

WinterKids

Season Wrap Up

Celebrating a season of transitions and creating positive changes in the lives of Maine children!



Achievements and Milestones



Program Highlights & Inspiring Stories



How We're Building a Culture of Philanthropy



2026 Outlook & Where We're Headed

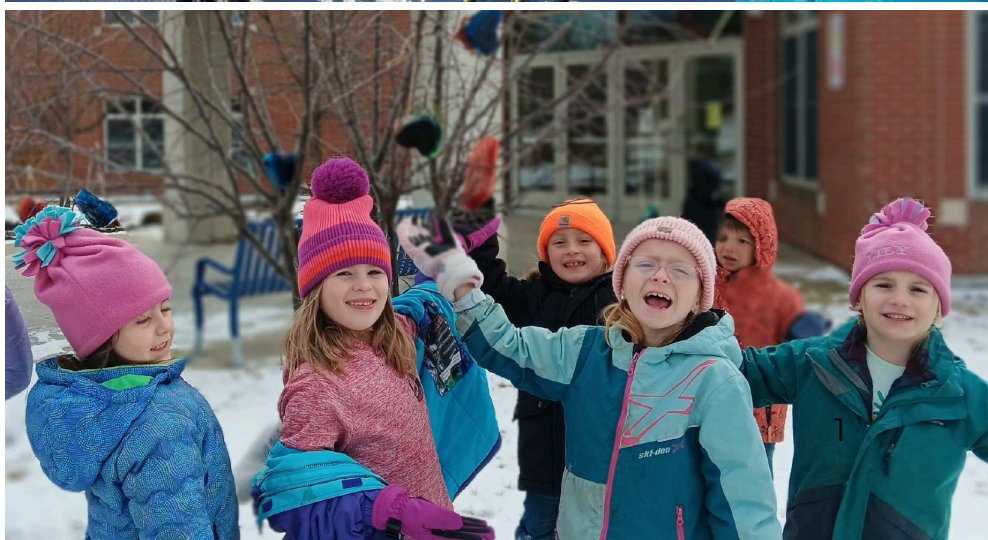
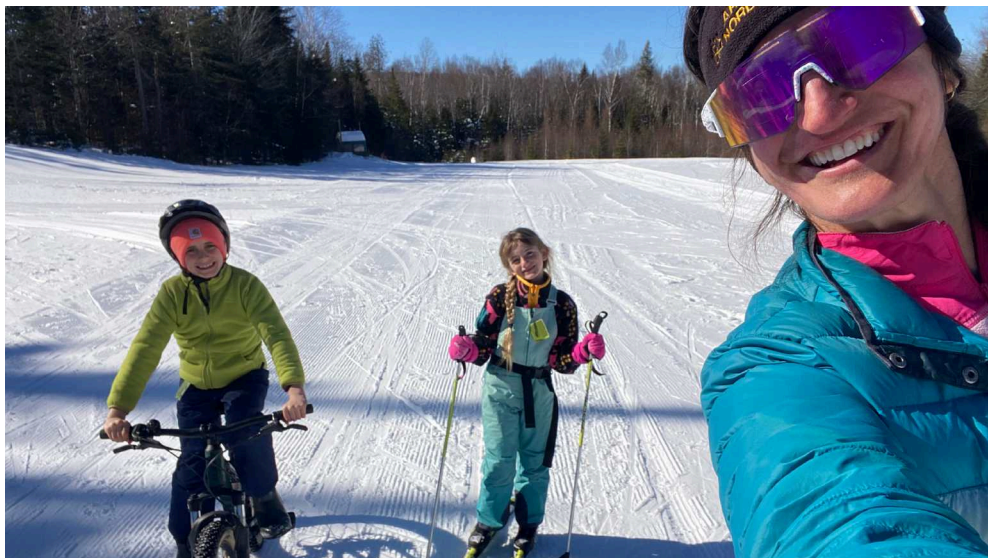


Staff, Board, and Statement of Activities



Contact WinterKids

207-871-5700
cholub@winterkids.org
501 Main Street
Westbrook, Maine 04092
winterkids.org



WHO WE ARE



MISSION

To help children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun outdoor winter activity.



