





“... we are walking alongside the next generation of leaders.”

## DEAR FRIEND,

We are honored to share with you our 2019-2020 Impact Report, celebrating the power of connection and relationship. This year has shown all of us, more than ever, how vital we are to one another's lives.

Together, over the past year, we maintained our “no matter what” commitment to youth and families during the COVID-19 pandemic; moved our two-generation approach from pilot to practice, serving both youth and caregivers at all new sites; expanded to 22 locations across the US and in the UK; and deepened our commitment to dismantling systemic racism and inequities.

Our relentless dedication to every child and family in our program and our focus on expanding to empower even more youth is continually reinvigorated by feedback from those youth and families. Erica, the mother of a young woman who graduated from our program, explained about her daughter, “I know she's prepared because she's had so much support over the last 12 years through Friends.”

James, one of our incredible program graduates, reflected that there wasn't “one particular moment in my life within [Friends of the Children] that kind of shaped me. I would say I looked at every encounter we had as a learning experience.” Now, as he finishes college, James also says, “My ideal job is just to help people figure out their passions and reach their full potential.”

Erica and James remind us that our work truly matters, and that we are walking alongside the next generation of leaders. This is especially important as we learn from our youth leaders about what's important to them in the Black Lives Matter movement, and the actions they are identifying to dismantle racism.

That's why we didn't let COVID-19 get in the way of our relationships or stop our upcoming leaders from finding the stability, growth and success that they needed. As others have said, “relationships are not canceled!” In truth, our relationships have grown. It's been incredible to witness the creativity of our communities in coming together. From meeting basic needs to problem-solving distance learning to finding new ways to connect, we are better together.

One of our Friends, Joe, spoke to the power of these relationships when he wrote a beautiful piece about supporting LGBTQIA+ youth with love and affirmation. He wrote:

*We are all on a journey, and we are called to witness others as they would like to be seen, lighten the load for each person we can, and hold space for folks that are on their own journey and can't wait to bask in the sun. We all play a role in making the world better, because progress is a series of small, bold moves and we each have a responsibility to play our part.*

Joe's inspiring message reflects our mission and the work we all do to empower youth and families: we show up every day for 12+ years, listening, celebrating and forging a better path forward. Thank you for joining us on this wonderful journey.

Warmest regards,

Terri Sorensen | CEO, Friends of the Children

# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

A few highlights from the past year help showcase all that we have to celebrate.

\$34  
Million

Network-wide operating budget

22

Locations across the US and UK:  
100% of which are working with public and private sector partners to advance systems change

Met a

300%

increase in demand for services and support during COVID-19

91%

Percent of youth in our program told us they were able to accomplish things they're proud of

6

New two-generation (2Gen) impact sites, bringing the total to 10:

Harlem, Bronx, Antelope Valley, Los Angeles, Fargo-Moorhead, Tacoma, Detroit, Utah, Lane County, Cornwall

\$2.5  
Million

from the National Institutes of Health to complete our 12-year randomized-controlled trial on the impact of long-term professional mentoring



## HOW JAMES FOUND HIS SPARK

**FIND YOUR SPARK:** I use creativity to explore my passions.

What passions or hobbies are helping you get through this tough time? At Friends of the Children, we call passions or hobbies our “spark,” and we work with every child in our program to explore new things and to find their spark.

Just as the COVID-19 pandemic was hitting, James\* was moved to a new foster home where he quickly began showing signs of trauma and distress. Thankfully, James and his Friend, Andrew, stayed connected on a regular basis.

Prior to the stay-at-home order, Andrew took James to a guitar shop and his eyes lit up. They had planned on taking lessons together, but with COVID-19 and James' new foster home, Andrew wanted to accelerate the process. Andrew reached out to the community and found someone willing to donate an acoustic guitar, lesson books, strings and picks.

With no lessons, but access to key tools, James picked up the guitar on his own and started eagerly writing songs. He called Andrew two days later and sang him some songs he had written ... one was called “Hope will come” His emotions were spilling out through lyrics. James was giving Andrew new insight into how he is feeling about all he'd been through. Learning to play the guitar opened a whole new world to James, and he found his spark. Only through the creative encouragement and “no matter what” philosophy from his Friend was James able to realize his passion to help him get through this difficult time. We agree with James: hope WILL come!

\*Name changed to protect privacy.

# COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Youth accomplishments and progress toward our collective goals are tracked regularly.

“ I had someone to be there with me, to back me up, to help me through school, to help me through life. And I know a lot of peers, they just give up, because they had nobody to support them ... Applying to colleges is very hard, but I’m looking forward to, you know, meeting new people, and putting myself out there. ”

— Program Graduate

## LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

With 27 years of data and outcomes to support the efficacy of our model, we’re excited to continue to scale across the country and share the amazing stories of our youth.



