winter4kids

Impact Report

Spring 2026

Built on R.I.S.E.
Driven by Impact.

Dear Friends and Supporters, **Spring 2026**

This season marked a significant milestone for Winter4Kids. We welcomed 1,846 young people to the mountain, delivering 11,076 lessons and more than 22,000 hours spent outside. Those numbers matter, but what matters more is what they represent. Young people gaining confidence, trying something new, and beginning to see what they are capable of. That is why Winter4Kids exists.

At Winter4Kids, everything we do is centered on what young people take with them when they leave. Through our outcomes, we see that impact clearly. Participants build resilience as they learn to navigate challenges. They experience inclusion, feeling a true sense of belonging. They are supported by a team that shows up for them, consistently. And over time, they develop a sense of empowerment, recognizing their own ability to grow, improve, and succeed.

Winter4Kids is intentionally built just for youth. It is a space where they can learn, take risks, and grow at their own pace. Through our Progression Park and the way our team supports each participant, we create an environment where progress feels natural and confidence builds over time.

This year also brought meaningful growth. We expanded our reach, welcomed new partners, and introduced more youth to winter sports than ever before. At the same time, we strengthened our operations and remained focused on delivering a consistent, high-quality experience for every participant.

This period of growth also marked a leadership transition for the organization. In November, I assumed the role of Interim Chief Executive Officer, following my tenure as Director of Programming and Operations. Having been with the organization since its inception, I am deeply committed to its mission and honored to take on this leadership responsibility. What makes Winter4Kids exceptional has long been evident to me, and it is a privilege to help guide the organization into its next chapter.

None of this work happens without the people who stand behind it. Our staff, partners, and donors make this possible, and we are grateful for the trust you place in us.

There is more ahead. I am excited about where we are going and the work we will continue to do to ensure that every young person who comes to Winter4Kids leaves stronger than when they arrived. Thank you for being part of this.

With deep gratitude,

Judie Rullis, Interim CEO

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Our Purpose

Mission: Our mission is to influence youth behavior through winter activities. As the nation's only winter activity center built exclusively for kids, Winter4Kids builds confidence, resilience, and character by providing equitable access to outdoor winter sports and structured learning experiences. We create environments where students discover their potential, strengthen self-belief, and rise beyond the snow.

Vision: We envision a world where all youth, regardless of their background, can discover their strength, build resilience, and rise to their fullest potential through the power of outdoor winter experiences.

2014

The former Hidden Valley ski area is reimagined and transformed into the National Winter Activity Center.

2015-2019

Building on a successful pilot season, the National Winter Activity Center expands its reach.

2019

The National Winter Activity Center publicly rebrands as Winter4Kids, reflecting expanded reach and impact.

Present

Winter4Kids serves thousands of youth annually through multi-year programs that combine winter sports, mentorship, nutrition, and life-skills development, welcoming over 20,000 youth since opening.

> ***This trip increased the self-confidence of our students and opened new doors for them. Many students expressed a new love of skiing and snowboarding that will stay with them forever.***
> -Teacher, East Side HS, Paterson, NJ

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A Season In Review

Winter4Kids primarily supports families often experiencing scarcity in their financial resources, access to shelter or food, exposure to activities outside their neighborhoods, and/or positive role models.

1,846 First Tracks students

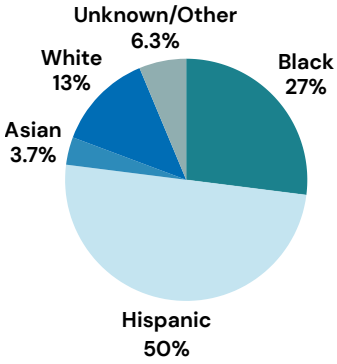
11,076 lessons

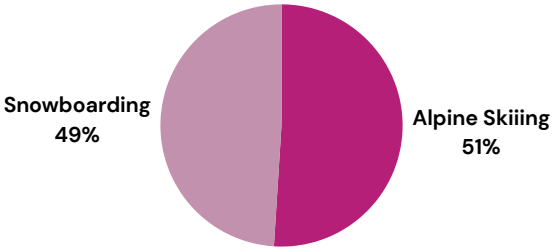
77% low-income students

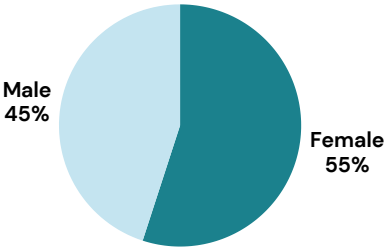
27,690 hours outside

11,076 meals served

50 partner organizations







Winter4Kids hosts year-round events that bring our community together for enrichment, recreation, and mentorship. These gatherings create opportunities for students to build confidence, develop new skills, and connect with positive role models in a supportive community environment.

CHILL & CHILI
SAVE THE DATE 2.28.2027

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
SAVE THE DATE 3.7.27

NJ HIGH SCHOOL RACES

US SKI & SNOWBOARD RACES

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R.I.S.E. Framework

At the core of our model is the RISE framework—**Resilience, Inclusion, Support, and Empowerment**—which intentionally cultivates what we define as "mountain agency": a participant's ability to navigate challenges, make decisions, and persist in the face of uncertainty. Over time, this mountain-based learning translates into "real-life agency," equipping youth with the mindset and skills needed to succeed in school and beyond.

Our program does more than teach winter sports—it develops resilient, confident, and capable young people who are prepared to navigate challenges, build meaningful relationships, and pursue expanded opportunities in all areas of their lives.

