



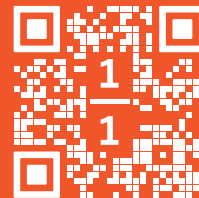
FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN

**IMPACT
REPORT**
2024 - 2025

A circular collage of various artworks. The central circle is filled with a variety of drawings and paintings. At the top left, there's a drawing of a group of colorful, stylized animals or characters. To its right is a drawing of a face with blue and green hair and a pink mouth. Below the face is a drawing of a person in a dark jacket holding a stick, surrounded by text and other small drawings. To the right of that is a drawing of a person's head with long brown hair. At the bottom right is a large, vibrant rainbow. Other smaller drawings include a grid of 16 small squares, each containing a different drawing, and a drawing of a person's head with long brown hair. The entire collage is set against a blue background with the text 'EMPOWERMENT • DREAMS • HOPE • JOY • BELONGING' written in white, curved letters around the perimeter of the circle.

**FEATURED ARTWORK FROM
*HEART OF THE CHILDREN***

HeART of the Children is a book featuring more than 400 youth art projects, including paintings, poetry, sculpture, and video. The book showcases the heart and creativity of the youth in our program, and we are honored to share it with you here and in our **ONLINE GALLERY.**



DEAR FRIEND,

Every fall I look forward to sharing our Impact Report with you because it does such an incredible job of showcasing the work of Friends of the Children and bringing you stories that inspire and help all of us see good in the world.

When I am describing the work of Friends of the Children to someone who isn't familiar with our organization, there is invariably one moment when they stop in their tracks because they think they've misheard me; it is when I mention our commitment to walking alongside the youth we serve for *12+ years, no matter what*.

Take a moment and think about what it means to support a child starting in kindergarten, through elementary school and middle school, and then until graduation from high school. Our trained, professional mentors—called Friends—empower youth to develop a love of learning, discover what they want to do, and gain important life skills. They work through hard challenges together, practice reading and help with homework, and set big goals. They plan special outings and trips, which can spark a child's imagination and new interests. They are there for them as they prepare for graduation, for job opportunities, and for college.

While our 12+ year commitment to youth is about empowering their growth as individuals, it is just as much about the power of relationships and the unconditional, years-long consistency that it takes to build trust. Youth and their families know they can count on Friends of the Children to be there for them throughout those many years—through the challenging times and the celebrations too.

I can't wait for you to read the stories in this 2024 – 2025 Impact Report including one about Joshua, one of our first graduates from Friends of the Children – Tampa Bay, and the network of community support that Friends of the Children – Coachella Valley is spearheading for a single mom and her family. You'll learn how we are strengthening connection to traditions for Indigenous youth on the Flathead Reservation in Western Montana. You'll read about our growing national network of 43 locations in urban, suburban, rural, and Indigenous communities across the country. You'll also discover information about our funders, partners, and other champions who are helping make this work possible, including World Champion gymnast and youth advocate, Simone Biles.

The long-term commitment that Friends of the Children makes to youth and their families takes planning, intentionality, and resources. I hope that you will join us in walking alongside youth who have big dreams and who persevere through some of the toughest things in life, like foster care, poverty, housing insecurity, and more.

Thank you for reading these stories. We appreciate your support as we work to ensure that every child who needs a Friend has one, and that we keep our promises to every youth we commit to – *12+ years, no matter what*.

Warmest Regards,



Terri Sorensen | National CEO, Friends of the Children



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1



OUR MISSION

Impacting generational change by empowering youth who are facing the greatest obstacles through relationships with professional mentors

– 12+ YEARS, NO MATTER WHAT

MORE THAN WORDS:

HOW LITERACY IS BUILDING CONFIDENCE & CHANGING THE GAME



At 11 years old, Nylah* is an energetic and resilient young athlete. Enrolled with Friends of the Children — Detroit since kindergarten, she has known the steady support of a Friend—a long-term, professional mentor—throughout her early years. Growing up with two brothers, Nylah holds her own and channels her energy into sports and her family. Whether she is playing flag football or running with her Girls on the Run team, Nylah’s love for sports is undeniable.

In 2022, Nylah’s world changed forever when her mother passed away suddenly. Now being raised by her grandmother, one of the most beautiful ways Nylah stays connected with her mom’s memory is through whistling—a unique and personal coping mechanism she developed to navigate her grief. Whistling is how she talks to her mom, a quiet form of healing that brings her comfort in the hardest moments.

Grief affected more than her emotions—it also impacted her academics. Nylah began struggling in school, especially with reading. That is when Friends — Detroit enrolled her in the Detroit Read with Certainty program at their clubhouse. Designed to support youth reading below grade level, the literacy initiative is a weekly one-on-one professional tutoring program that offers engaging activities, personalized books, and confidence-building support to boost reading skills.

