



Growing up Boulder

SUMMER 2015

ANNUAL REPORT

Highlights from the Past Year

Growing Up Boulder (GUB) has actively engaged young people in a number of planning and design projects to increase youth voice. Some highlights of GUB's work in the 2014-2015 academic year include:

* Youth engagement in designs for the Boulder Civic Area with Whittier International Elementary School, Casey Middle School, and Boulder High School

* Exploring ideas of resilience with Youth Services Initiative, in conjunction with the City of Boulder's Resilience Office and the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities project

* Nature explorations at Coot Lake with Boulder Journey School to inform the design of future nature play spaces in the city

* Exploring the Boulder Reservoir with Parks & Recreation's EXPAND program

* Presentations and workshops with James Rojas, creator of City as Play

* Presentations about GUB's work in ENVD, Boulder, Denver, San Diego, Denmark, India, and Australia

* Forthcoming publications about the Great Neighborhoods project and praxis course, the Boulder Civic Area, Burke Park, Child Friendly Cities as Resilient Cities and children's participation in the design of the city

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"Working with GUB on the Civic Area project was a great opportunity to really understand children's needs. Throughout this project it became evident to me how selfless children can be, as they often spent their time focusing on all other ages of children and all types of visitors that would come to this space." – Emily Tarantini, GUB Intern and Research Assistant

Youth Engagement in Civic Area Re-Design

In 2012, the City of Boulder began a visioning process for a major redevelopment of Boulder's Civic Area, just south of the city's downtown. The goals of the redevelopment included developing an urban design vision for public and private spaces, guiding decisions for buildings in the high hazard flood zone of the creek, and exploring potential uses for recreation and culture. In 2014, the city moved into a site planning phase, engaging the community and a design firm in public meetings and a design workshop.

Building on its previous work from 2012, Growing Up Boulder engaged youth in the site planning process, GUB gathered ideas from students in three 3rd-grade classes at Whittier International Elementary School, an applied science elective at Casey Middle School, and a 10th grade Advancement via Individual Determinism (AVID) class at Boulder High School. Work in 2014 was funded by a CU Outreach and Engagement Award.

Our Approach

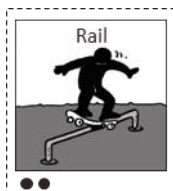
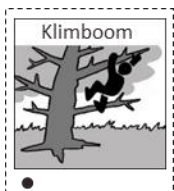
Methods varied slightly by age group but included presentations about inspiring public spaces, field trips to the Civic Area, City As Play (See page 6 for City As Play), photogrid, imagining public art pieces with a visiting artist, drawing, visual preference surveys, design scenario critiques, model-making, and the techniques pictured below.



Nicho Boxes – Whittier students made multimedia art boxes, inspired by Latin American folk art, through which students expressed what was important to them



Part of the Co-Design method, Whittier students used the Personal Experience and Perception technique during a field trip to the Civic Area



Picto-Play – Middle school students used this method from Belgium to learn to design play spaces within a set budget. Dots on each icon represent relative expenses.

Image credits: Emily Tarantini (top), Stephen Cardinale (middle), kind and samenleving (bottom)

COMBINED DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Arts & Culture—Interactive art displays, sculptures, world flags, quotes and poems on a path in different languages, inspirational chalkboard wall

- Active Play— Small skateboard park, space for pick-up games, parkour course, slacklines, climbable animal structures

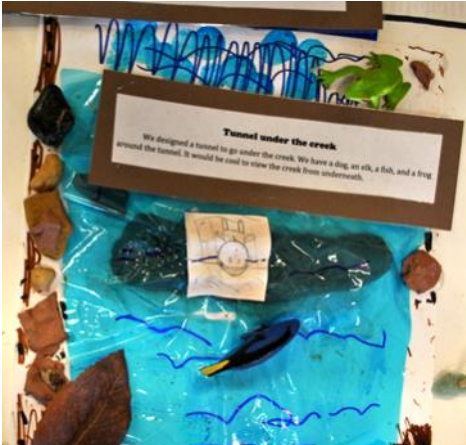
- Nature Play—interaction with the creek, climbing trees, tree houses

- Affordable & Diverse Food Options— Food trucks, picnic tables, coffee shops, food stands, shaded seating, areas

- Outdoor Libraries & Learning Spaces— Outdoor lending library, treehouse with book nook & bean bags, sheltered spaces for protection from sun and rain, hangout spaces, greenhouse with books and nature

Youth Engagement in Civic Area Re-Design

In the final stage of the project, students presented their models, persuasive writing, and other supporting project materials to city staff and community members. The images and quotes below are details from the final models.

