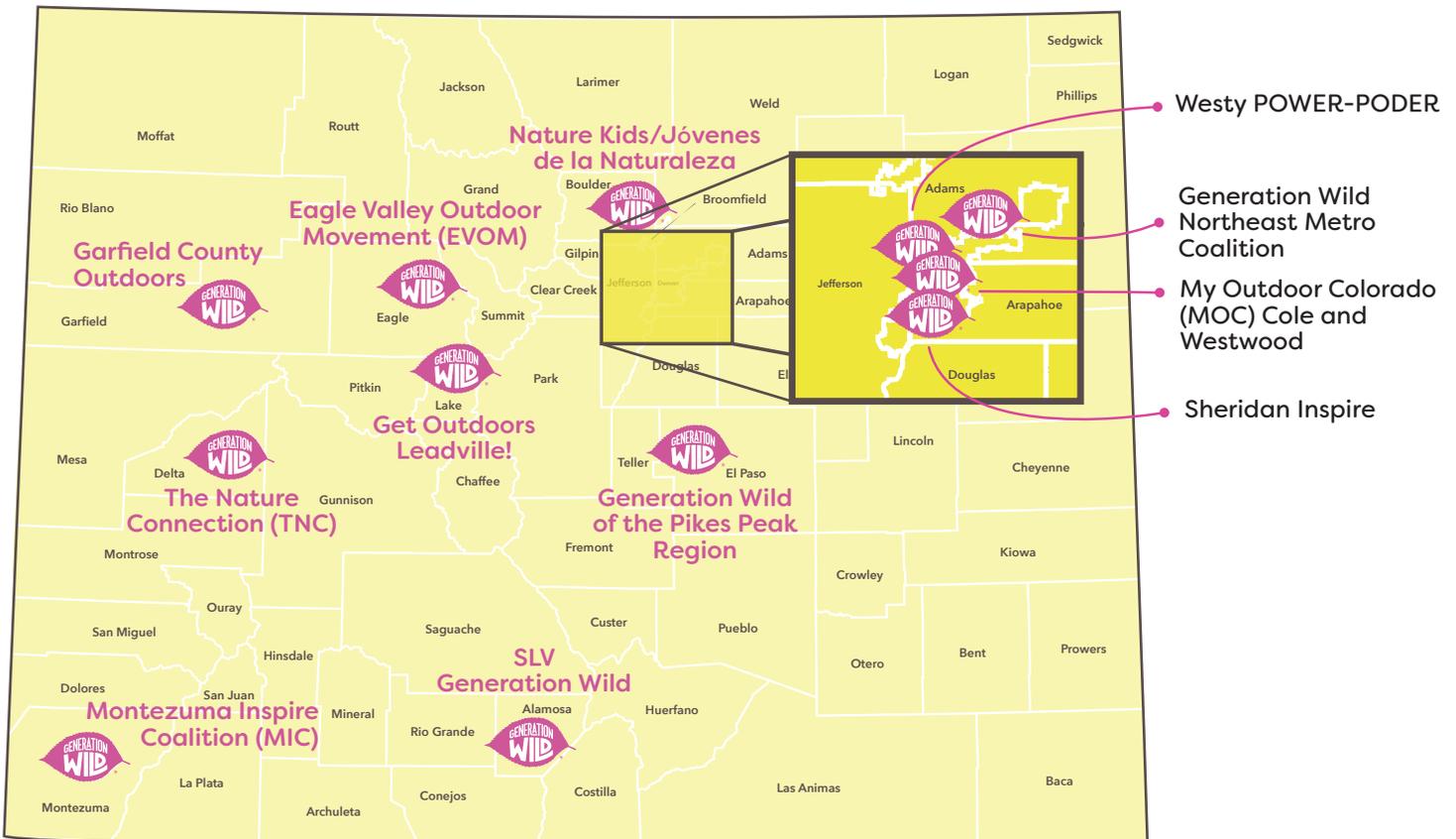
# Milestones



## Generation Wild Communities



There are 12 Generation Wild communities throughout Colorado. Each one brings together a coalition of organizations investing GOCO funding to break down barriers to getting youth and families outside.



# Program Evaluation

## From 2016-2019, GOCO worked with Kaiser Permanente's Partners in Evaluation & Research Center

to conduct an evaluation of the Generation Wild program to assess program impact, identify cross-site trends and measure participation, though not by tracking unique individuals. Through youth surveys, programmatic data on participation, emergent learning focus groups with providers, and a social network analysis of partners, the team captured data and gleaned insights that are driving the program forward. The results of the effort are below, and additional program evaluation is underway to capture more context about how and why these programs are impacting youth.

### Program Impacts

The movement has demonstrated scalability, as tens of thousands of kids and their families have reaped the benefits of access to new places to play and enriching outdoor programming, and just as importantly, individual youth lives have been deeply impacted by positive, lasting experiences.