Since joining the program, Nylah’s growth has been nothing short of remarkable. Her teachers have noticed the transformation—she is more engaged, more confident, and thriving academically. Reading isn’t just a skill she is building—it is becoming a tool for her to rediscover her voice.

Through it all, Nylah and her Friend Cheryl have built a deep bond rooted in trust. From going to the movies, skating, shopping, or having quiet chats in the car, their connection has grown stronger and has been a source of joy and stability for Nylah. Once quiet and reserved, she now lets her personality shine and she opens up to Cheryl about her feelings, and her hopes and dreams.

As Nylah continues her journey with Friends of the Children, her future is full of promise. “I hope she knows there isn’t anything she can’t overcome,” Cheryl says.

A HEALING-CENTERED

approach to literacy means that children are taught by people who they know care about them. This creates a trusting environment where youth feel safe trying new things, being vulnerable, and making mistakes as they

LEARN TO SUCCEED.

**SHE HAS ALL THE TOOLS
TO BE SUCCESSFUL—AND
ALL THE PEOPLE TO HELP
HER GET THERE. SHE
IS ALREADY PROVING IT
EVERY DAY.”**

- FRIEND, CHERYL

**Youth name changed to protect privacy*



A PROGRAM GRADUATE'S **FULL-CIRCLE MOMENT** ON THE TODAY SHOW WITH CIARA

Earlier this year, Friends of the Children – Seattle graduate Tah-Jae Franklyn lit up national television as a featured guest on the TODAY Show with Jenna Bush Hager and GRAMMY Award-winning artist Ciara.

Years ago, Tah-Jae met Ciara as a youth in our program. Ciara's Why Not You Foundation, co-founded with Super Bowl champion Russell Wilson, has partnered with Friends of the Children since 2016. The brief but powerful encounter planted a seed that inspired Tah-Jae to pursue music seriously, thanks in part to support from her Friend—a long-term, professional mentor—who helped her access singing lessons and join a group called Arts in Motion. For Tah-Jae, singing became more than a passion; it became a source of focus, healing, and hope.

On the TODAY Show, Tah-Jae surprised Ciara on stage, thanking her for being a role model and expressing her gratitude for the inspiration that helped shape her journey. It was a full-circle moment that was made even more special when the Why Not You Foundation awarded Tah-Jae \$5,000 to support her dream of launching her music career.

"That is why we do what we do at the Why Not You Foundation, and Friends of the Children is a great organization that we get to help," said Ciara. "And it is really important to see young girls like you...thrive and go and be what you are destined to be."

Music has long been Tah-Jae's lifeline, and a connection to her father who passed away when she was only one. Today, Tah-Jae sings across Seattle—including performances at Climate Pledge Arena with Macklemore, the national anthem at a Sounders game, and most recently a featured performer at Friends of the Children's National Gala.

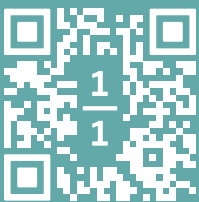
"When you talked to me that day I met you at Friends of the Children – Seattle, it sparked something within me that made me realize that I want to be an artist," said Tah-Jae to Ciara.

**YOU HELPED CHANGE MY LIFE
AND I WOULD LOVE TO BE
THAT FOR SOMEBODY ELSE."**

- TAH-JAE



Friends of the Children is cheering for Tah-Jae as she continues to chase her dreams and support others, and we are incredibly grateful to Ciara, the Why Not You Foundation, and the TODAY Show for amplifying the power of long-term, professional mentorship on a national stage.



