

FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN

IMPACT REPORT 2025 - 2026





"Becoming a teacher wasn't my first career choice, but I am so thankful for all the lessons I learned while at Friends. They trained me for this job and made me the amazing teacher I am."

- Cardeana Harris, Portland, Class of 2013
Mother, award-winning schoolteacher, and educator who specializes in youth behavioral health



"Working for the Oregon Judicial Department has taught me to give a voice to a population that seems to be voiceless. My own children remind me to advocate for those who struggle through the same issues I did as a child."

- Jimmy Tyrrell, Portland, Class of 2009
Proud father who works in the justice system standing up for youth

**FRIENDS OF
THE CHILDREN
PROGRAM GRADUATES
ARE SERVING THEIR
COMMUNITY AND
BETTERING THE
WORLD**



"My work at the hatchery through the Klamath Tribes has me excited for so many new things. I can see I'm making a difference, contributing to something important—generationally."

- Truett Rose-Noneo, Klamath Basin, Class of 2023
Klamath Tribes member and technician with the Tribe's fish hatchery



"When we create spaces that nurture connection and collaboration in our community, we create a sense of home and legacy that honors where we've come from, celebrates where we are, empowers the dreams of today, and shapes a brighter future for our children."

- Freddi McCullers, New York, Class of 2013
Successful event planner with a passion for travel who has advocated for youth in Congress

DEAR FRIEND,

Great ideas begin with a promise. Thirty-three years ago, Friends of the Children made a promise that was simple and radical: every child deserves one dedicated, caring adult who shows up for them from kindergarten through high school—12+ years, *no matter what*.

More than three decades later, that promise has grown from three long-term, professional mentors in Portland, OR to a national movement spanning nearly 50 communities. Friends of the Children is the only organization in the country that commits to youth for their entire childhood, and we've proven that when someone keeps showing up, the trajectory of a life and family can change forever.

We face a defining moment across America: families are under pressure, systems of support are shifting, and for many, stability is fragile. The demand for long-term, trusted relationships is soaring just as traditional funding becomes less predictable. Many organizations are scaling back their commitments during this time. Friends of the Children is doing the opposite—our organization is doubling down, keeping our promises while building systems and efficiencies that will help us sustain our programming for children and families.

In Los Angeles, Friends of the Children has expanded throughout the entire county into all eight of the city's service planning areas, keeping youth and families out of the largest foster care system in the nation. In Western Montana, our work with Tribal Nations is growing on the Flathead Nation, as the chapter renovates a new clubhouse to better serve families on the reservation.

The youth and families in our program are extraordinary and resilient, and they inspire me. Take, for example, two graduates you'll read about: in Portland, Enrique was able to see new possibilities for his future, when he looked past circumstances he couldn't control; and a determined Ashley, in Boston, learned to set goals so that she could reach her dream of enrolling in college for a fine arts degree. These are just two alumni of our program, and they represent hundreds of youth who have come before them: enrolling in higher education, serving our country in the military, building careers and following their different passions.

This year also marks the completion of the Duncan & Cindy Campbell National Center of Excellence for Professional Youth Mentoring in Portland, Oregon. You'll learn about how the new Center is more than a testament to our founder, it is a catapult toward the future, a space for innovation around professional youth mentoring, and a way to demonstrate and build best practices for our field.