VISION

A Maine where regardless of background, every child grows up with access to outdoor winter play and education, fostering lifelong learning, health, resilience, and a deep connection to nature, outdoor recreation, and the state.



PURPOSE

To facilitate meaningful opportunities for Maine children, regardless of background, to develop healthy lifestyles through inclusive and high-quality outdoor winter education and recreation. By focusing on depth of engagement with each child and family, our programs integrate movement and learning to build confidence, support well-being, and lay strong educational foundations. We prioritize accessibility by addressing physical, financial, and geographic barriers, ensuring that all children have the chance to thrive.

Introduction

As we pack away our gear for the season, we're filled with gratitude for a winter that brought more than just cold and (a little) snow it brought connection, joy, and movement to over 16,000 children across Maine.

This year, WinterKids reached more than 50,000 Mainers with evidence-informed programs that enhance educational outcomes, foster social development, and boost physical and mental health. Our work is grounded in research and fueled by fun.

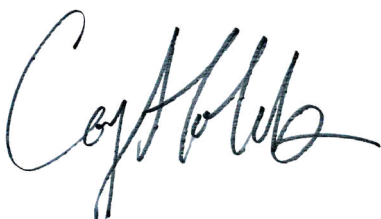
Thanks to your support, we helped kids across Maine experience the magic of winter. From their first sled rides to snowy hikes, snowshoe treks, and backyard obstacle courses, children moved, learned, explored, and felt the joy of being outdoors, many for the first time. Together, we make winter accessible, active, and joyful for everyone, regardless of zip code or income.

Inside this wrap-up, you'll find highlights from our season, stories from our amazing community, and a snapshot of what your generosity made possible. Every cloud counted in the Winter Games, every layer zipped up for Welcome to Winter, every burst of laughter on a Snowshoe and StoryWalk, every WinterKids App Family Day- that is your support in action.

As we look ahead to our 25th anniversary next season, we're celebrating not only how far we've come but also the incredible fact that we're now inspiring a second generation of WinterKids. Kids who once wore their first pair of snow boots with us are now parents, educators, and community leaders themselves, passing on a legacy of outdoor learning, movement, and joy.

We're proud of what we've accomplished together and excited for what's ahead. Together, we're working toward a Maine where, regardless of background, every child grows up with access to outdoor winter play and education, building lifelong learning, health, resilience, and a deep connection to nature, outdoor recreation, and the state.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Courtney Holub
Executive Director, WinterKids





Weather Explorers Take Learning Outside

This year's WinterKids Winter Games focused on **WEATHER**, and it was one of our most engaging themes yet. With help from meteorologists who visited every competitive track school, students explored clouds, storms, snow science, and the effect of weather on our world. Blending movement, STEAM learning, and outdoor fun, the Winter Games transformed playgrounds into weather labs, giving kids a hands-on (and sometimes snowy!) understanding of the environment around them.



Ski Smart, Ski Safe: Big Rock's Ski4Life Button Program

At Big Rock Mountain, a WinterKids grant helped launch a creative safety system for their Ski4Life program, which introduces kids to skiing by removing financial and transportation barriers. Using their grant money, they developed a colorful button program that shows each student's skill level: green for beginners, blue for intermediate, and black for advanced.

This fun, visual approach helps lift operators, instructors, and school staff ensure kids ski only on trails that match their abilities. The buttons also serve as keepsakes, turning safety into celebration and helping every child build confidence, stay safe, and enjoy learning on the slopes.



**Award Finalist In the 2025
National Ski Area Association
Safety Awards!**

Getting Back to Our Roots

WinterKids-sponsored events created opportunities for kids across Maine to learn the joy of being outside this winter.

