



THE CHILDREN'S PLAYHOUSE

400 Tracy Circle, Boone, NC 28607 ♦ www.goPlayhouse.org ♦ 828-263-0011 ♦ EIN #27-0065653

The 2024 BuildFest was a Blast

The **9th Playhouse BuildFest** was held on **Saturday, April 13th, 2024** at Watauga High School from 9 am to 2 pm. BuildFest is a free community event featuring 80 hands-on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) activities for kids aged 2-12, plus a giant Cardboard City, Tiny Town, Family Resource Village, Touch a Truck, plus four Science of Magic Shows and one Amazing Science Show.



BuildFest by the Numbers

Number of hands-on activities: 80

Number of attendees: 1448

Number of staff: 12

Number of volunteers: 210

Number of STEM professionals: 10



Quotes from Families

"I'm so happy to live in a place where this exists. What a tremendous gift to the children in this community. An absolute blast. Wish it happened twice a year!"

"Everything was so well organized and all the volunteers were so upbeat and helpful. Well done!"

"The best part was the wide variety of activities and how age appropriate everything was, my kids were so engaged for so long. My son LOVED the skulls and has talked about it many times."

"Honestly I think the biggest take away was that Science and arts can be so much fun!"

"Energy & physics stuff, and the science show were big hits this year!"



Quotes from Volunteers

"Their eyes lit up when they saw what we were working on."

"The best part was watching the kids go crazy and have so much fun!"

"We had a child who spent nearly an hour at our booth working on a wind turbine blade design to try to get the high score (voltage output of the turbine)! Very sharp and persistent!"

"It was fun to hang out with the youth of Watauga County and their families. Such an impressive crowd!"

"A lot of the kids were just excited to see the rainbows that light makes which is always fun, but some were very interested in the astronomy application, so it was very cool to be able to answer their questions and go more in depth with the science!"





Sponsors

Skyscrapers: The Cardinal & Lily's Snack Bar, ECRS, Moltox, and Zionville Ramp Company

Bridges: Bluebird Pediatric Dentistry, OP Smiles Adult & Child Orthodontists & Pediatric Dentists

Roads: North Carolina Science Festival, App Family Healthcare, Mast General Store, Ridgeline Leadership, and VPC Builders

Bricks: Greene Construction; Greenway Medical Associates; Modern Ford of Boone; Peak Insurance Group/First Security Insurance/High Street Insurance Partners; Revolution Boone

Activity Partners

Thirty classes, clubs, and community groups joined with The Children's Playhouse to create BuildFest. Together, we provided more than 80 hands-on activities.

Appalachian State University: Anthropology Club, AppITP, Biology, Geological and Environmental Science, Office of Sustainability, Physics and Astronomy Club, and the Solar Energy Society.

Community nonprofits and local government: Casting Bread Market & Cafe, Children's Developmental Services Agency of the Blue Ridge, Community Artists, Community Mental Health Project, High Country Doulas, Parent to Parent FSN-HC, The Children's Council of Watauga County, Town of Boone Fire Department, Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative, Watauga County 4-H, and the Watauga Public Library.

Local schools:

Morganton Robotics, Mountain Alliance, Two Rivers Community School, Hardin Park Stem Club, Head Start, and Watauga High Robotics

Family-oriented businesses: Lara's Lactation Consulting



Countdown to BuildFest!



To build excitement in the weeks leading up to BuildFest, The Children's Playhouse led four science workshops at the museum using NISE science kits in February and March and brought the Mars Rover activity to first grade students at Freedom Trail Elementary Elementary School in Avery County on March 20th. Additionally, our partners in the ASU department of Geological and Environmental Sciences brought "Geo Tots" to The Playhouse once a month until BuildFest.