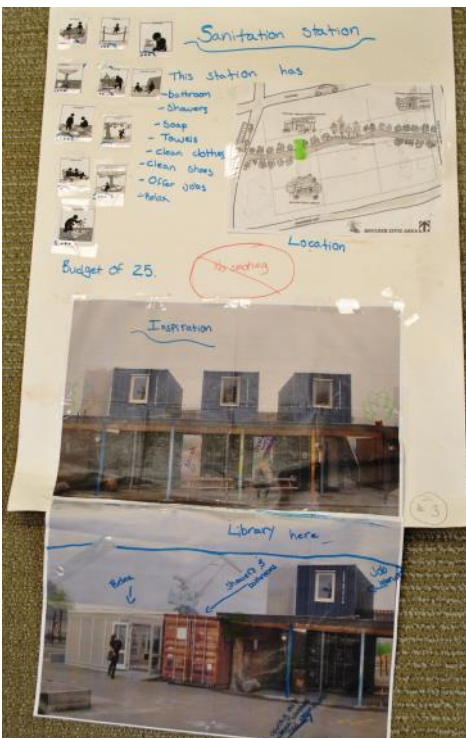


Whittier students requested many water features (left), animal sculptures, interesting seating (middle left) and treehouses (bottom).

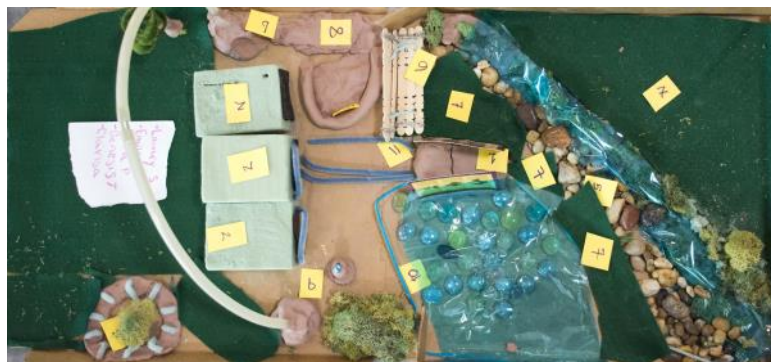
"Having an underwater tunnel (left) is important because you can interact with nature and families love to play in the water and there's no real place to do that now."



Boulder High students (below) wanted access to food and hangout spaces that were integrated with recommendations for food trucks, food stands, picnic tables and covered seating (above).



The homeless sanitation station was a proposal created by a group of Casey students who realized during our many visits to the Civic Area that there was a lack of shelter from the elements and a lack of "real" bathrooms. They used their entire picto-play budget to provides services for the large homeless population that they saw at the creek.



BHS group photo, Bodie Hultin. All others, Emily Tarantini.

Exploring Resilience with Boulder's Youth

In 2014, the City of Boulder was selected to participate in the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative. The project aims to support cities that have experienced natural disasters in exploring and developing strategies around sudden and long-term issues, such as flood, wildfire, disease outbreak, and drought. Their City Resiliency Framework includes the following aspects: Health & Wellbeing, Economy & Society, Infrastructure & Environment, Leadership & Strategy.

As a first step in this process, the City seeks to understand people's perceptions of resilience in Boulder. In collaboration with the City's resilience staff and the Youth Services Initiative (YSI), GUB worked with youth to develop their own meanings of resilience through art by considering the Rockefeller definition of resilience:

"the capacity to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks [people] experience."

Photos (Clockwise): High School participants participate in nested ecology activity; Elementary participants answer resiliency ball questions; Middle school students jot down ideas before taking photos; Elementary students brainstorm resilience

For this project, GUB worked with two groups of participants, one of middle and high school ages, and one of elementary school age, from the Youth Services Initiative, a program of Boulder's Parks and Recreation Department that serves Boulder's public housing sites.