This winter, WinterKids partnered with community organizations to bring 192 students, parents, and teachers outdoors. For some, it was their very first time on snow.

These experiences spanned three counties, and three ski areas, creating countless moments of laughter, and connection.

MARCH 2, 2025

Black Mountain of Maine | Rumford

Teens to Trails organized an incredible group of 147 middle and high school students and teachers from 11 different schools. They enjoyed a day at Black Mountain of Maine skiing, snowboarding, and tubing, with equipment rentals and lessons provided by Black Mountain of Maine, and paid for in part by WinterKids.



The smiling faces out on the hill said it all. Thanks to WinterKids, students learned new skills and had fun doing it.

— Todd Reutlinger, Black Mountain of Maine



At a Glance:

192

total participants
(80% children)

3

counties reached:
Oxford, Knox, and
Aroostook

1st

time snow
experiences for
dozens of kids

\$8,932

invested in access,
lessons, and
equipment

FEB 18, 2025

Camden Snow Bowl | Camden

The Down East Family YMCA brought 28 participants, 19 children and 9 adults, to the slopes for a joyful day of skiing and snowboarding. For many, it was their first time on snow. With 21 equipment rentals and 18 lessons, every participant had the support they needed to explore with confidence. It was a day full of movement, connection, and winter fun.



We are so grateful for these wonderful community partnerships that help create special experiences like this for the people we support.

— Central Aroostook Association

FEB 18, 2025

Big Rock Mountain | Mars Hill

Seventeen children and their caregivers gathered at Big Rock Mountain for a snowshoe adventure made possible through a partnership with Central Aroostook Association. With gear provided for each child, they set out along the trails, learning about the machines that keep the snow smooth and ski-ready. After exploring, the group gathered by a warm fire, sharing stories, laughter, and a memorable winter day together.



Supporting Access and Development

Mica Project Fund | Bethel

With the help of a \$1,500 WinterKids grant, the Mica Project in Bethel launched a mobile gear library this winter, bringing nearly 100 sets of skis, poles, and boots directly to children. Outfitted in a new trailer with shelving and racks, the library removed key barriers and sparked new energy around local winter fun.

The trailer traveled between the elementary school, trails, and events, meeting kids where they were. Across school-day sessions, a middle school team, and a community ski series, 93 children joined, including 20% who were new to skiing.

In one after-school program, 42 elementary students - 16% of the school - attended, regardless of the weather. One parent said they never imagined their child would love skiing so much.

This is what access looks like, not only bringing kids to winter but bringing them inside it.

From Maine Trails to Mountain Heights: Meet Johnny Bsullak

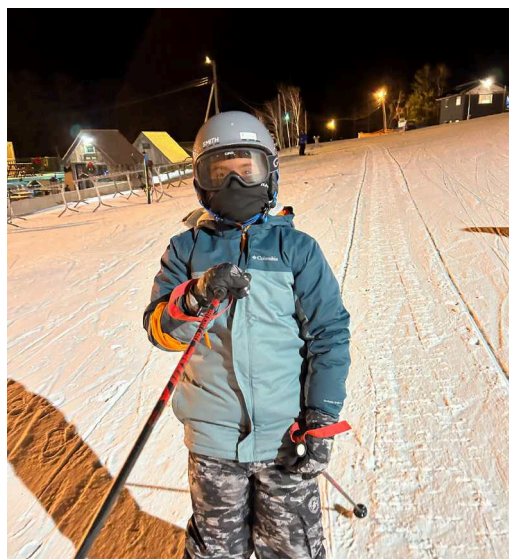
Johnny Bsullak, a high school senior from Poland, Maine, is many things: farm kid, varsity cross-country runner, plumber-in-training, certified scuba diver, and community volunteer. But when the snow falls, he's all in on freestyle skiing.

Johnny got his start at Lost Valley and Sunday River, learning from peers and practicing on his own. He joined USASA as a homegrown skier and quickly progressed to the Futures Tour with U.S. Ski & Snowboard, a key step toward national events like the Toyota Grand Prix, X Games, and Olympics.