SCAN TO WATCH
TAH-JAE ON THE
TODAY SHOW

EXPANSION UPDATE

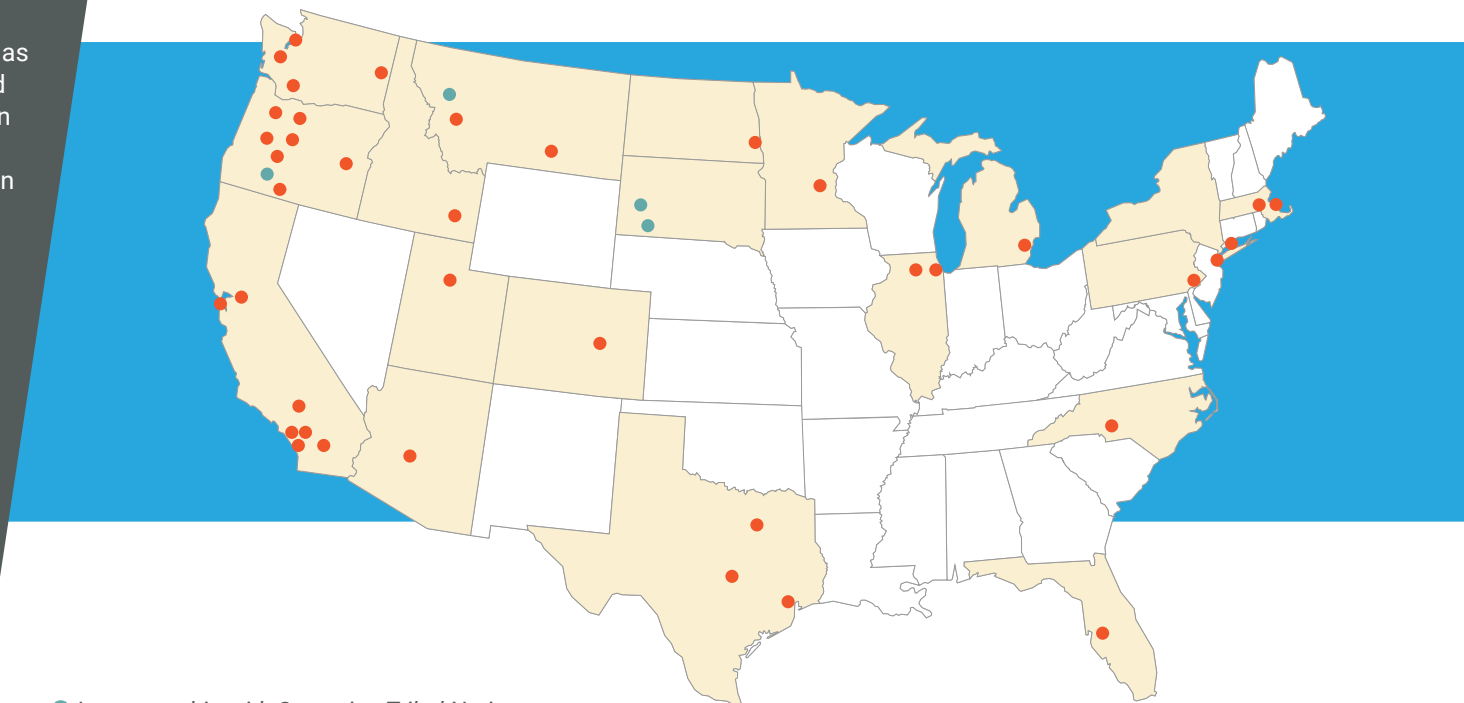
CURRENT LOCATIONS

Over the past decade, Friends of the Children has grown from 5 to 43 locations across the United States in rural, Indigenous, suburban, and urban communities. In the last fiscal year alone, we launched new chapters in Spokane, Washington and Dallas, Texas. The astounding growth of our national network means we are walking alongside youth and families in 22 different states, including partnerships with Sovereign Tribal Nations: the Oglala Lakota Nation, the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes, and the Klamath Tribes.

Our national network collaborates with philanthropists, community leaders, school systems, government agencies, foundations, and youth and families in every corner of the country to work toward a day where every child who needs a Friend has one. Together, we are breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty, increasing access to mental health supports, and preventing youth from being impacted by the foster care system.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

In alignment with the values of Friends of the Children, as an organization we acknowledge that each of our chapters are located on lands that were home to Indigenous people since time immemorial. Prior to the creation of the United States of America, this part of the continent was Turtle Island, the home of millions of diverse and thriving Indigenous people. We acknowledge and respect the inherent sovereignty and unique cultures of the first peoples of this land.



● In partnership with Sovereign Tribal Nations

ARIZONA

- Phoenix

CALIFORNIA

- Antelope Valley
- Coachella Valley
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco Bay Area
- San Gabriel Valley
- Stockton

COLORADO

- Colorado Springs

FLORIDA

- Tampa Bay

IDAHO

- Pocatello

ILLINOIS

- South, Chicago
- West, Chicago

MASSACHUSETTS

- Boston
- East Boston

MICHIGAN

- Detroit

MINNESOTA

- Minneapolis-St. Paul
- Fargo-Moorhead

MONTANA

- Billings
- Flathead Nation (Polson)
- Missoula

NEW YORK

- Bronx
- Harlem

NORTH CAROLINA

- Charlotte

NORTH DAKOTA

- Fargo-Moorhead

OREGON

- Bend
- Chiloquin
- Eugene
- Gresham
- Klamath Falls
- La Grande
- La Pine
- Portland

PENNSYLVANIA

- Philadelphia

SOUTH DAKOTA

- He Sapa (Rapid City)
- Oglala Lakota Nation (Pine Ridge Reservation)