**92% of youth** go on to enroll in post-secondary education, serve our country or enter the workforce.



**83% of youth** receive their high school diploma or GED.



**93% of youth** remain free from involvement in the juvenile justice system.



**98% of youth** wait to parent until after their teen years.

## INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

To ensure that youth are on track to reach our long-term outcomes, we support youth to achieve their own goals within intermediate outcome areas. We are proud of our youth for their achievements.

**95% of youth** made progress on social and emotional development, such as asking for help from a caring adult, practicing healthy ways to cope with stress and building relationships with Friends and adults who provide social support and connections to resources.

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**93% of youth** made progress on attaining skills for safety and independence, setting short and long-term goals and monitoring progress toward them.

**PLANS AND SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE**

**95% of youth** made progress toward school success, such as finishing homework, regularly attending school or staying focused in the classroom.

**SCHOOL SUCCESS**

# COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, Friends moved into action to fulfill our NO MATTER WHAT commitment to our youth and families. Leveraging our values, Friends reimaged their day-to-day work to ensure that even in these tough times, our youth have hope.

## PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

Friends showed up virtually every week and sometimes daily – helping with school work, making art and music, completing projects and reminding our youth how resilient they truly are.

Since March, Friends averaged 7 connections per week with youth in our program.

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ON LOVE

With schools closed and economic stress on the rise, Friends collaborated with every family in our program to ensure they had what they needed – food, cleaning supplies and even help with daily routines.

Since March, Friends of the Children has seen an over 300% increase in demand for services.

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“ My family is struggling to get through the pandemic. We need help with rent, food and other expenses, and I’ve been so worried about how I was going to make it next month. It’s been hard to apply for programs that I normally wouldn’t qualify for, but since I’ve been laid off, I’ve been so desperate. Thank you so much for this incredible gift! I started to cry when my mentor told me about this opportunity [from Friends to directly receive funds]. I can now get what I need for my family. ”

– Caregiver

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## PURSUING GOALS RELENTLESSLY

As education shifted to online platforms, Friends became educators – providing instruction, accountability and advocacy for our youth to continue learning.

Since March, we’ve secured hundreds of tablets and computers, beginning to close the digital divide for our youth.

## COMMITTING TO EMPOWERMENT

Inspiring possibility through empathy, hard work and fun, supporters of our network found creative ways to honor our youth, creating virtual activities and experiences that affirmed youths’ individual talents and broadened their visions for the future.

Since March, 92% of our youth have made progress on goals they set for themselves.

## DEMANDING EQUITY

For most of our youth and families, the pandemic of racism and systemic oppression came long before COVID-19. On behalf of our youth and families, we fight to end race-based discrimination and advocate for changes in policy that promote equitable access to opportunity, health and hope.

**This year**, we interrupted adversity and walked alongside thousands of youth – 88% of whom identify as youth of color – as they worked tirelessly to achieve their hopes and dreams.



## THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

**HOPE:** When I have rough times, I believe it can get better.

Do you believe it CAN get better even when times are tough? At Friends of the Children, we call this “hope,” and we work with every child in our program to believe in themselves and to have hope for the future.

Chris\* is 6 years old and had only been in the program one month when he was placed into foster care. He has two younger siblings (ages 4 and 3) who were placed in a different foster home. His Friend, Chai, was at the foster home within hours of getting the call from Chris’ mom and has been back multiple times to help with the sudden and scary transition. In a short time, Chai has built strong, trusting relationships with all the critical people in Chris’ life. His caregiver remarked how scared and quiet Chris had been, but then when Chai got there, Chris became a whole new child. Knowing that Chai was there for him – even when everything else had changed – was the highlight of his day.

Chai is committed to making sure that Chris has things to look forward to as he navigates life in his new foster home, including consistent time together every week. As Chris is learning new household rules and staying connected remotely to his parents and siblings, Chai is walking alongside him every step of the way – using those opportunities to build his self-confidence. The two are also preparing for the journey ahead, which in the fall involves a new school and new friends. Times are – and have been – tough for Chris, but Chai is helping him and his caregiver see that things can and will get better. Now, they both have hope.

\*Name changed to protect privacy.

## THE RANDOMIZED-CONTROLLED TRIAL: 12 YEARS LATER

When Friends of the Children was founded in 1993, we wanted to ensure we built a program that was data-informed and based in sound research. We also wanted unbiased, third-party research from a randomized-controlled trial (RCT) – the gold standard in research – to measure the effects of a long-term, paid professional mentor.