This season, WinterKids supported Johnny's trip to Freestyle Nationals in Colorado. His story is one of persistence and possibility, proof that with passion and support, Maine kids can go anywhere.



WinterKids Grant Opens the Slopes to Biddeford Youth



With support of a WinterKids grant to **Biddeford Recreation**, local youth were given the chance to participate in a ski program, an opportunity that would have been out of reach for many due to financial barriers or limited access to winter sports. For some participants, it was their very first time experiencing snow sports, learning how to ski or snowboard, and spending extended time outdoors during the winter months in a structured, supportive environment.

This experience was more than just recreation; it was a chance for students to build on their strengths. Through skiing and snowboarding, they developed confidence, resilience, and teamwork, while engaging in a fun, healthy outlet during the winter season. The program allowed youth to access a sport that has traditionally been financially exclusive. They connected with the outdoors, challenged themselves physically and mentally, and uncovered new passions they can carry with them for years to come.



The reach of this program extends beyond the individual participants. It brings energy to the broader community, encourages youth engagement, and underscores the importance of equitable access to outdoor experiences. WinterKids' investment is helping create a generation of young people who feel empowered, included, and inspired.

Maine Families, Discovering Winter Fun Together

This season, the WinterKids App helped 5,209 family members across Maine enjoy winter together, with 2,975 free junior tickets redeemed at 75 partner ski areas and winter sports locations. Kids experienced skiing, snowboarding, skating, and more, creating fun family memories and encouraging active outdoor play.

The program connected families to Maine's best winter destinations while supporting healthy habits and time together outside.

As we head into our 25th year, we're excited to announce that the WinterKids App will return to its roots with a new name: the WinterKids Passport, bringing even more ways for Maine families to make winter their playground.



I now have my own kids and knew I wanted to pass along the love of skiing to them, but cost was always a factor for our family. Thanks to WinterKids, my children have been able to experience the love of this sport, grow their skills and have found great joy in the winter season. Both of my children have benefited from WinterKids days at Mt. Abram and Powderhouse Hill along with programs in their schools in Maine and this winter has been amazing.

— Whitney Blethen, WinterKids App family



5,209

**FAMILY
MEMBERS**

2,975

**OFFERS
REDEEMED**

75

**PARTNER
LOCATIONS
ACROSS MAINE**



A Magical Night at Welcome to Winter

Our Welcome to Winter celebration at Lost Valley on December 19th brought the Lewiston/Auburn community together for outdoor winter fun. Hundreds of kids and families learned new ways to embrace the joys of Maine's winter season, with snowshoeing, skiing, snowboarding, raffle prizes, a sled giveaway, and cozying up with new friends, hot chocolate, and s'mores around the fire.

Here's a quick peek at Welcome to Winter 2024 by the numbers:

- * An estimated **350** Attendees
- * **11** generous event partners
- * **10** incredible volunteers
- * Over **100** Sleds & Helmets given away
- * **10** OUT-door prizes awarded
- * **75+** free ski & snowboard rentals
- * **Umpteen** Cups of hot chocolate poured and S'mores consumed
- * **2** adorable mascots
- * **1** night of outdoor winter fun for all!



Mark Your Calendar!

Welcome to Winter will be back at Lost Valley on **Monday, December 22, 2025.**



How Snowshoes and StoryWalks[®] Made This Winter One to Remember



This winter, hundreds of Maine kids and families laced up snowshoes, stepped into fresh snow, and followed the pages of a story through the woods, all thanks to the WinterKids Snowshoe and StoryWalk[®] Loan Program.

From Scout Troop 93 exploring local trails, to Brewer Community School turning reading into an outdoor adventure, these experiences blended literacy and active learning in the heart of Maine's winter.