Growing Up Boulder used a variety of methods to facilitate conversation, including a resilience "question ball," drawing, and mural making with elementary school students, and drawing, photovoice, a nested ecologies activity, and art boxes with middle and high school students.

To our knowledge, Boulder is the only member of the Rockefeller network to engage youth in their processes. This pilot tested methods for use in additional work with children and youth in the fall of 2015.

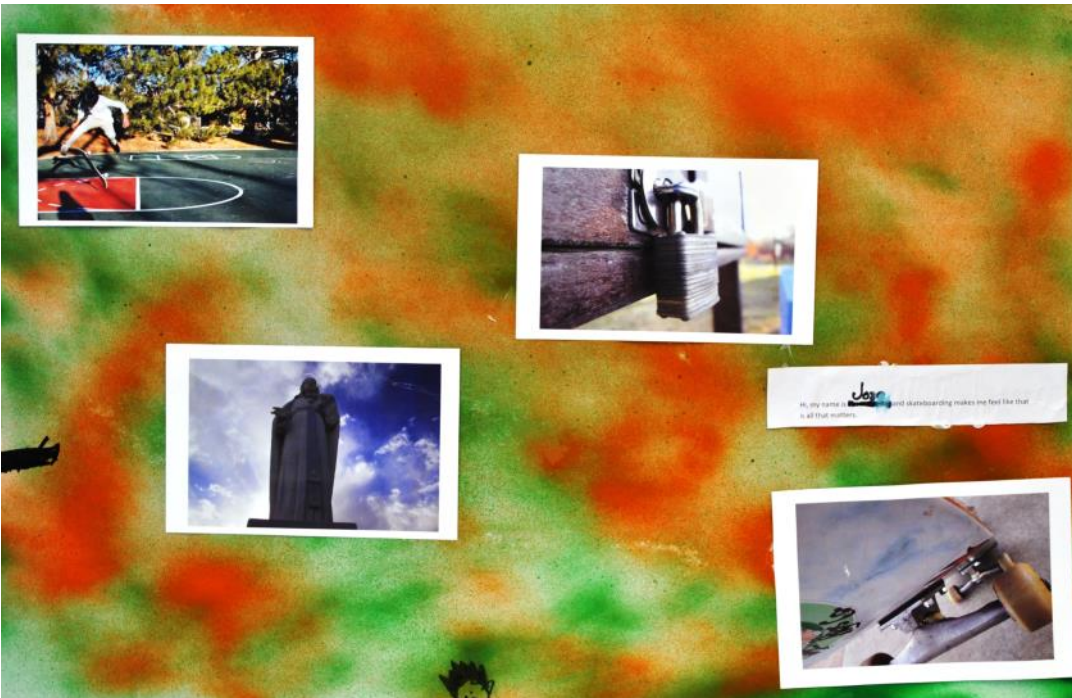
"I chose brotherhood, because my friends and family would always have my back no matter what. Boulder has many struggles, but the community has always been there."

-Middle School Student



Exploring Resilience with Boulder's Youth

Things that make younger students feel resilient include home, family, pets, nature, parks, hiking, ice cream, fresh fruits, and activities such as art, music and nature (mural left, below). Things that make them feel vulnerable include schools and home, guns and dying, bullies, and dangers, such as falling from trees (mural right, below). The older participants feel resilient through the supportive benefits of nature, friends, family, pets, skateboarding, and love. Things that make them feel vulnerable include money and the expense of living in Boulder, housing, negative global issues as portrayed on the news, and cultural exclusion.



"My name is Jose and skateboarding makes me feel like that is all that matters."

"Nature makes me feel relaxed and free from the world."

"Big. Happy. Family."

"Which is more important. . . Money or Nature?"



City As Play

In September 2014 Growing Up Boulder hosted James Rojas for a series of City as Play workshops and a lecture at the University of Colorado. James pioneered the City as Play method to engage communities in the planning process in a more accessible way. He developed a method of using common, everyday objects to "scramble the brain" and unleash creativity. His methods have been used in many places including James' home city of Los Angeles, Mexico, the Mississippi Delta, and now Boulder. During his stay, he worked with classes from Whittier International Elementary School, Casey Middle School, and Boulder High School as well as with the city's transportation department.