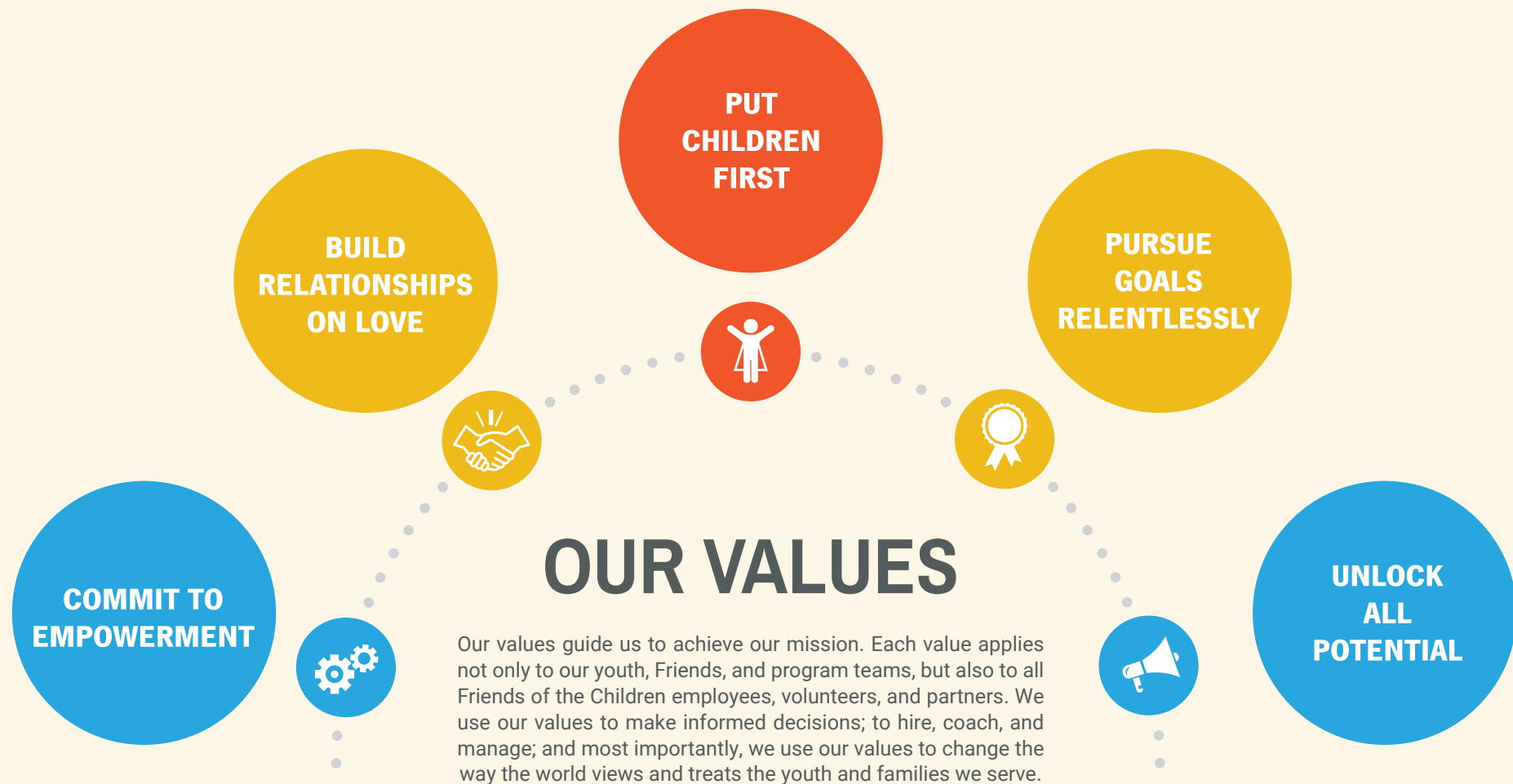
I hope the stories in this impact report help you see the difference we can make in the lives of children and families. It is your encouragement, hope, and support that make our work possible, and help us keep the promises we make to every youth.

Warmest Regards,



Terri Sorensen
National CEO, Friends of the Children





OUR MISSION

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

– 12+ YEARS, NO MATTER WHAT.

SIDE-BY-SIDE:

A MILESTONE COHORT ENTERS HIGH SCHOOL IN AUSTIN

This fall, Ashley D. will walk into high school for the first time. She will navigate new teachers, new classmates, and an entirely new routine, but one crucial part of her life will remain perfectly consistent: her professional mentor, Silvana, will be right by her side.

Ask Silvana to describe Ashley, and she doesn't have to think for long. She's curious. She'll try just about anything once. She's outspoken, fearless—the kind of person who stands up for her friends without hesitation. Those observations weren't formed in a single conversation. They accumulated over eight years together, as Ashley grew from an energetic six-year-old into a teenager preparing to enter high school.



The longest-tenured professional mentor at Friends of the Children – Austin, Silvana still vividly remembers their first official outing together at the Thinkery, and her first day on the job.