The following organizations brought the magic of Snowshoeing and StoryWalks to life this season:

- Scout Troop 93
- Palermo Consolidated School
- Cape Elizabeth Land Trust and Cape Community Services
- Andover PTA
- Brewer Community School
- New England Hemophilia Association
- Augusta Parks and Recreation

Together, these groups reached 730 children and community members.

The best part? It was accessible for everyone. By loaning snowshoes and StoryWalk[®] kits free of charge, WinterKids expanded opportunities for outdoor play, fresh air, and joyful reading experiences. Kids embraced the season with confidence, curiosity, and a spirit of adventure all while building healthy habits and a love reading and learning.





Weather Explorers: How 10,000+ Kids Made Winter Their Classroom



10,218

STUDENTS



945

TEACHERS



762

CLASSES



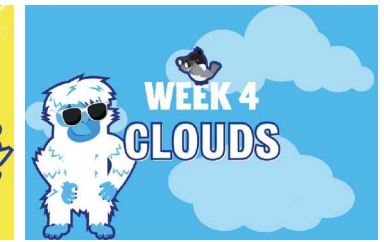
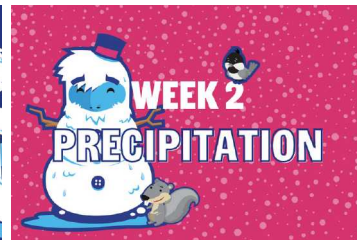
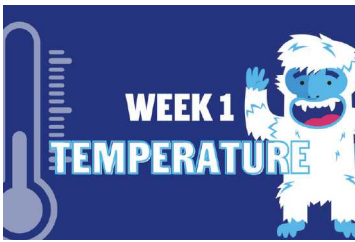
99

SCHOOLS

From January 13-February 7, 2025, schools across Maine were buzzing with excitement as more than 10,000 elementary students took part in the 2025 WinterKids Winter Games, a four-week academic challenge that turned winter into an outdoor classroom full of movement, teamwork, and discovery.

Centered on the theme of WEATHER, the Winter Games invited children to become budding scientists, tracking daily weather observations and diving into weather-themed lessons that blended science, math, and art. From snowy experiments to creative projects inspired by Maine's ever-changing skies, classrooms stepped outside and embraced winter together.





Over **4,000** students joined the **Winter Games Competitive Track**, where 16 schools were selected to compete for cash prizes to support wellness and outdoor learning. All schools won cash prizes, with the largest of \$5,000, \$3,000, and \$1,500 going to the top schools, recognizing their outstanding engagement and teamwork.

Meanwhile, over **6,000** more students joined the **Winter Games Play-Along Track**, enjoying the challenges without the competitive element, thanks to free registration that made participation accessible for schools of all sizes.

The 2025 Winter Games showcased the power of joyful, hands-on learning, proving once again that Maine's winters are the perfect backdrop for helping children build healthy habits, curiosity, and confidence, one chilly winter day at a time.

TOP 3 WINNING SCHOOLS

🥇 Gold Medal + \$5,000

Rangeley Lakes Regional School
(Franklin County)

🥈 Silver Medal + \$3,000

Lamoine Consolidated School
(Hancock County)

🥉 Bronze Medal + \$1,500

Community Regional Charter School
(Somerset County)

A **grand total of \$18,250 was awarded** across all competing schools, recognizing their dedication to outdoor education and the spirit of winter fun!



Miller School is grateful for this incredible program that helps schools get their students outside by providing great themes, materials, and incentives. This type of daily content would be difficult to do with the whole school if it weren't for this program and its amazing sponsors. It has not only made an impact on our school but also our community. This is Miller School's second year participating and it has been really cool witnessing how much our community has come together with supporting our students and attending our school-wide events.

Thank you, WinterKids Board and Members [donors], for everything you do to make this happen across our state.

— Miller School, Waldoboro, Maine (Lincoln County)

Learn Outside Guide: Inspiring Outdoor Learning Beyond the Winter Games

At the heart of the Winter Games, the WinterKids Learn Outside Guide has always encouraged teachers to weave outdoor learning into their winter lesson plans.