City as Play in Action: Casey students and their models in the civic area (top); Boulder High School students sharing their creations (middle left); representation of ideal spaces (middle right and bottom left); Boulder High student shares her model. Photo credits: James Rojas

EXPAND at the Reservoir

For the first time this year, Growing Up Boulder worked with participants of EXPAND — Boulder's Parks and Recreation program for adults and youth with disabilities. On a soggy Friday in May, GUB and EXPAND took a group of 15 young people to Boulder Reservoir's south side, a site being planned for future redevelopment. The engagement process took the form of a scavenger hunt. Participants and their helpers were asked to find and take photos of things such as a nice place to sit, something that looks or smells yucky, and a place that was hard to walk to. Youth responses include:

- Favorite places: water, grills, beach
- Fun things: Jet ski (5 votes!)
- Nice places to play: sand, cement patio in the sand, snack deck
- Pretty things: sand, dandelions
- Hard to get to places: swim beach dock, cement patio in the sand
- Easy to get to places: the pavilion/snack deck
- Dirty/yucky things: muddy puddle, trash cans, bathrooms
- Things you want to change: oil drums (photo below), propane tank, the snack deck (which is dark and boring) and the first aid station (we don't want people getting hurt)

Importantly, EXPAND youth said that one of the easiest places to get to (the pavilion, snack deck) was also the least desirable in terms of aesthetics and comfort. As planning for the Reservoir, or other public spaces, moves forward, these youth remind us the importance of considering their needs in planning places that are accessible and interesting for them.



Clockwise from top left: "Something you want to change" (top left); "something bright green" (top right) "something fun" (bottom right); and "hard to get to" (bottom left). Photo credits: top left, Erica Fine; all others, Krista Stonedahl.



Art in the Park

This spring, Elijah, a 12-year-old from Casey Middle School, approached GUB about facilitating public art in the Civic Area. GUB worked with Elijah to conduct an Art in the Park "plein air" workshop just outside the library with 3rd graders from Mackintosh Academy. Elijah asked the students to paint something natural that they love about Boulder. Many children emphasized the Canada Goose and her goslings who were at the creek that day. The art will hang in the library this summer.



Elijah talking to Mackintosh 3rd graders (top, photo Max Boykoff). Artwork (from left) by Elle, Blake, Anar, Shae Shae



GUB partnered with Parks & Recreation and Boulder Journey School to gain a child's perspective on the natural elements of Coot Lake, as an exploration of what was important to them within Boulder's Parks. Students from Boulder Journey School took their interest in insects to Coot Lake for further investigation.

At Coot Lake, students:

- Researched key elements of different bugs (color, antennae, number of legs) to design costumes to wear so as not to frighten the bugs
- Thought about the impacts of recreation and human use of natural spaces on the bugs
- Compared and contrasted bugs living on land versus those that live in the water
- Saw bugs in different habitats from at school
- Documented their ideas through words and drawings

These same students will continue to explore insects and nature at Wonderland Lake this summer, to help inform Open Space and Mountain Parks planning.

Photo Credits: Tina Briggs

Insect Explorations at Coot Lake

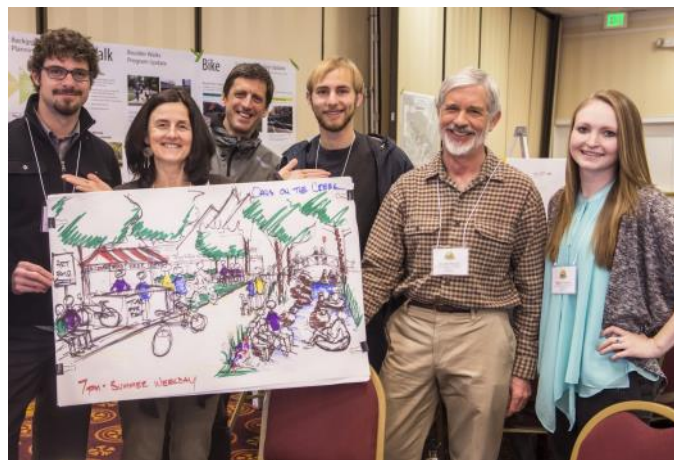
A Window Into Planning...

