

WINTERKIDS KICKS OFF SEVENTH ANNUAL WINTERKIDS WINTER GAMES IN MAINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS STATEWIDE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 3, 2024 – The 7th annual [WinterKids Winter Games](#) will kick off this month with 16 schools (comprised of 3300+ students and 380+ teachers) statewide who have applied for and been selected to compete for a total of nearly \$20,000 in cash prizes for their schools as part of the [Competitive Track](#). The winning Competitive Track school will receive \$5,000, second will receive \$3,000 and third place will receive \$1,500 in school-wide prize ceremonies. All competitive schools will receive a cash prize based on how they finish.

In addition, over 6,000 additional students and 400 additional teachers will participate in the Winter Games as part of a [Play-Along Track](#), which was born during the pandemic to reach children even though they were not in school. This non-competitive edition of the Games offers all the same fun activities and lessons without the structure of earning weekly points or meeting deadlines. Teams (classrooms, rec departments, individual students) will move, learn, and explore with this go-at-your-own-pace track. All participating students have received comprehensive toolkits and weekly incentives that will allow them to take their learning outside for the full 4 weeks of daily challenges.

The Games will kick off with an outdoor Opening Ceremony event at the Williams-Cone School in Topsham on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Press is welcome and encouraged to attend.

“This initiative goes beyond the competition; it's about fostering a love for outdoor exploration and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle. The Winter Games not only bring joy and excitement but also serve as a reminder of the

transformative power of outdoor education,” said Julie Mulkern, WinterKids’ Executive Director. “WinterKids is proud to be a catalyst for bringing joy, movement, and a sense of community to classrooms statewide.”

Embracing outdoor learning helps to counteract the negative effects of excessive screen time – particularly for those in elementary school. WinterKids provides resources for both teachers and parents to get their kids outside and active. Learn more at <https://winterkids.org>.

The 7th Annual WinterKids Winter Games are made possible thanks to Hannaford Snack Pals, Weekly sponsors Aroma Joe’s, Backyard Farms, and Wyman’s, and contributing sponsors, Kittery Trading Post, Stockhouse Restaurant, and MMG Insurance.

Let the Games begin!

About WinterKids: WinterKids is a nonprofit organization based in Maine that provides children with opportunities to stay active, healthy, and learn outdoors during the winter months. Since its establishment in 1997, WinterKids has been dedicated to ensuring that hundreds of thousands of children embrace the joy of outdoor winter activities while reaping the numerous physical and mental health benefits they provide.

Through innovative programs, including the WinterKids App, WinterKids Winter Games, Welcome to Winter, License to Chill, WinterKids StoryWalk & Snowshoe Loan Program, WinterKids Learn Outside Guide, WinterKids Peisner Nordic Fund, Mountain Mayhem, WinterKids Downhill 24, and D24 Outdoor Fund, WinterKids helps children develop healthy lifelong habits through fun, outdoor winter activity.

WinterKids’ Major Community Sponsor is L.L. Bean. Supporting Sponsors are Agren, CMP, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, WEX, WMTW and The CW, and Zachau Construction.