Today, the Winter Games PLAYBook features two engaging lessons from the Guide each week, and participating teachers receive the Guide as a lasting resource for continued outdoor learning.

Updated in recent years, both the Early Childhood and Elementary editions now include a virtual training module offering contact credits for educators. Each edition is designed by and for teachers, with easy-to-implement activities aligned to P-MELDS or Common Core Standards. **The Early Childhood Guide provides 12 weeks of enriching outdoor lessons, while the Elementary Guide offers over 40 standards-aligned activities across six subjects.**

By blending movement with academics, the Learn Outside Guide empowers teachers to keep kids active, curious, and joyful all winter long, nurturing wellness and sparking a love of learning that lasts far beyond the season.

This past season, in addition to the teachers and students who participated In the Winter Games, **133 teachers** brought the Learn Outside Guide Into their classroom, reaching a total of **1,747 students** across Maine.



Building a Culture of Philanthropy



At WinterKids, philanthropy isn't just about raising money, it's about building a community of people who believe in getting Maine kids outside, active, and connected. When we talk about a culture of philanthropy, we mean everyone- staff, board members, volunteers, and donors, working together with shared purpose and respect.

This culture is rooted in trust and genuine relationships. It's about listening and showing up with honesty and gratitude. People give because they believe in what we do and because they feel part of something bigger.

We believe that winter is for everyone. That Maine's winters are unique classrooms. That every child deserves a chance to play outside. And that fairness and integrity matter in every game, trail, and snowball toss. These beliefs guide how we build partnerships, share stories, and invite support.

Our values- children's health and wellness, active education, and inclusivity- are at the heart of our work. And they're made possible by a strong culture of philanthropy, where fundraising isn't the job of a few, but a shared commitment to moving forward together.

The generosity we see isn't just financial; it's time, talent, passion, and connection. And that generosity fuels everything we do. Together, we're building a movement that helps kids thrive in every season.





Meet J.J. Sevigny: WinterKids' Young Fundraising Champion!



For the past two years, J.J. Sevigny has been our top youth fundraiser at Downhill 24, and at the age of 12, he's just getting started!

Inspired by watching other teams ski through the night, J.J. couldn't wait to join the fun himself. Now, he loves raising money to help more kids get outside, saying, "It's so much fun staying up all night skiing under the lights and making memories."

When asked what drives him, J.J. shared, "I want kids to experience what it's like to be outside in Maine in the winter and try new things!" His simple approach, "just asking around at the right time," has helped him make a big difference. And his favorite part? "It felt awesome to be the top youth fundraiser!"



J.J.'s advice for other kids who want to help?
"Do it - you meet new friends, and seeing how much we raise for WinterKids is so worth it!"

We're so proud of J.J. for showing that winter fun and helping others truly go hand in hand.



Partner Spotlight:

Jon Morrill & Kittery Trading Post

This year, we celebrate Jon Morrill, recently retired Kittery Trading Post Vice President, Specialty Sports Buyer, for his incredible leadership, vision, and commitment to getting Maine kids outdoors.

For more than 20 years, Kittery Trading Post has been a cornerstone partner in the WinterKids movement, providing not only financial support but also gear, event sponsorship, and an unwavering belief in our mission. Jon has been the heart of that partnership. His passion for the outdoors and his deep care for Maine's communities helped shape a culture of giving at KTP that reflects everything we value: access, adventure, and opportunity for all kids.

From helping families gear up for their first ski day to championing programs that make outdoor play more accessible, Jon's legacy is woven into the lives of tens of thousands of children who have discovered the magic of winter through WinterKids.

We're grateful for his partnership and proud to honor his contributions.





Fueled by Passion, Powered by Volunteers

At WinterKids, our volunteers are the heart of everything we do. Their time, energy, and love for the outdoors help create joyful, active winter experiences for children and families across Maine.