She remembers the weight of it: a family had entrusted her with one of the most important people in their lives. She worried she wasn't doing enough, right up until Ashley asked a simple question at the end of the day: "When do I get to see you again?" In that moment, Silvana felt her calling.

For the past eight years, their weekends, evenings, and summers have been filled with soccer, karate, volleyball, softball, and swimming lessons. Silvana notes that Ashley rarely needs convincing. If there is an experience she hasn't had before, she wants to give it a try.

Today, before they even decide on the day's plans, Ashley asks about dance class, Silvana's dogs, and how her powerlifting training is going. Their conversations flow naturally, built on eight years of ordinary moments and deeply earned trust. Silvana considers it a privilege to witness Ashley's transformation, noting that she now looks at her and sees a level of confidence she wishes she had possessed at that age.

Ashley is one of 22 youth entering high school this fall as part of the first-ever class of rising freshmen in Friends of the Children - Austin's history. It is a milestone in Friends of the Children's history made possible in part by a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) award, which helped launch and grow chapters like Austin and expand our model nationwide. Today, we are proud to watch these cohorts of youth in chapters across the country successfully transition from middle school to high school.

Furthermore, this funding laid the foundation for our deep, continuing impact in Texas. What started in Austin has successfully expanded across the state, launching Friends of the Children – Houston in 2022 and Friends of the Children – Dallas in 2025.

As Ashley prepares for her freshman year, Silvana's advice isn't about getting good grades or trying to fit in. Instead, it is a powerful affirmation of the young woman she has spent nearly a decade getting to know: "Don't dim your light. Keep being exactly who you are."



WATCH THE VIDEO TO MEET MORE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST-EVER CLASS OF RISING FRESHMEN IN FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN - AUSTIN'S HISTORY AND DISCOVER HOW LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS HAVE HELPED SHAPE THEIR JOURNEY.

A LANDMARK FOR PROFESSIONAL YOUTH MENTORING

This September marked the opening of the Duncan & Cindy Campbell National Center of Excellence for Professional Youth Mentoring in Portland, Oregon. The new Center serves as both the national headquarters of Friends of the Children as well as the Albina Campus of Friends of the Children – Portland.

The newly renovated building is a special place, not far from where our founder Duncan Campbell grew up. The state-of-the-art facility is a touchstone for the power of professional youth mentoring, focusing on four key areas: training and development; innovation; research and evaluation; and thought leadership.



“THE CENTER IS A HUB WHERE RESEARCH MEETS PRACTICE. IT’S A HOME WHERE WE WILL DEEPEN AND BROADEN OUR IMPACT FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES, ALLOWING US TO INNOVATE, RESEARCH, CONVEY, AND COLLABORATE ON CUTTING-EDGE PRACTICES.”

- Terri Sorensen
National CEO, Friends of the Children

PROFESSIONAL YOUTH MENTORING CERTIFICATE:

One of the key elements of the new facility is the launch of a new Professional Youth Mentoring Certificate in partnership with the University of South Carolina’s Youth Empowerment in Schools and Systems Lab.

The new Certificate has three key goals:

1. Establish a standardized, credible, and education-aligned mentoring credential for professional youth mentors;
2. Strengthen the practice and effectiveness of professional mentors (Friends) within our network; and
3. Advance the field of professional mentoring by highlighting the profession, standardizing best practices, and differentiating professional mentors from therapists, social workers, psychologists, paraprofessionals, and others.

The inaugural cohort of 25 professional mentors received their Certificates this summer. These Friends and program leaders represented 17 chapters across the Friends of the Children network, with experience ranging from 2 years to more than a decade.

“Professional mentors are deepening their understanding of concepts critical to supporting youth who have experienced trauma,” says Miles Allen, Director of the Center. “The Certificate is opening up dialogue to promote learning across the network, while also facilitating mastery in supporting youth through mentoring.”



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CENTER: Visit FriendsMentoringCenter.org

THANK YOU

DUNCAN AND CINDY CAMPBELL NATIONAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE INVESTMENTS

Thank you to these generous capital donors!

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Special thanks to Bruce Schoen (National Board) and Matt Swaim (Portland Board) for their generous financial support, countless hours, and expertise in launching the National Center of Excellence.