**2007**

Study launches with children enrolled from four chapters: New York, Seattle, Boston and Portland. The study continued with support from the Robert Wood Johnson, Edna McConnell Clark and Silver Family Foundations, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

**2015**

Early findings are published, showing that around the age of 12, youth with a Friend were more likely to behave positively, manage their anger and get in trouble less often in school. Parents of youth with Friends also had more positive attitudes toward their children.

**2020**

In May 2020, the final phase of the study was funded: The Social Development Research Group at the University of Washington received a five-year, \$2.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study youth when they finish the program, at ages 19 and 21.

Our study is the only long-term, randomized-controlled trial of a mentoring program in the past 50 years!  
We look forward to sharing the results when they become available.

# EXPANSION UPDATE

Building on a solid foundation, we are excited to continue growing our impact.



When Friends of the Children received the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) award in 2016 to increase children served in existing sites and expand our model to new locations, we had no idea how many communities would be interested. It turns out, it was a lot, and that started a wave of expansion that continues long past the SIF award. To ensure we could sustain such growth, in 2019, Friends of the Children launched an Expansion Campaign to raise \$50 million by 2025. To date, over \$15 million has been raised, thanks to catalytic investments from AT&T, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and from private philanthropy, including Michael Jordan, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Ballmer Group. We are well on our way to achieving our goal of being in 25 cities by 2025!

## HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Receive an invitation and a catalytic investment to launch expansion efforts in a community.
- 2 Identify and establish a local champion's committee to help raise seed capital (between \$1 million-\$2 million) through multiple sources, and to connect and engage local community and nonprofit partners to build awareness and collaboration.
- 3 Once launch funds are raised and the community has invested their time and voice, the National Board of Directors votes to move forward with chapter launch.
- 4 The chapter's 501c3 status is obtained, executive leadership is hired from the community, the chapter board of directors begins to meet, and we support the new chapter leaders in hiring Friends and selecting the first cohort of youth.

## EXPANSION INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT: MICHAEL JORDAN

In 2017, basketball legend, Michael Jordan, decided to invest in Friends of the Children and our "no matter what" commitment to youth. We are honored that he selected us to be a beneficiary of proceeds from *The Last Dance*, a 10-part, ESPN/Netflix documentary series on Jordan and the Chicago Bulls' quest for a sixth championship in 1998.

"What stood out to me about Friends of the Children was that they employ and train their mentors and that they commit to every child for 12 ½ years," says Jordan. "That dedication is important to me. My mentors believed in me and taught me the power of perseverance. I want youth in Friends of the Children to see that they have that same potential."

With his support, Friends of the Children opened six new sites and invested in existing chapters, including Chicago and Charlotte, to serve even more youth and families!

Today, "no matter what" means more than ever. We are grateful that youth in our program see their own resilience and strength mirrored in strong Black role models like Michael Jordan. By partnering with Friends of the Children, Jordan and many others are investing in changing the systems that perpetuate generational cycles of poverty and inequity. Together, we are demanding equity. We are part of the solution, working toward a more just world with opportunity for all.

# 2GEN EXPANSION

Guided by the voices of our youth and families, we are updating the way we work.

Now, we see greater potential for youth empowerment when we connect caregivers to their own supports, many of which are focused on helping their children.

We call this kind of thinking a two-generation approach, or “2Gen.”

In addition to providing a one-on-one salaried, professional mentor (a Friend) to individual children, our 2Gen approach supports parents and caregivers by identifying the factors that undermine a family’s overall well-being, then working with the family to solve problems, break down systemic barriers, access new resources and sharpen existing skills.

## TWO-GENERATION (2GEN) APPROACH: HOW WE’RE DOING IT

Impacting change across generations – for both youth and their families:  
Empowering families to move beyond obstacles such as poverty, foster care and criminal justice involvement, and toward health, well-being and community.



Ten of our locations are now implementing our 2Gen approach.

By 2025, all locations in our network will implement 2Gen, advancing opportunity and possibility for both youth and caregivers together.



## 2GEN IMPACT

Building relationships with youth and caregivers based on love.

Six-year-old Raquel\* is very social and smart, but she is behind in school academically. She struggles with her behavior and emotions both at school and at home. Raquel lives with her three siblings, four cousins and aunt. She knows that when she was 18 months old, her mom dropped her off and never returned. Her aunt signed Raquel up for Friends of the Children but was reluctant to build a relationship with Raquel's Friend, Chanel. Then COVID-19 hit, and the entire family had to deal with quarantine.

During the first few weeks of quarantine, Chanel made regular deliveries to the family – food, gift cards, school supplies and books – consistently reached out via phone calls and text messages. Her aunt slowly opened up, and two months later, things began to change. Raquel was struggling at home, so her aunt called Chanel for help. Chanel put on her mask and gloves, came over and spent time talking with both Raquel and her aunt. They discussed strategies to help Raquel deal with her emotions and make different choices with her behavior, and agreed to connect her with a therapist.