At a Glance:

83

Volunteers

5

Programs
Supported

395

Total Hours
Worked

That's the
equivalent of
10 weeks of
full time
employment!

Rooted in Heart and Winter



For 17 years, Elise Bridge has brought the WinterKids mission to life, helping children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity. Her dedication and passion have created countless opportunities for Maine kids to get outside, be active, and fall in love with winter.

Elise began volunteering with WinterKids by helping with mailings and data entry at our previous location on Exchange Street. Since then, she's become a familiar and beloved presence at events like Downhill 24 and Cooper Campbell Day at Shawnee Peak. She gives her time because she deeply believes in the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of nature and outdoor play.



This year, Elise took on a leading role as the volunteer coordinator for Downhill 24, organizing and supporting dozens of volunteers with care and confidence. Her leadership ensured a smooth, positive experience for everyone involved, and her energy set the tone for a memorable event.

Elise's warmth, dedication, and unwavering belief in the power of outdoor experiences make her an irreplaceable part of the WinterKids family. We're endlessly grateful for her years of service, and for the inspiration she continues to share with all of us.





2026 Outlook

As we look toward our 25th anniversary and beyond, we're doubling down on what matters most: helping all Maine children thrive outdoors in winter.



We've clarified our purpose to guide this next chapter: To facilitate meaningful opportunities for Maine children, regardless of background, to develop healthy lifestyles through inclusive and high-quality outdoor winter education and recreation.

This means focusing on depth, not just how many kids we reach, but how deeply we engage with each child and family. Our programs will continue to integrate movement and learning in ways that build confidence, support well-being, and lay strong educational foundations. And we're committed to breaking down physical, financial, and geographic barriers so that every child in Maine can move, learn, and explore in the snow.

Where We're Headed

We're building a future where outdoor winter learning isn't just a moment, it's a lifestyle. We're focused on supporting more schools, more families, and more communities with the tools, training, and inspiration to make outdoor learning and recreation part of everyday life. We're expanding access so all kids can experience the power of play in the winter.

We're building a culture where health, wellness, and connection are built into how kids grow and learn. And with your continued support, we'll keep pushing forward so every child, no matter where they live or learn, can develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun outdoor winter activities.



Thank you for your support!



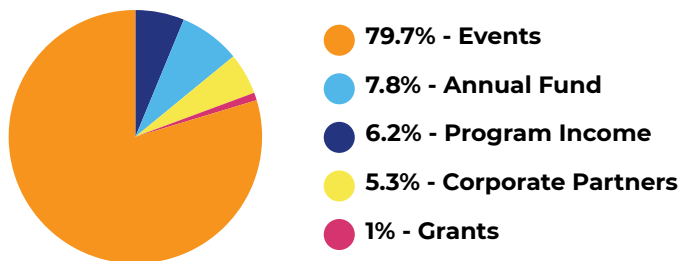
Because of you, WinterKids programs reached over **8%** of all Maine Kids aged 5-17 during the 2024/25 season!

Participants Reached:

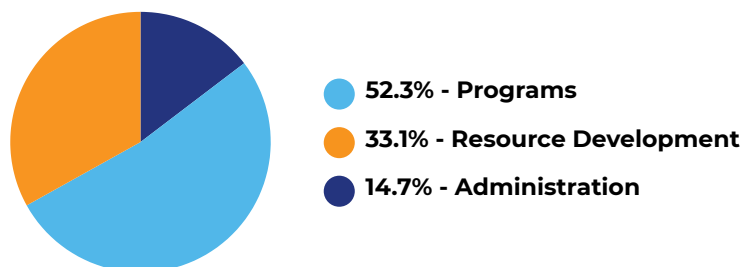
22K Kids **5.3K** Teachers **104** Schools

Statement of Activities:

INCOME



EXPENSES



Staff

COURTNEY HOLUB
Executive Director

MARION DOYLE
Education Director

MELISSA FERRIGNO
Administrative & Volunteer Manager

JOSH HARRINGTON
Family Programs Manager

KRISTEL HAYES
Marketing Manager

TOM LONG
Program & Environmental Sustainability Manager

Board of Directors

OFFICERS

PARKER SWENSON, PRESIDENT
Project Manager, Operations, Diversified Communications

CHAD CREELMAN, VICE PRESIDENT
Head, Sales Excellence, WEX, Inc.