TEXAS

- Austin
- Dallas
- Houston

UTAH

- Salt Lake City

WASHINGTON

- Seattle
- Spokane
- Tacoma
- Vancouver

OUR HISTORY OF SUPPORTING YOUTH

Friends of the Children began more than 30 years ago with a bold idea: every child deserves a dedicated, caring adult who shows up for 12+ years, *no matter what*. That idea became the first and only long-term, professional mentoring program in the country. Starting in Portland, Oregon with 24 youth and three professional mentors, our organization pioneered a unique model that has grown to 43 locations nationwide, serving over 20,000 children and caregivers throughout the last 30+ years.

Long-term, professional mentoring has transformed lives—through small moments like bike rides, homework help, and playground visits, and big milestones like college applications, high school graduations, and first jobs. We hope you explore this timeline to discover key moments in the history of the Friends of the Children national network.



Friends of the Children is founded by **DUNCAN CAMPBELL** in Portland, OR

1993

Bob and Dottie King invest \$5M to establish National, the first of several investments totaling over **\$8M** from King Philanthropies

Network-wide performance management system launched

Preliminary findings from the Longitudinal Randomized Controlled Trial are published in *Prevention Science*

● Gresham, OR
Portland chapter adds 2nd location

● Austin, TX
● Charlotte, NC
● Chicago, IL
● Los Angeles, CA
● Bend, OR

NIH awards **\$3M** for Randomized Controlled Trial of the effectiveness of the Friends of the Children model

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention invests **\$500,000** to support the expansion of service to youth in foster care – the first of eight awards through 2024 **TOTALING \$13.62M**

● New York, NY

2000

● Seattle, WA
● Klamath Falls, OR

2001

2004

● Boston, MA

2008

2010

2013

2014

● Tampa Bay, FL
● South Bronx, NY
NY chapter adds 2nd location

2016

● San Francisco, CA

2017

Michael Jordan makes **MULTI-MILLION** dollar investment

2018

Friends of the Children begins selecting youth directly from **FOSTER CARE**

Friends of the Children receives **\$4M** Social Innovation Fund award

Russell Wilson and Ciara begin investing in Friends of the Children through their **WHY NOT YOU FOUNDATION**

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation invests **\$1.75M** to launch **2GEN PILOT** - the first of 4 awards through 2024 **totaling \$6.15M** to expand 2Gen work and to study its impact

Social Return on Investment Study determines that **EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED** in Friends of the Children **RETURNS OVER \$7 TO THE COMMUNITY**





- Antelope Valley, CA
LA chapter adds 2nd location
- Fargo, ND
- Detroit, MI
- Tacoma, WA
- Salt Lake City, UT

Annie E. Casey Foundation study results published in *Child & Family Social Work*

- Missoula, MT
- Colorado Springs, CO

Echo Fund invests **\$6M** to support the expansion of partnership and program impact in rural and tribal communities - the first of two awards through 2023 **totaling \$12M**

Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies invests **\$2.5M** to expand partnerships with tribal communities

Gary & Christine Rood commit **\$33M** to the Friends of the Children network

- Pocatello, ID
- Philadelphia, PA
- East Boston, MA
Boston chapter adds 2nd location
- South, Chicago, IL
Chicago chapter adds 2nd location

● Chiloquin
Klamath Basin chapter adds 2nd location in partnership with the Klamath Tribes

● Flathead Nation
Western Montana chapter adds 2nd location in partnership with the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes

● La Pine, OR
Central Oregon chapter adds 2nd location

- Spokane, WA
- Dallas, TX

2019

2021

2023

2025

2020

- Vancouver, WA
- Eugene, OR

SIMONE BILES begins her incredible support for the Friends Network

In response to COVID-19, Family Needs Assessments take place across the network

2022

- Rapid City, SD (He Sapa)
FIRST CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC CHAPTER
- Phoenix, AZ
- Billings, MT
- Houston, TX
- Twin Cities, MN
- Pine Ridge Reservation
He Sapa chapter adds 2nd location in partnership with the Oglala Lakota Nation

Mackenzie Scott invests **\$44M** in the Friends of the Children network

2Gen Impact Randomized Controlled Trial launches in partnership with the University of Notre Dame and now Portland State University

2024

- Coachella Valley, CA
- Long Beach, CA
LA chapter adds 3rd location
- San Gabriel Valley, CA
LA chapter adds 4th location
- La Grande, OR
- Stockton, CA

Ballmer Group invests **\$2.3M** to sustain and expand our work in Washington State

Congress approves **\$850,000 GRANT** for National Center of Excellence

Friends of the Children closes out **\$30M CAMPAIGN** for the 30th anniversary



Today, Friends of the Children serves

43 LOCATIONS
in 22 STATES

including partnerships with Sovereign Tribal Nations



THE DUNCAN AND CINDY CAMPBELL NATIONAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL YOUTH MENTORING



In 1993, founder Duncan Campbell first committed to the idea that just one stable, long-term relationship can change a child's life for the better. Today, paid, professional mentors are gaining national recognition for their ability to address the unique educational, social and behavioral health needs of children and families facing the toughest challenges in communities across the country.