INSPIRING CHANGE:

FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN TAKES THE NATIONAL STAGE AT THE NFL DRAFT



A Friends of the Children – Chicago youth, Tylen, and his professional mentor (called a Friend), Timothy, recently shared a once-in-a-lifetime moment in the national spotlight, bringing the mission of Friends of the Children to millions of football fans across the country.

In April 2026, Tylen and Timothy took the main stage at the 2026 National Football League (NFL) Draft to help announce the Chicago Bears' third-round draft pick: Stanford tight end Sam Roush. Standing side-by-side under the lights, their prime-time appearance marked a major milestone for Friends of the Children as a new grant partner in the NFL's Inspire Change program.

The NFL invited Friends of the Children to join Inspire Change, a program that recognizes a select group of nonprofits working to reduce barriers to opportunity in communities across the country. Tylen and Timothy's unforgettable moment on the draft stage is a powerful reminder of what is possible when young people have someone who shows up for them—through the hard days and the celebrations alike. It is exactly the kind of moment that 12+ years, no matter what is built to inspire and create.



MAKING HER OWN DREAMS COME TRUE: ASHLEY'S STORY

For 12 years, Ashley L. has been a bright, positive, and loving presence at Friends of the Children – Boston. This year, we are incredibly proud to celebrate her as an outstanding program graduate and as a young woman who has fearlessly pursued her dreams and is now watching them become reality.

From an early age, Ashley knew exactly where she wanted to go: Boston Arts Academy. Rather than simply hoping, she took concrete steps toward that goal, participating in a dual enrollment program, taking college-level coursework while still in high school, and earning her place.

"She is determined," says Analisa Fazio, a School Counselor at Boston Arts Academy. "When she has something in her mind that she wants to accomplish, she does not hesitate to take those steps to accomplish those goals."

Though she once considered herself shy and introverted, Ashley has learned to embrace her own voice. Her professional mentors—called Friends—have watched her step into the spotlight and become a talented vocalist and visual artist.

"I remember her becoming the lead singer of our band when she was much younger than she is now," says Yi-Chin Chen, Executive Director of Friends of the Children – Boston. "The way that she commanded the stage... standing up there completely fearless, singing a song in front of hundreds of people. A lot of the time, I look at her and I say there's nothing that she can't do."

That same determination carried her through one of the biggest milestones of her journey: applying to college. Taking a passion for music and visual arts to the next level requires an immense amount of work, and Ashley did not have to navigate that path alone.

"I wanted to focus on art as a career because I was always interested in it," Ashley explains.

When it came time to look at higher education, her professional mentor, Maricela, was there every step of the way. Maricela helped Ashley navigate the complex application process for 10 different art and design schools. Together, they created a dedicated space for the work to happen, sitting at local cafés to compile and submit portfolios, complete homework, and polish college essays.

Today, Ashley has been accepted into her top-choice programs, including: School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, and the School of Visual Arts.

"It's not every day that you get to see a young person make their own dreams come true," says Chloe Frankel, a former professional mentor and Assistant Director of the Adolescent Cohort.

For Ashley, the shyness she once saw as a limitation has become something she can shape and grow—one smile, one song, one bold step at a time. As she heads to art school, she carries with her the confidence that comes from being believed in, and from 12+ years of someone showing up, no matter what.

"She is as bright, as positive, as loving as any person can be," says Yi-Chin Chen. "She has my heart."

WATCH THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW ASHLEY
BEST SHARE WHAT MAKES HER SPECIAL.

NATIONAL PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG ADULTS:

Our commitment doesn't end at graduation. Beginning fall 2026, our new National Pathways for Young Adults pilot will extend individualized support to graduates ages 18–22, ensuring they move into adulthood with meaningful connections and pursue a degree, certification, or living-wage career.