Growing Up Boulder's primary focus is integrating children's perspectives into planning. But GUB also influences university students who are involved in the partnership. This spring, a few students focused their senior planning capstone projects on youth engagement – in transportation planning, public housing renovations, and teen girls and parks. One of these students was Nathan Pope (ENVD 2015). Nathan's capstone focused on effective methods for engagement in transportation planning with youth from the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board. This project reflects his passion for including youth voice in planning, which he attributes to GUB's work. Through his capstone, he says:

"I learned how to talk to high school students better, to slow down, to give them time to answer... And how to give them the tools and information to come up with what they want to do. Not just listening but seeing what they need."

Nathan describes his work with GUB as instrumental in being able to understand and engage in the world of planning outside of the classroom. After attending a GUB/City of Boulder co-sponsored lecture on Co-Design by Stanley King and Susan Chung, he participated in GO Boulder's Bike/Walk Summit which utilized this method of graphic facilitation. For Nathan, this was a turning point:

*"That GUB focused on children, and because children are really a key part of any planning process, it helped me as a planning student see real world examples of all different types of planning. This helped me make a better decision about what I am interested in [within planning] and what I want to do. **GUB is the open-est door to the thriving planning world of Boulder, which I was never really a part of until GUB. It was a window into planning outside the classroom.**"*



Nathan (3rd from right) at the 2014 Bike/Walk Summit
Photo Credit: Lynn M. Lickteig

Revisiting Burke Park

Admiral Arleigh A. Burke Park has the unique distinction of serving as a school ground, a recreational park, and a wetland for the Frasier Meadows neighborhood. In 2012 and 2013 the Park was the focus of a school and community planning partnership between GUB, the City of Boulder Parks & Recreation, and CU's Environmental Design Program. Schoolyard renovations were completed with a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado.

In the spring of 2015, Dr. Angela Kreutz, a postdoctoral fellow in Environmental Design at CU, began working on a post-occupancy evaluation of the joint-use grounds at Burke Park. The aim of the study is to evaluate



how Burke Park is currently meeting user needs. Angela has surveyed and conducted child-led walks with Horizons' students from Kindergarten through 8th Grade. She has conducted numerous interviews with Horizons' teachers, Frasier Meadows Retirement Village residents and staff, and neighborhood residents, as well as staff from GUB, Parks & Recreation, and ENVD. The knowledge gained through this dialogue will bring the different users of the park together to further improve the space as both a school ground and recreational setting.

Photo Credit: Lynn M. Lickteig

Sharing Our Work

Growing Up Boulder has been disseminating its work through a wide range of venues, including presentations and publications. These have include the following presentations in the 2014-2015 academic year:

- Annual meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects in Denver, Tori Derr
- Colorado ProGreen Pecha Kucha 10x10, Louise Chawla and Emily Tarantini
- 4th International Children, Youth and Families Conference, Tori Derr
- 7th Child in the City Conference in Odense, Denmark, Mara Mintzer and Tori Derr
- Small Children, Big Cities: Building Smart Child-Friendly Cities for 21st Century India, Louise Chawla and David Driskell
- Environmental Design's Architectural History Course, ENVD 3214, Tori Derr
- Conference on Communications and Environment, International Environmental Communication Association, Tori Derr and Simge Yilmaz
- Boulder County Creative Community Conversations: Experiences of Immigration Summit, Tori Derr and Gianni Franceschi (see poem below)
- University of New South Wales, School of the Built Environment, lecture & tutorial on "consultation methods with children and youth" to undergraduates, Mara Mintzer
- University of Western Sydney, Sustainability Research, Centre for Educational Research, Sustainability, Mara Mintzer
- University of Sydney, Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Health Sciences, Mara Mintzer

In addition, at least eight academic papers are being written or are in press for 2015. These include papers about the Great Neighborhoods project and praxis, the Boulder Civic Area, Burke Park, and two book chapters in an international volume about children's participation in the design of the city.