In honor of that legacy, this year Friends of the Children broke ground on the Duncan and Cindy Campbell National Center of Excellence for Professional Youth Mentoring.

More than a building, the National Center of Excellence will soon establish itself as the

destination for evidence-sharing and innovation in professional youth mentoring for researchers and practitioners nationally and world-wide. The National Center of Excellence will be located in Portland's historic Albina neighborhood and will be completed in fall of 2026. In addition to serving as a gathering space for youth and families at the Friends of the Children – Portland chapter, the building will be a hub for training and technical assistance, as well as research and innovation.

"There is a distinct need across the nation for programs that support young people facing issues daily like homelessness, mental health challenges, and foster care," said Gary Rood who, with his wife Christine, invested \$5 million to help make the National Center of Excellence a reality.

THE CENTER WILL NOT ONLY ENSURE MORE CHILDREN HAVE A FRIEND, BUT ALSO ENSURE VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES ARE GETTING THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO SUCCEED."

- GARY ROOD

In January 2025, Friends of the Children founder Duncan Campbell was honored with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Mentoring Summit's Excellence in Mentoring award ceremony. The award, presented to Duncan by Friends of the Children – National CEO Terri Sorensen, recognized Duncan's visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of children and families facing the greatest obstacles.



A NEW GRADUATE FOCUSES ON THE FUTURE



Joshua is a 17-year old who just completed high school, becoming one of the first three graduates ever of Friends of the Children – Tampa Bay. Joshua was matched with a long-term, professional mentor—called a Friend—12 years ago when the chapter started and when he was a rising first grader.

“I’ve gotta get ready for the real world,” says Joshua with a big laugh. He’s focused on his future, attending Brewster Technical College in Tampa Bay, then building a career around his love of cars.

When he first met with his Friend Justin, he was working through a difficult time. Joshua and his three siblings were in foster care, and they weren’t always placed together. At school he was acting out—hiding under desks and flipping trash cans.

“Justin was my safe place, and he allowed me to speak without judgment. That’s when I found my voice,” says Joshua. “He taught me how to express my feelings without being physical.”

The two of them went to the park together to throw the football and hang out. They worked on school assignments and had discussions about everything. Justin was the consistent presence Joshua needed in his life, and his school behavior improved as the two built trust.

After five years in foster care, the family was reunited.

As is common for youth in the program, in high school Joshua transitioned to a new Friend named Markus-Derek. This change was a chance to expand his network of support.

“As I got to know, Mr. Marcus, I found out that he is a very good dude—he has a lot of structure. And his love for music is amazing to me,” says Joshua. “What I learned from Mr. Marcus is don’t judge a book by its cover.”

“Joshua’s struggle was real, but so was his strength,” says Markus-Derek. “He didn’t just graduate, he overcame.”

The stress of school and life often made Joshua want to quit. But he had support, like his mother’s little quotes he heard every single day: “Can’t isn’t in a man’s vocabulary” and “a diamond isn’t a diamond without extreme pressure at high temperatures.”

“I saw that no matter how difficult life is, we all have the same 24 hours. And I still have to fight so I can be great in life,” says Joshua.

“This was a hard fight,” says Joshua’s mother. “I don’t want foster care to ever hinder Joshua in life. I want my kids to take their past and make it part of their own story. I don’t want him to ever be just another statistic.”

Joshua’s mother says both of Joshua’s Friends provided her son a male figure to help show him who he could be. She’s glad that he keeps up with them both.

“I’m honored to be a part of Friends of the Children, because they helped me through my journey and have continued to be a part of my life.



**THEY GAVE ME SUPPORT,
ENCOURAGEMENT, A SAFE PLACE, AND
MOST OF ALL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.”**

- JOSHUA



MORE THAN A CHAMPION:

SIMONE BILES' LEGACY OF IMPACT WITH FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN

In a monumental year for both Simone Biles and Friends of the Children, the World Champion gymnast and youth advocate stood as a powerful ambassador for our organization with every opportunity. As Friends of the Children celebrated our growing impact, Simone's voice, presence, and heart elevated our mission to new heights—amplifying the power of long-term, professional mentoring and empowering youth across the country.