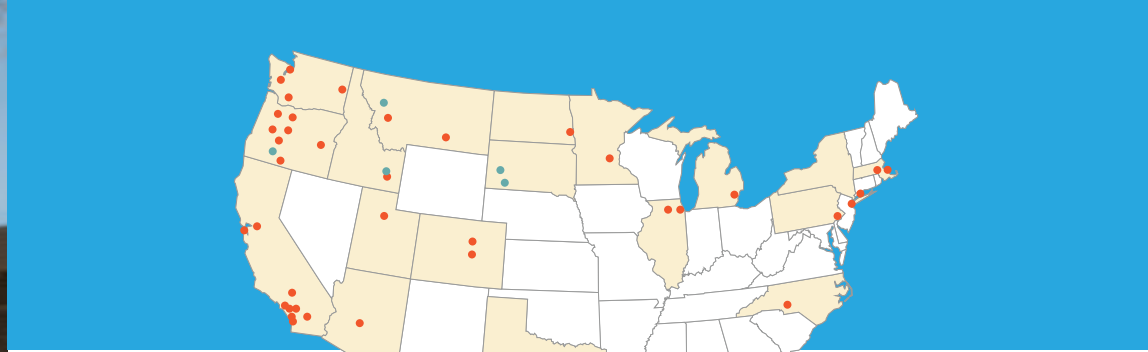
EXPANSION UPDATE

At Friends of the Children, we are serving more children and families than ever before. This year, the national network grew to 48 locations, spanning rural, Indigenous, suburban, and urban communities across 22 states, including partnerships with Sovereign Tribal Nations: the Oglala Lakota Nation, the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes, the Klamath Tribes, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.

As part of Friends of the Children's priority to sustain and grow the impact of our work, we added new locations in Denver, Colorado; Fort Hall, Idaho; and San Fernando Valley, California.

The San Fernando Valley expansion marks a tremendous milestone for the Friends of the Children – Los Angeles chapter, which now serves the entirety of Los Angeles County. This growth reflects the power of our model. Data from a 6-year pilot project show that when families at the highest risk of foster care entry have a Friend, children don't go into care: not a single child with a Friend has entered the system. In response, Los Angeles County has invested over \$22M and adopted our program county-wide as part of its foster care prevention strategy.

And we are not stopping there! This fall, we look forward to adding two locations in San Diego, California, and Miami, Florida—bringing our long-term, professional mentoring model to even more youth and families who need a Friend.



FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN CURRENTLY SERVES 48 LOCATIONS in 22 STATES

ARIZONA

- Phoenix

CALIFORNIA

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

COLORADO

- Colorado Springs
- Denver

FLORIDA

- Miami
- Tampa Bay

IDAHO

- American Falls
- Fort Hall/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

● In partnership with
Sovereign Tribal Nations

12+ YEARS, NO MATTER WHAT.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN:

Friends of the Children was established in 1993 by entrepreneur Duncan Campbell and his wife, Cindy Campbell, in Portland, Oregon. The Campbells purchased a school building - located in the same Northeast Portland Albina neighborhood where Duncan experienced a challenging childhood.

In 1992, extensive research clearly indicated that the strongest protective factor a child can have is a long-term, nurturing relationship with a consistent and caring adult.

Friends of the Children has developed a strong reputation based on the proven, measurable outcomes for youth facing the greatest challenges in life. What began with three paid, professional mentors and 24 children has grown to serve thousands of children and families across the country.

Our Friends are special and amazing.

They are full-time, paid professionals trained in the art & science of mentoring. Their commitment to our long-term model offers quality and consistency to our youth and families.



"I BELIEVE PEOPLE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO REACH BACK AND TAKE CARE OF OTHERS, SO THAT THEY CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND BECOME SELF-RELIANT, CONTRIBUTING CITIZENS... ALL THROUGH THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS."

-Duncan Campbell, Founder

HOW IT WORKS:

Our model is bold and distinct. Friends of the Children is the only long-term professional mentoring program in the country, committed to walking alongside youth for 12+ years.