By being patient, consistent and committed, Friends build relationships with youth and families. This is a long-term partnership. Together, Chanel and her aunt will make sure that Raquel has every opportunity to thrive. This is how we build relationships on love.

\*Name changed to protect privacy.



“*Friends of the Children has helped me become a better parent/person. They have assisted me in becoming a better advocate for myself/children. They have let me know that there are endless possibilities!!!*”

— Caregiver

## CAREGIVER SURVEY

While still early, our first annual caregiver survey results are encouraging. Caregivers are reporting that their child's Friend:

- Supported them in learning more about their child and helped them reach goals that they have for themselves and their child.
- Provided support with educational assistance such as books in the home, tutoring or library access.
- Helped the family deal with unexpected problems and connected them to a job, education or training.

“*... they are here for you and your WHOLE family. Even when I, as an adult, feel defeated, they lift me up!!!*”

— Caregiver

# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Here's a financial snapshot for fiscal year 2019.

## OPERATING REVENUE

Foundations	\$5,205,478
Government	\$3,739,745
Individual	\$2,670,061
Events	\$2,515,913
Corporate	\$917,438
Consulting Fees	\$863,828
Other	\$426,419

**Total Operating Revenue** \$16,338,882

## OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Expenses	\$11,618,049
Fundraising Costs	\$1,150,581
Administrative Services	\$997,128

**Total Operating Expenses** \$13,765,758

## ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$12,711,750
Receivables	\$3,814,883
Prepaid Expenses	\$249,277
Equipment	\$4,552,578

**Total Assets** \$21,328,488

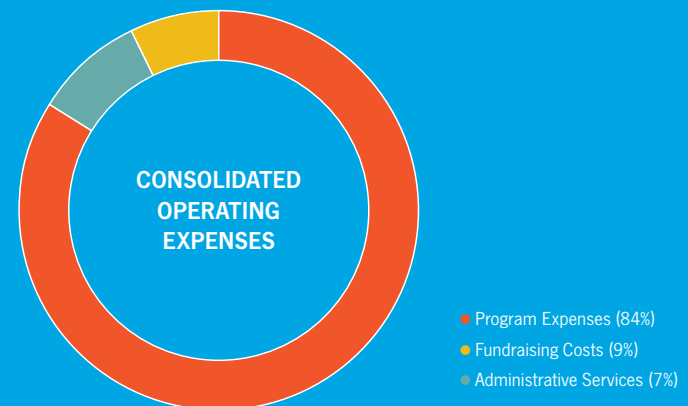
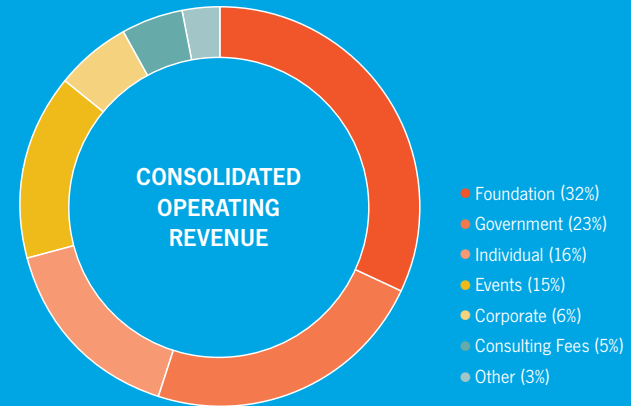
## LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$2,153,847
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## NET ASSETS

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$7,228,916
With Donor Restrictions	\$11,945,725

**Total Net Assets & Liabilities** \$21,328,488



# THANK YOU

Thank you to the following partners who support our work:\*

## \$1 MILLION & UP

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation  
Corporation for National & Community Service  
King Philanthropies  
Michael Jordan  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
Stand Together Foundation

## \$500,000-\$999,999

AT&T  
Medina Foundation  
Michigan Health Endowment Fund  
Why Not You Foundation

## \$100,000-\$499,999

Anonymous (2)  
Cambia  
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The McGregor Fund  
The Troesh Family Foundation  
The WRG Foundation  
Tykeson Family Foundation  
Christine Washburn  
Donald Washburn  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Whisper Foundation, a legacy of Gary E. Milgard Family Foundation

## \$50,000-\$99,999

All Ways Up Foundation  
Anonymous (2)  
Bamford Foundation  
John Dozier  
Michael and Deborah Feldser  
First Tech Federal Credit Union  
Tom Jefferson  
Koons Family Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation (James and Mary Koons)  
Korum for Kids Foundation  
Quest Foundation  
Satterberg Foundation  
Schultz Family Foundation  
Sorenson Legacy Foundation

\*Investments recognized between the time period of September 1, 2018 through July 31, 2020

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