Simone's personal journey with foster care and mental health challenges mirrors the experiences of many youth in our program. That is why when she discovered Friends of the Children, she found more than a cause—she found a purpose.

"I have always wondered what my legacy would be, what I could do to give back...and then I found Friends of the Children," said Simone at our 30th Anniversary Gala in Santa Monica last fall where she was honored as a *Champion for Children*.

Recognized along with our founders, Duncan and Cindy Campbell, Simone shared: "There was an instant connection because I have gone through what these kids have gone through. I have grown through what these kids are going to grow through."

I CAN SEE MYSELF IN THESE KIDS WHO JUST NEED SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES IN THEM AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN DOES."

- SIMONE BILES

Her words resonated with everyone in the room—philanthropists, industry magnets, celebrities, network leaders, Friends, and youth alike. That night raised \$3 million to expand our impact, funds that will bring professional mentoring to even more youth and families.

Simone spotlighted our organization again when she was named 2024 *Sports Illustrated's* Sportsperson of the Year, donating a full-page ad featuring Friends of the Children in the magazine and giving a heartfelt shoutout to “my friends at Friends of the Children,” during her acceptance speech at the award ceremony. Time and time again, Simone uses any opportunity to leverage her global platform to champion our work.

Simone brings that same enthusiasm to every interaction she has with youth in our program. In May, she joined hundreds of youth from across our network for a special virtual video call celebrating National Foster Care Month and Mental Health Awareness Month, and Simone's smile and energy were infectious. She shared her own story, answered thoughtful questions, and led powerful affirmations like: “I am strong. I can do hard things. I am brave. I am one of one.” Youth saw themselves in Simone, and they felt seen, valued, and inspired.

In 2022, Simone helped launch our Houston chapter in her hometown. This year Simone, her husband Jonathan Owens, and the rest of the Biles family welcomed the Friends of the Children — Houston youth to the *Simone Biles Invitational* at the World Champions Centre where she gifted them an Olympic medal and an autographed plaque for their clubhouse. At every turn, she has created unforgettable memories that remind our youth they matter.

As she continues to break records and barriers, Simone remains grounded in what matters most: showing up for kids. Her unwavering support ensures more youth across the country have a champion in their corner and a mentor by their side for 12+ years, no matter what. Friends of the Children is so grateful for her dedication—thank you, Simone!

SIMONE BILES

Q&A



During Simone's recent video call with youth from across our national network, they had the opportunity to chat with her and ask questions. Below are a few questions from youth in the program and a Friends of the Children graduate.

Q: WHAT DOES SISTERHOOD, FAMILY, AND SUPPORT MEAN TO YOU?

A: Being in foster care made me realize how important it is to have constants in your life. My sister and I were adopted at six, and while it wasn't always easy, my family showed up every day and believed in us. That made all the difference. Support isn't always about biology—it is about people who show up, love you, and push you to be your best no matter what. I've found that in my gymnastics, my friend groups, and my mentors. Everyone deserves that kind of constant in their lives who believes in them. That kind of support changes everything.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GYMNASTICS OUTFIT?

A: That is a great question! I've competed internationally for over 10 years, so I have worn a lot of outfits. My favorites are from the recent Paris Olympics—we were absolutely covered in crystals from head to toe. I loved the patriotic colors, the flags, and everything it represented about being an American. Those leotards really stood out to me!

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE IF I WANT TO BE LIKE YOU?

A: Be the best version of you. My mom always told me, “Be the best Simone,” and that stuck with me. Don't compare yourself to others—focus on your own journey. You can accomplish anything you put your mind to. Be brave, believe in yourself, and speak up for yourself and those around you. Dream big and never give up!

Q: WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU WANT TO TRY SOMETHING NEW IN GYMNASTICS?

A: When I want to try something new, I take it one step at a time. At the end of each year, our coaches would introduce new skills to see if we were ready to move up to the next level. We used the foam pit as a safe space to practice those new and sometimes scary moves. That's how we built the confidence to try things that were different, challenging—or even things no one had done before. And we pushed ourselves a little more each day. Most skills don't come overnight. It takes hard work, dedication, and a lot of perseverance.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The youth in our program
ACHIEVE INCREDIBLE SUCCESS.

*We are inspired by their accomplishments
as they pursue their hopes and dreams.*



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



83% of youth earn a high school diploma or a GED.



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



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



BALLMER GROUP INVESTS \$2.3M

**TO EXPAND FRIENDS OF
THE CHILDREN'S IMPACT
IN WASHINGTON STATE**

Inspired by Friends of the Children's proven impact, in 2024 Ballmer Group invested \$2.3 million to expand and sustain our long-term, professional mentoring model across Washington State. This transformational multi-year grant is supporting chapters in Seattle, Tacoma, and Southwest Washington, and helped launch one of our newest chapters in Spokane.