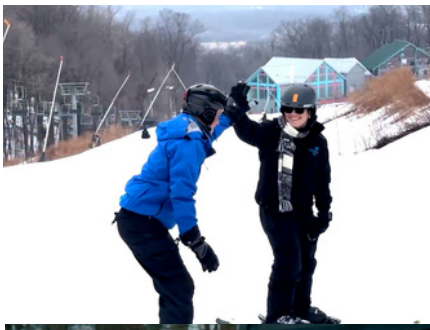
When youth become drivers of their own growth...

...agency is built.

Student Testimonial

"Before Winter4Kids, I had never snowboarded and didn't think it was something I could do. At first, I was nervous and unsure of what to expect, but the coaches and staff supported me every step of the way. ***They created a safe environment where I could challenge myself, try new things, and keep improving.*** *They pushed me to work hard and reminded me not to give up, even when things felt difficult. Because of this experience, I built confidence and discipline I didn't have before. I feel proud of myself for stepping out of my comfort zone, and I see myself differently now—more confident, more determined, and more willing to try new things. Winter4Kids changed my life, and it's a sport I want to continue every winter for the rest of my life."*

- Student, East Side High School, Paterson, NJ



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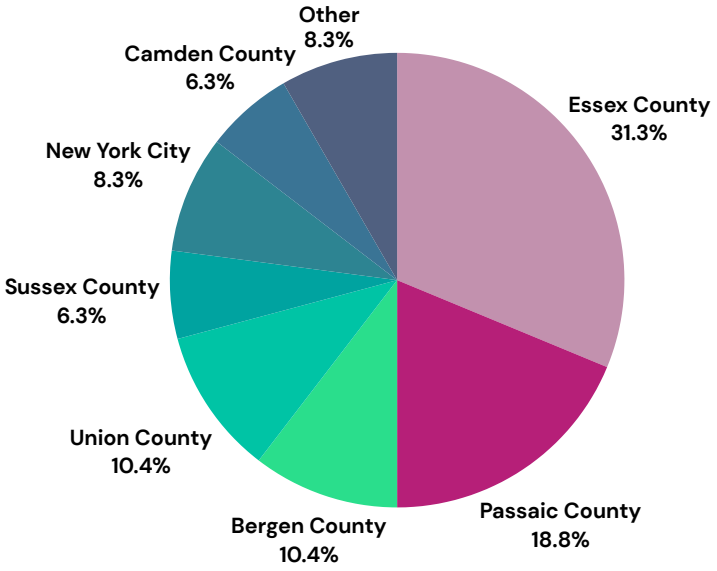
Partners

Winter4Kids partners with 50 organizations across the region to expand access to winter sports and year-round enrichment for youth who might not otherwise have these opportunities. These partnerships are central to our reach, connecting students to transformative experiences both on and off the mountain.



> ***Winter4Kids really helped my students come out of their shell... All of our students walked out of the program having learned a skill they never would have had the opportunity to learn otherwise.***
> - Teacher, Luis Munoz, Newark, NJ

Feedback from participating schools and partner organizations highlights the powerful impact of the Winter4Kids program on the students they serve. Survey responses consistently emphasized increased confidence, belonging, and access to opportunities students might not otherwise experience. The results reflect strong satisfaction with the program and meaningful growth observed in participating youth.

- 96% of participating schools plan to return in 2027.
- 100% of partners said the program provided opportunities students would not otherwise have.
- 100% reported increased student confidence, perseverance, and independence.
- 100% said students felt welcomed and included.
- 77% saw improved student attendance during the program.

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Supporters and Donors

We are deeply grateful to our donors and supporters whose generosity makes it possible for Winter4Kids to expand access, opportunity, and joy for every young person we serve.

Bachleda Family Foundation
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Boston Foundation
BR+A Charitable Foundation
Bronx Scuba
City of Paterson
Columbia Sportswear
Comet Security
Community Foundation of NJ
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In Memory of Everett Merriman
In Memory of Carl Boyhan
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Stacey Roman - Wells Fargo
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Techflex
The Aspinall Family
The Daily Bean
The Ford Foundation
The JAKET Foundation
The Plainfield Foundation
The Ruhl Family
The Silber Family
Todd Thomas
UFCW LOCAL 888
Esad Vuvic
Michael Walden
Warm Jacket Foundation
Winsupply Middletown NY
Workspace Logistics

> ***This program has given our students an incredible opportunity to grow… Winter4Kids has become something our students and chaperones look forward to every season.***
> - Teacher, Belleville Middle School, Belleville, NJ

Organizational Sustainability

Winter4Kids remains committed to long-term organizational sustainability through a thoughtful, mission-driven approach to growth:

- **Financial Sustainability:** We prioritize an efficient, program-driven budget while expanding and diversifying revenue streams across individual donors, board support, institutional grants, school partnerships, and earned income.
- **Programmatic Sustainability:** By offering a full spectrum of coaching—from first-time participants to competitive racers—we ensure accessibility while deepening engagement and increasing repeat participation among youth and partners.
- **Inclusivity & Community:** We are intentionally cultivating a culture of inclusivity, both within our organization and across the communities we serve. Through transparent, visible leadership, we attract and retain dedicated ambassadors and volunteers who help sustain and amplify our impact.

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(973) 846-8250

www.winter4kids.org

44 Breakneck Rd, Vernon Township, NJ 07462