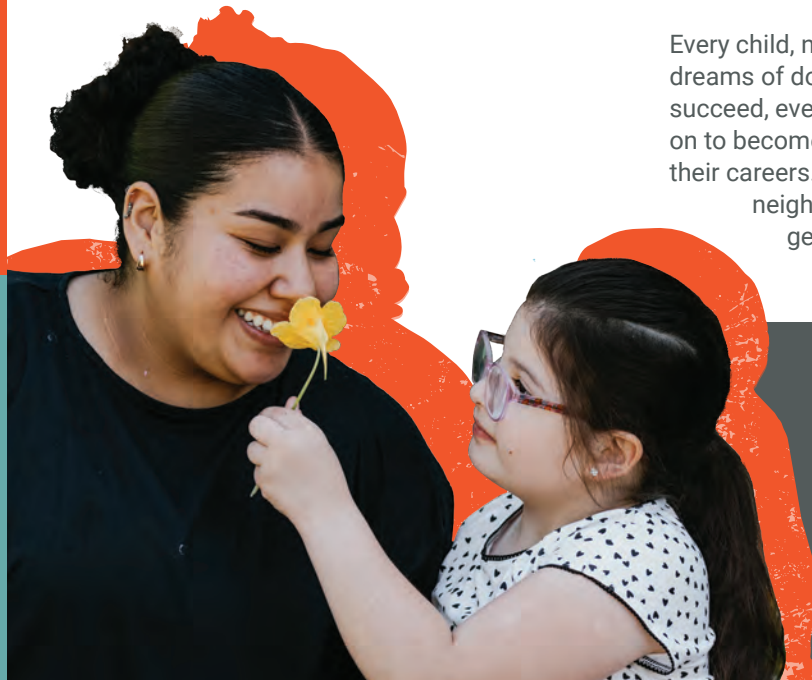
We enroll children who could most benefit from a relationship with a mentor. Community partners, like schools, help us invite children ages 4 to 6 to join our program. The youth we serve have unique talents, varied interests, and big dreams!

THE POWER OF ONE:

Every child, no matter who they are or where they live, has dreams of doing big things. Any child in any situation can succeed, even those facing the most obstacles. Our youth go on to become leaders in their communities and successful in their careers. This has ripple effects on their siblings, peers, neighbors, and their children, breaking the cycle of generational poverty.

Relationships are the key.

We focus on building trust and fostering resilience through 1:1 relationships from pre-kindergarten to high school graduation. 12+ years, no matter what.



Our work is individualized and intentional.

Friends help youth find their unique sparks and navigate personal challenges. Through goal setting and skill-building, Friends provide “no matter what” support inspiring change and possibility.



“IF IT WEREN'T FOR FRIENDS, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE GOING TO SUCH A GOOD SCHOOL, AND I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SPEAK UP.”

- Ben, Program Youth



OUR GRADUATES:

Graduates from Friends of the Children are curious, courageous, resourceful, and resilient. They are future leaders. They are full of promise, and they inspire us every day.

More than 90% of our program graduates go on to accomplish what we refer to as our “3Es”—enrollment in post-secondary education, enlistment in the military, or employment in living-wage work.

Our goal is that youth graduate from our program with the skills and tools they need for success in their lives, whatever path they choose. We collect data so we can measure and improve our program. Youth at Friends of the Children are proud of their accomplishments, just as we are proud of them.

We work with youth in school, at home, and in the community.

We take a whole-child, two-generation impact approach because we understand that lived experiences, home environment, communities, and culture shape how youth grow and learn.



“SHE’S JUST LIKE ME”

SIMONE BILES SHOWS UP FOR YOUTH IN CHICAGO



**“I AM BRAVE. I AM LOVED.
I AM IMPORTANT.”**

- Simone Biles, leading daily affirmations with program youth



In October 2025, World Champion gymnast and youth advocate Simone Biles made a special, in-person visit to the Friends of the Children – Chicago clubhouse. As a longtime ambassador of Friends of the Children, Simone spent the afternoon doing what she does best with youth and their professional mentors: connecting.

She answered questions, signed autographs, took pictures, and shared powerful words of encouragement about the absolute importance of believing in themselves and their futures.

The visit held a profound significance for Simone, who frequently spent time in the city supporting her husband, NFL player Jonathan Owens. Having entered the foster care system alongside her siblings at a young age, Simone sees her own journey reflected directly in the youth she met.

During the visit, a powerful exchange took place when one youth, Vanessa*, asked, “Do you ever say anything negative about yourself and how do you stop?”

Simone met the question with honesty: “Sometimes you think you’re too short or you’re too tall... you’re perfect just how you are and so I try to do my affirmations every single day.” She then led the room through some of her favorite daily affirmations, encouraging the youth to repeat after her: “I am brave. I am loved. I am important.”