Across Washington, our chapters serve youth with incredible potential who are also disproportionately affected by foster care and other challenges. Ballmer Group's support will enable Washington chapters to sustain and grow their 12+ year commitments to hundreds of youth and their families.

Ballmer Group's commitment to the Friends of the Children model runs deep. In 2017, Ballmer Group invested \$500,000 in catalytic seed funding to bring the Friends of the Children model to Los Angeles. Over the years, they have also invested more than \$2.6M in Friends of the Children – Seattle, one of our longest-standing chapters.

*We are deeply grateful to
Ballmer Group for their
continued support!*

ADVANCING FOSTER CARE OUTCOMES

In 2021, Friends of the Children set a goal to be part of the nation's efforts to reduce entry into foster care. Aiming for a 10% reduction in 5-year-olds entering foster care by 2030, we are celebrating that as of the most recent data available, 12% fewer children age 5 entered the system. Preliminary data from pilot projects in Los Angeles and Austin have shown that when paired with a Friend, children who are at highest risk of foster care entry or re-entry avoid foster care 100% of the time. Now that is worth celebrating!

A MOTHER BREAKS THE CYCLE

THROUGH STRENGTH, SUPPORT, AND A SECOND CHANCE

"My biggest hope for my children is for them to achieve everything they want to," says Carmen*, a mother of four, whose daughter Ana* is enrolled in Friends of the Children — Coachella Valley, in California.

Carmen is a survivor of domestic violence and is raising her children as a single mother while their father is incarcerated. Hardship does not define Carmen's story though—she shows an unwavering commitment to build a better future for her family.

When Ana enrolled in Friends of the Children, she was shy and struggling academically. But with the steady support of Belinda—her professional mentor—Ana began to blossom, raising her hand in class, discovering a love of reading, and becoming more confident.

Shortly after Ana entered the program, the family came to the attention of the child welfare system. The converted garage the family called home had become cluttered, and at times, Carmen had to leave the children alone while she worked. Child welfare had enough cause to consider removing the children from the home, but what happened next speaks to the power of partnership and prevention.

When child welfare learned about the family's involvement with Friends of the Children, they spoke with Belinda and the Program Director, Cecelia, who shared that Ana was thriving in school, and Carmen was working to improve the family's circumstances.

Instead of removing the children, the family was placed on a three-month improvement program, and the Friends — Coachella Valley team rolled up their sleeves and connected the family to after-school programming, therapy, and a domestic violence survivor program. They also brought in community partners to transform their home and remove clutter.

Paint was donated to remove visible reminders of the past. A refrigerator, a ceiling fan, and door were also donated. Community members provided a patio set for enjoying meals together, a bunk bed, and a new bed for Carmen. The county donated mattresses for the children, so now each child has their own space.

"I have seen so much determination from this family," says Cecelia.

WITH FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN DEDICATING TIME TO THE FAMILY, THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES. I AM EXCITED FOR WHAT THEIR FUTURE HOLDS."

- CECELIA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Their home is now a place of peace, comfort, and possibility, and the family is flourishing.

Throughout it all, Carmen continues to show up with resolve and love, adjusting her work schedule to spend more time at home, and enlisting Grandma's help to ensure the children are safe.

Carmen's story shows what is possible when families feel supported. It is proof that foster care prevention is possible when communities come together and walk alongside families through life's hardest moments.

"Ana is so smart and coming into her own. She is talkative, loves to draw, color, and read," says Carmen. "I am so glad Belinda came into our lives. It feels good to know people are there for me and my kids."

*Names changed to protect privacy



The work of our professional mentors with youth and families is highly individualized and intentional—92% of caregivers say Friends helped connect them to concrete supports that enrich and stabilize their family and 77% say Friends promoted their ability to navigate systems and build community connections.



FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN – FLATHEAD NATION CONNECTS YOUTH TO KINSHIP AND CULTURE

In spring 2023, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council passed a resolution supporting the launch of Friends of the Children – Flathead Nation, a site dedicated to serving youth on the Flathead Indian Reservation. This location, part of the Friends of the Children – Western Montana chapter, brings our proven professional mentoring model to Tribal youth.

“Wild rose bushes are a sacred symbol of transition and resilience to our Tribes, and they can also represent a youth’s 12+ year journey with Friends of the Children,” says Program Manager, Nicole Callahan. “When children first enroll, they are like tightly closed rose buds, from the many obstacles they’ve faced. After their first year in the program, many are already blooming beautifully with a stronger sense of identity, sparking meaningful relationships with elders, and connecting to their community.”

