



Great Outdoors Colorado

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Ring in Summer with Generation Wild May 29
Statewide Event to Mark the End of the School Year

DENVER, (May 8, 2020) – It’s a time-honored tradition when that final school bell rings. Papers fly. Lockers slam shut. Kids run out the door. And summer begins. But this year is different. With in-person learning canceled for the remainder of the year for Colorado schools, the last bell won’t ring – at least not in the same way as before. That’s why [Generation Wild](#), a movement from Great Outdoors Colorado ([GOCO](#)), is encouraging the entire state to get outside on [Fri., May 29 at 3:00 p.m.](#) to ring whatever bell they have to celebrate the kids and teachers. To honor the front line. To remind all of us that better days lie ahead. And to signal the start of summer.

“Kids have had to miss out on so many important milestones and activities this spring because they weren’t in school,” said GOCO Executive Director Chris Castilian. “We wanted to come up with a joyful and fun way to acknowledge the end of the school year and the beginning of summer. So we’re hoping that everyone including kids, moms, dads, grandparents, churches, fire stations and even town halls will ring a bell – any kind will do – at 3:00 p.m. on May 29. Who knows? Maybe we’ll even see Wilder ringing a bell or two.”

Realizing how COVID-19 has drastically changed the way people are able to interact with one another, Generation Wild wanted to explore ways to unite and bring hope to its community through a shared experience. Thus, the idea for a bell ringing to signify the start of summer was born.

“The bell ringing gives us the opportunity to pause and acknowledge that we’ve made it this far and there are better days ahead,” Castilian added.

While so much has changed, the one thing that hasn’t is Generation Wild’s commitment to encouraging children to get outside and engage in unstructured play. Its [100 Things to Do Before You’re 12 list](#) and [Backyard Hacks](#) have come in handy as children and their caregivers find

Kids grow better *outside.*





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themselves with time to explore the outdoors close to home. [The Generation Wild website](#) details the benefits of outdoor play along with offering strategies and tips to nudge children away from the television, computer or other screens more often.

Generation Wild was created by GOCO to reconnect kids with nature 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. The movement is generating measurable results. Generation Wild enjoys broad support from statewide non-profit, public and private partner organizations, including Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Colorado State Library, and Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado. In 15 Colorado communities, diverse, locally based [Generation Wild coalitions](#) are creating equitable access to the outdoors with new places to play, outdoor programs, and pathways to leadership opportunities and jobs in the outdoors.

Go to [GenerationWild.com](#) to find more information on the movement, Ring in Summer, Wilder and innovative parenting strategies to help children get outside and play. Or follow Generation Wild on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), or join the [Raising Generation Wild Facebook group](#).

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a Constitutional Amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 5,300 projects in urban and rural areas in all 64 counties without any tax dollar support. Visit [GOCO.org](#) for more information.

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