Photo credits: YSI youth (top) and Emily Tarantini (bottom)

*voices projected
 heard
 Roger that
 but what happens when
 Rodrigo isn't offered that?
 instead
 found his voice
 through the noise
 of a camera snap
 photographs
 that show the mass
 life
 as what he knows it as
 situations
 immigration
 unheard words rest upon
 whose ears?
 forget selfies and "pics"*

*these photos scream in silence
 with the things he's dealt with
 unheard words
 finally captured in a moment
 yet he still feels
 rejected
 connected
 by pixels and squares
 another medium for them to
 see some one
 that they don't really hear
 I'm here.*

*Gianni Franceschi
 (ENVD 2015, GUB Intern 2013)*

Coordinators

Tori Derr & Mara Mintzer

Interns & Visiting Scholars

Travis Cobb

Erica Fine

Angela Kreutz

Alessandro Rigolon

Emily Tarantini

Simge Yilmaz

Executive Committee

* Boulder Valley School District

* Children, Youth & Environments Center, University of Colorado Boulder

* City of Boulder, Community Planning & Sustainability

* City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation

* City of Boulder, Transportation

* Former State Senator Dorothy Rupert

Steering Committee

* Boulder Housing Partners

* Boulder Journey School

* City of Boulder, Community Planning & Sustainability

* City of Boulder, Office of Arts and Culture

* City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation

* City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks

* CU Engage

* GO Boulder

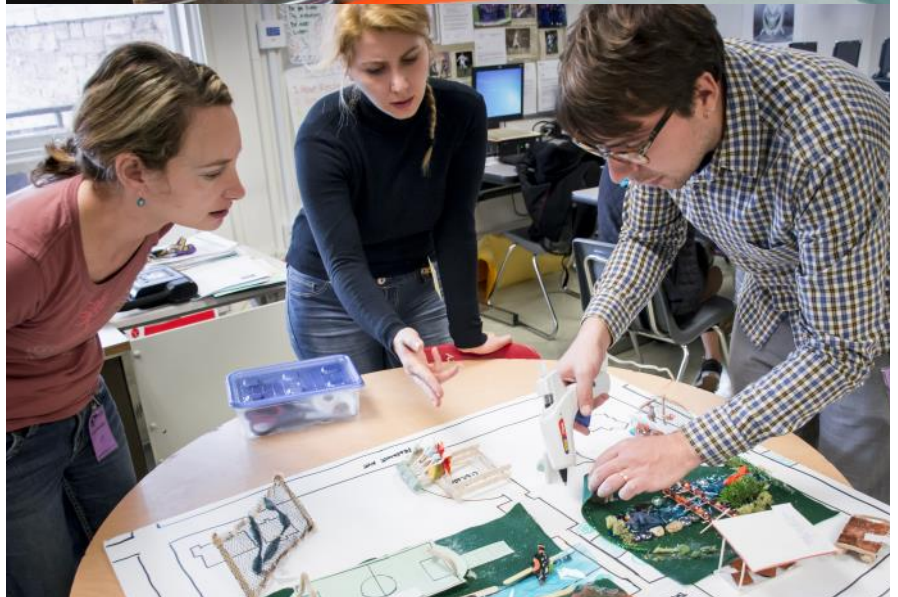
* I Have a Dream Foundation

* Youth Services Initiative

* University of Colorado, Program in Environmental Design

GUB Faces: Emily Tarantini assisting Casey students with their sanitation station; Erica Fine helping YSI participants with their resilience mural; Mara Mintzer, Simge Yilmaz, and Alessandro Rigolon assembling a model of the Civic Area

Photo Credits: Stephen Cardinale (top), Emily Tarantini (middle), Bodie Hultin (bottom)





www.growingupboulder.org

GROWING UP BOULDER IS A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY INITIATIVE THAT BEGAN IN 2009. IT IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF BOULDER, BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO PROGRAM IN ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN, AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT SERVE YOUTH.

Academic Year 2014-2015

Number of Projects	6
Number of Young People Engaged	195
Number of Interns, Visiting Scholars & Volunteers	10
Number of Undergraduate Participants [Capstone + Co-Design]	125
Number of Contact Hours with Children and Youth	3300

OUR SUPPORTERS

- Campus Compact of the Mountain West
- Children, Youth and Environments Center for Community Engagement
- City of Boulder, Community Planning and Sustainability
- City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks
- City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation
- City of Boulder, Transportation
- University of Colorado, Program in Environmental Design
- University of Colorado Office of Outreach and Engagement