Friends – Flathead Nation is unique in serving youth from the Salish, Qlispe, and Ksanka Tribes—and welcomes all Tribal youth living on the reservation, which is home to 64 Tribal Nations. This inclusive approach honors the reservation’s rich diversity and interconnectedness of the Tribal communities. The chapter’s advisory committee, comprised of Tribal elders and community leaders, ensures that programming incorporates traditional practices, language, and cultural teachings that reinforce youth’s belonging and pride in their heritage.

The Flathead Nation location is committed to empowering youth through culturally grounded activities including naming ceremonies, storytelling, and learning their Indigenous language which connects back to generations of their heritage. In the summer, youth attend a cultural camp full of activities steeped in Tribal traditions. A favorite camp activity consists of children making their own hoops for the Salish Hoop and Dart game—a traditional Indigenous game that builds hand-eye coordination, accuracy, and hunting skills.

Friends of the Children’s approach honors the Indigenous value that “children are sacred” and emphasizes long-term, consistent relationships rooted in extended kinship. Professional mentors are called “Relatives,” reflecting the Indigenous tradition of extended family roles of aunts, uncles, and elders who nurture children’s growth.

One youth had just missed a visit with their biological aunt, and they asked their professional mentor: “If we’re from the same Tribe, can you be my Auntie too?” This bond, rooted in shared culture and kinship, gave the youth a sense of belonging and comfort during a challenging time.

Nicole Callahan speaks to creating cultural connection for youth: “If our kids are connected and rooted in their Tribes, their customs and beliefs, they’ll be unstoppable as adults.”

34 OF OUR 43 SITES ACROSS THE COUNTRY SERVE INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND FAMILIES.

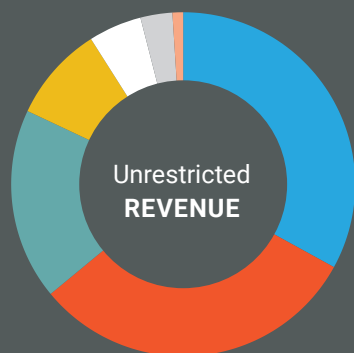
Friends of the Children’s national network is thankful that the

COMIS FOUNDATION

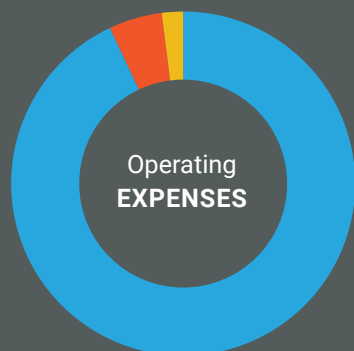
has committed \$600K supporting Indigenous culturally-specific projects—like those at Flathead Nation—across the Friends of the Children network. They have also committed an additional \$1.5M toward our rural and tribal campaign designed to increase opportunities for these communities to benefit from the Friends of the Children model.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

FISCAL YEAR 2024



- Individual (33%)
- Property & Rental Income (31%)
- Foundations (18%)
- Government (9%)
- Consulting Fees (5%)
- Other & In-Kind (3%)
- Corporate (1%)



- Program Expenses (93%)
- Administrative Services (5%)
- Fundraising Costs (2%)

UNRESTRICTED REVENUE

Individual	\$7,079,789
Property & Rental Income	\$6,855,763
Foundations	\$3,989,626
Government	\$1,938,932
Consulting Fees	\$1,145,070
Other & In-Kind	\$664,549
Corporate	\$200,929

Total Operating Revenue	\$21,874,658
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EXPENSES

Program Expenses	\$22,945,002
Administrative Services	\$1,451,187
Fundraising Costs	\$399,663

Total Operating Expenses	\$24,795,852
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ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$29,056,193
Receivables	\$2,971,197
Equipment & Leases	\$319,828
Prepaid Expenses	\$271,907

Total Assets	\$32,619,125
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LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$6,946,197
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NET ASSETS

With Donor Restrictions	\$11,041,464
Unrestricted Board Designated	\$8,484,694
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$6,146,770

Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$32,619,125
---	---------------------



THANK YOU

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*Denotes support of chapter(s) across the Friends of the Children network

**Denotes support of Friends of the Children - National and chapter(s) across the Friends of the Children network

†Investments recognized between September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2025



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*Scheduled to re-open in fall of 2026

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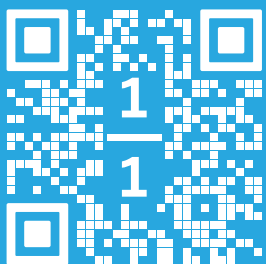
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