



What is Generation Wild?

Generation Wild is a movement that began with Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and is supported by hundreds of partners across the state. Launched in 2017, the campaign's purpose is to reconnect kids with the outdoors by increasing the amount of time they spend outside in unstructured play – the kind of play that used to be way more common.

The program is an integrated, statewide effort that involves providing parents and caregivers inspiration for getting children outdoors. Campaign collateral is anchored by a clever “100 Things to Do Before You’re 12” list, which includes all kinds of activities ranging from rolling down a hill to skipping rocks, and making a mud pie to visiting a glacier. The [Generation Wild website](#) details the benefits of outdoor play and offers strategies and tips to nudge children away from the television, computer or other screens in a fun and engaging manner.

Centered around the notion that “Kids grow better outside,” the initiative has resonated with moms across the state. In fact, more than 73.8% of Colorado moms surveyed after two campaign seasons had heard about Generation Wild. Of those, 65.9% reported either having or using the 100 Things to Do list, and 60% indicated their child had engaged in 31+ activities from it.

Generation Wild enjoys broad support from statewide non-profit, public and private partner organizations, including Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado State Libraries, and Boys & Girls Clubs of Colorado. It's also an [on-the-ground initiative](#) by 15 locally based coalitions in [Generation Wild communities](#) working to create new places to play, outdoor programs, and pathways to leadership opportunities and jobs in the outdoors.



Overall, moms familiar with the campaign reported an increased connectedness to the outdoors.

Those not familiar with the campaign reported a decreased connectedness to the outdoors.

Why Generation Wild?

The data is staggering. Today's children spend an average of just four to seven minutes per day outside in unstructured play. Four to seven minutes. This shift toward a sedentary lifestyle is a major contributor to the decline in children's health.

The thing is, outdoor physical activity isn't just a fun break from digital devices and structured daily routines. It makes kids healthier and happier, from strengthening their immune systems to lowering stress. It also can improve vitamin D levels, which can in turn provide protection from ailments such as heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis.

Studies agree that kids who play outside are smarter, happier, more attentive, and less anxious

than kids who spend more time indoors. Social play in natural or outdoor settings has been shown to aid cognitive development and diminish the symptoms of ADHD. Just seeing green space can significantly reduce a child's stress level.

Importantly, children who experience diverse natural settings are more physically active, more aware of nutrition, more civil to one another and more creative. Plus, playing outside builds confidence, promotes creativity and imagination, teaches responsibility, provides different stimulation, and reduces stress and fatigue.

Free unstructured play goes beyond just a child's fitness. It affects their social and emotional development.



How do I learn more?

You can find information about Generation Wild online at GenerationWild.com or on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