Simone emphasized that building self-confidence

early is key to navigating the daily hurdles the youth face. “Kids are like sponges and around the spaces they are in they can hear all sorts of things, so I think it’s really important to start those affirmations young so they fully believe in it and themselves,” Simone said.

Simone’s shared experience is exactly what makes her connection with the youth in Friends of the Children’s program so genuine. “I feel like they see me on the TV all the time and it doesn’t seem relatable,” Simone reflected. “But whenever I come in and have a conversation with them, they are kind of like, ‘Oh, she’s just like me.’” Seeing their faces light up, she added, “truly means the world, and I want to continue to do work in the foster care community.”

Phalon Carpenter, Program Director of Friends of the Children - Chicago, said the day will be a core memory for the youth. “It’s very important for our children to see people who look like them be successful,” she said. She added that while Simone is one of the greatest athletes of all time, “her experiences with the foster care system allow her to connect with the children and teens in our program in such an authentic and meaningful way.”

Thank you to Simone for showing up for youth and for your continued belief in the power of individualized, intentional, professional mentorship. *For 12+ years, no matter what.*

**Youth name changed to protect privacy*

FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN UPDATES LONG-TERM PROGRAM OUTCOMES

A multi-site randomized controlled trial (RCT) study that began in 2007 is concluding this year, and it has provided Friends of the Children with new data that affords us the opportunity to update our long-term program outcomes. For all the youth in the study who participated in Friends of the Children program for at least 9 years, or graduated from the program, here is what we found:



90% graduated from high school or earned their GED (up from 83%)



96% avoided criminal justice system involvement (up from 93%)



95% avoided early parenting



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

Friends of the Children hopes that this fall the full RCT study results will be released by researchers, digging into the efficacy of our program and sharing new understandings about our impact on youth mental health and substance use.



“WE ARE SO PROUD TO SEE A LARGE JUMP FROM 83 TO 90 PERCENT IN THE GRADUATION RATE.

We know that improved high school graduation and GED completion are critical to our mission of breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty. Most youth in our program are the first in their families to celebrate that accomplishment.”

- Terri Sorensen,
National CEO, Friends of the Children

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN:

A NEW CLUBHOUSE FOR THE FLATHEAD NATION

The Flathead Nation site of Friends of the Children – Western Montana has a new home in Ronan, Montana. The clubhouse is in a 14,000 square-foot space on Main Street, centrally located on the 2,000 square-mile Flathead Reservation. Its renovation will be completed in early 2027.

"We have so much hope for our new home," says Nicole Callahan, Program Director of the Flathead Nation site and National Network Tribal Program Director. "One of our mentors said it well, that many of the children in our program don't have a strong sense of stability or a continuum of safety because of the many transitions in their lives. But this clubhouse will become that space for these youth—a place they can take pride in, and ownership of, for years to come."

The building has a long history as a pharmacy, electronics store, mechanic shop, and more. But now the structure is the clubhouse - a home for the Flathead Nation site, which began serving Indigenous youth in 2023 in partnership with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

The clubhouse will immerse youth in their culture, including two planned murals by local Indigenous artist Aspen Decker, featuring local flora and fauna connected to the tribes.

The purchase of the space was made possible in part by a large gift from the Tykeson Family Foundation. The funder has long supported rural and Tribal sites in the Friends of the Children network with investments totaling more than \$3.75M across five locations in Montana and Oregon.

"As someone who calls Montana home, I am inspired by the important work of Friends of the Children. Across Western Montana, Friends weaves together community, culture, and a deep belief in the potential of every child," says Amy Tykeson. "By building partnerships in rural and Tribal communities, the Friends of the Children network—together with local leaders and elders—supports youth and families for lasting change."

For the Western Montana site, alone, the Tykeson Family Foundation has provided \$1.7M in support. This includes not only contributing to a matching capital campaign for the clubhouse, but also in seed funding for the chapter, and supporting cultural programming for youth that centers on Indigenous culture and sustainability.



An example of the culturally-specific programming provided by the Flathead Nation took place this past spring, as youth and caregivers participated in a multi-day event connected to traditional food of their Indigenous ancestors. Dozens came together to learn how to identify, collect, and cook bitterroot, which is the state flower of Montana. The group learned how bitterroot sustained their ancestors in colder months, and then they created their own traditional diggers with hard wood and antlers through the direction of community knowledge keeper Jordan Stasso. Later, the group went out with Kootenai elders, harvesting and cleaning the plants.