RYAN LARSEN, TREASURER
Corporate Merchant, Sporting Equipment, L.L. Bean

SETH COBURN, PAST PRESIDENT
Partner, Duane Morris, LLP

COURTNEY HOLUB, SECRETARY
Executive Director, WinterKids

DIRK GOWENS, EX OFFICIO
Executive Director, Ski Maine Association

MEMBERS

JUSTIN BREWER
Performance Director, CRH Americas Material, Inc

ABE FURTH
Owner, Orono Brewing Company & Wild Maine Seltzer

JESSICA GAGNE
WMTW Morning News Anchor

JOHN GIFFUNE
Partner, Verill Dana, LLP

JOE LAJOIE
Vice President, Lajoie Brothers. Inc. Construction & Design Firm

PETER LOWELL
Financial Advisor, Edward Jones, LLP

KRISTEN MAZOKI
Psychiatrist, Franklin Memorial Hospital

JILLIAN RICH

2024/2025 Sponsors & Partners:

MAJOR COMMUNITY SPONSOR

L.L.Bean

SUPPORTING SPONSORS



KITTERY TRADING POST

wex™



EXCLUSIVE TELEVISION PARTNER



THE WINTERKIDS WINTER GAMES WERE BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

- Hannaford Snack Pals
- Weekly sponsors: Aroma Joe's and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
- Contributing sponsors: MMG Insurance and Stockhouse Restaurant

DOWNHILL 24 EVENT PARTNERS

- Presenting sponsors: Agren Appliance and Zachau Construction
- Platinum Prize Sponsor & Founding Partner: Kittery Trading Post
- Skin Up Sponsor: L.L. Bean
- Television Partner: WMTW TV and Maine's CW
- Black Diamond Sponsors: Herc Rentals, Pike Industries, Franklin Printing, Maine Health, Patra Company, Sugarloaf Inn, WEX
- Blue Square Sponsors: Portland Media Group and Kevin Browne Architecture
- Green Circle Sponsors: Dirigo Technologies, Maine Drone Imaging, and Snowbound USA
- Additional sponsors: Orono Brewing Company, Carrabassett Coffee Company, Hannaford to Go, All States Materials Group, Northern Light Health, Family Chiropractic Associates, Winterstick Snowboard, West Mountain Ski Company, Martins Point Health Care, LaJoie Brothers, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and Mountainside Real Estate

WELCOME TO WINTER EVENT PARTNERS

- Ski & Snowboard rentals and lessons provided by our host, Lost Valley
- Snowshoes and Bean Boot appearances by L.L. Bean
- XC Ski demos, courtesy of New England Nordic Ski Association
- Adaptive winter sports gear information & demos, provided by Central Maine Adaptive Sports.
- Sleds & Helmet giveaway, generously donated by Flexible Flyer Sleds
- Comfy heated seating, thanks to our friends at Huga.
- Hot chocolate bar, generously provided by Aroma Joe's Coffee.
- Tables with games and resources by Teens to Trails, Evergreen CU, and and Healthy Androscoggin

LICENSE TO CHILL EVENT PARTNERS

- Presenting sponsor: Mt. Abram
- Snowman Sponsor: Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
- Snowball Sponsors: Acadia Insurance, Chalmers Insurance, Charcutemarie, Eighty 8 Donut Cafe, and The Little Gym of Scarborough

SNOWSHOE & STORYWALK PARTNERS

- Brought to you by Evergreen Credit Union
- Snowshoes provided by L.L. Bean



Stay In Touch

WinterKids.org
207-871-5700

Email Courtney:
cholub@winterkids.org