**40,000**

kids impacted

**2,140**

programs offered

**1,361**

pathway opportunities offered

Middle school-aged youth spending 5+ hours outside increased by

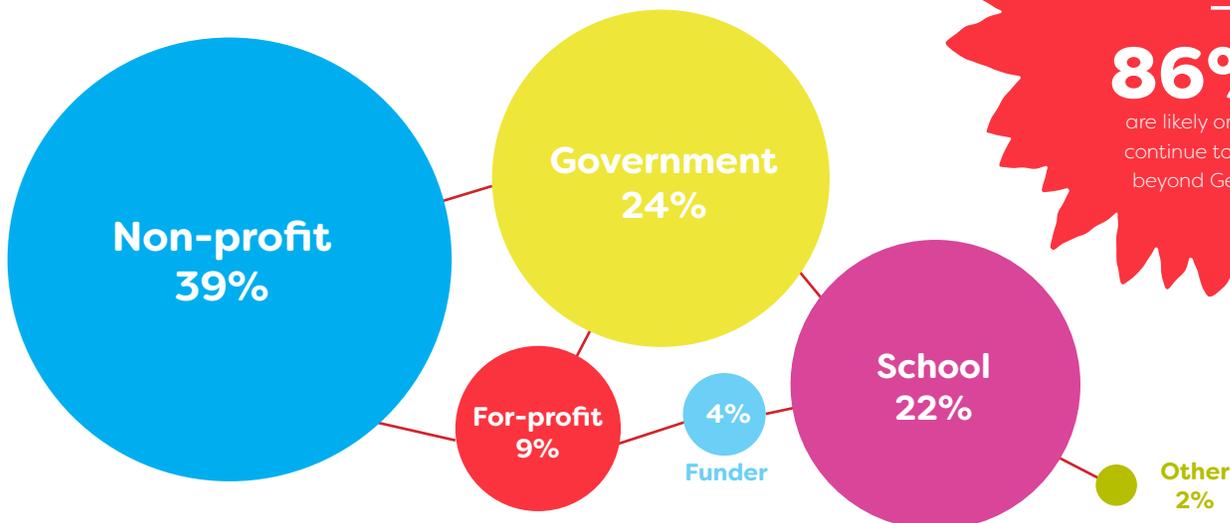
**27%**

High schoolers spending less than 2 hours a week outside decreased

**36%**

## Partnership Is Everything

What's the engine of the Generation Wild movement? It's the coalition partners. Diverse arrays of organizations have formed powerful networks, sharing resources and developing relationships that will strengthen communities into the future.



We celebrate Generation Wild and the partners making it happen.

# Testimonials from Our Coalition Partners

“Through mixed methods evaluation, Nature Kids/Jóvenes de la Naturaleza (NKJN) learned that time in nature through NKJN programming has positive impacts on social cohesion, and that nature is a moderator of social connection with peers and families. The benefits of outdoor programming have positive impacts on health and wellbeing, especially mental health and social-emotional wellness.”

**Angela Myers, Program Director - Community Partnerships, Thorne Nature Experience**

“Because of the funds from GOCO, the members at our Clubs have had access to a plethora of outdoor education and recreation experiences, to which they would not have access otherwise. It brings me so much joy to see the youth realize, on their own terms, what it means for themselves to live ‘wildly’ in so many different opportunities.”

**Kevin Spak, Outdoor Education Coordinator, Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver**

“Beyond the direct youth impacts, this work is also so much about the professional development of the adults that already work within youth programs. We have teachers, counselors, and out-of-school-time program providers who now understand the benefits of outdoor teaching and experiential learning and incorporating them into multiple aspects of their teaching work.”

**Beth Helmke, Former Director, Get Outdoors Leadville!**

## Communications Program Snapshot

The Generation Wild communications program delivered 178 million impressions between 2017 and 2020. You read that right. An integrated mix of digital marketing channels, television advertising, activations and events, a robust partner program and more delivers the “Kids grow better outside” message to parents, grandparents, and other caregivers of kiddos in every corner of Colorado in English and Spanish languages.

OMNI Institute, a firm supporting the public, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors with integrated research and evaluation in the area of social change, conducted an independent, longitudinal study to understand the effectiveness of the Generation Wild communications program in its first two years. On the right are key findings.

**73.8%**

of moms were familiar with specific elements of the Generation Wild campaign and 49% shared it

**75.7%**

of moms agreed “Generation Wild encouraged the idea that time outside is beneficial to my child’s development.”

**66.3%**

of moms agreed “Generation Wild encouraged me to get my kids outside more often.”

**65.9%**

of moms reported either having or using the campaign’s “100 Things to Do” list

## Generation Wild wants you.

Generation Wild has built incredible momentum and achieved amazing results in connecting kids to the outdoors. But we’re not done yet. There are plenty of ways to get involved—everything from amplifying the message and providing resources that help expand the presence of Generation Wild to creating new opportunities for kids to participate in our shared mission.

For program information, visit [GOCO.org/inspire](http://GOCO.org/inspire) or contact Jackie Miller at [jmiller@goco.org](mailto:jmiller@goco.org). On the communications side, visit [GenerationWild.com](http://GenerationWild.com) or contact Rosemary Dempsey at [rdempsey@goco.org](mailto:rdempsey@goco.org).



**The future belongs to the fearless. The future belongs to the imaginative. The future belongs to the generation of kids who play outside. Letting their imagination and their curiosity run wild. The future belongs to them. The future belongs to Generation Wild.**