"The kids loved it. And it was so special to be connected to the land and traditions in this community way," says Nicole. "And everyone took at least a bite."

Some youth ate the bitterroot raw, just after digging, and found it to be... no surprise... quite bitter!

"The kids were so surprised by how it tasted later when it was boiled with huckleberry," says Nicole, laughing. "It became easier to eat, and a taste of their ancestors' culture."



OVERCOMING LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES:

ENRIQUE'S STORY

Enrique Fuller-Avalos just moved to Olympia, where he is clerking for the Chief Justice of the Washington Supreme Court. The 25-year-old laughs thinking about his recent graduation from Gonzaga Law School, hearing his family celebrating in the crowd.

"I'm excited with this new job that I'll be effecting change in a real way," says Enrique. "I don't think of myself as special, but I'm a hard worker and growing up I could rely on people for support—mentors and good friends and family. Not everyone gets that support."

Enrique was raised in Portland, OR by his mother and with his six siblings—the house was full of energy, and his mother would open their home to friends who needed help. With so much going on, attendance at school was hard. In kindergarten, Enrique was matched with Andy—a professional mentor from Friends of the Children.

Andy and Enrique hit it off. For Enrique, something as simple as buying him an alarm clock with a battery back-up and helping him set it to his favorite radio station was life changing. Andy helped Enrique understand that he could take power over his own life, and practice responsibility. Enrique went from 48 tardies in first grade to only 4 by the third grade.

Andy was 6 feet tall, and Enrique was shorter, and not as fit. The pair would get out of the house and be active—playing basketball or riding bikes. They would have long conversations over meals. Enrique remembers how good it felt to talk with an adult—to be heard. Enrique worked to become a better student despite an environment that

wasn't always stable, and there was an affirmation from Andy that stuck: "it's just circumstances." It fueled a passion for Enrique to work hard.

One time Andy's car was towed and Andy called his father to pick him and Enrique up.

"Later, Andy mentions that his dad is a judge for the Oregon Supreme Court and I couldn't believe it!" Enrique says. "I thought he's just a normal guy, and something connected in my head. It broke an internal barrier for me, and I realized maybe I could do something like that in my life."

Early on in their mentoring relationship, Andy told Enrique: "I'm going to be at your college graduation, not just at high school." Enrique's mother and father pushed Enrique to succeed too. They both pulled Andy aside asking, "How do we get Enrique to college?"

In Enrique's 12 years at Friends of the Children, he also had Darren and Adam as Friends, and he acknowledges that all three men served an important role in his life. They helped build him into the person he is today—there when his mother remarried, when the family faced homelessness, at other challenging moments, and celebrations too.

When Enrique first started college at Western Oregon, he got a text from Andy: "You deserve this. You belong there."

"I was so ready for college," Enrique says. "And winning the Jordan Brand Wings Scholarship for a full ride, things were different. I didn't have to worry about food or housing. It was a moment I had waited for, for so long—better circumstances. Finally, I was in a position to succeed. It's just circumstances..."



"THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF IF ALL KIDS HAD SOMEONE THEY COULD LOOK UP TO, SOMEONE TO SHOW THEM THE LIFE THAT IS POSSIBLE."

- Enrique Fuller-Avalos

"Moving around a lot, facing instability, you sometimes become self-conscious," Enrique opens up. "You feel like you are wearing everything you are, and that's how other people see you. But what I learned from Andy was to take up space, and to be comfortable in places where at first I didn't think I belonged."

"Andy effected change not just for me, but my entire family," Enrique continues. "He uplifted all of us. My sister Chanrithy is now a Friend for youth in Portland, and I know I will mentor in my own way too."

"In my law career I want to lift up younger people, because when I look back, I know that I'm lucky," says Enrique.

IGNITING A LOVE FOR READING:

CREATING A CULTURE OF LITERACY IN UTAH

At 10 years old, Adrian* loves Legos, hockey, basketball, and being the funniest guy in the room. But these days, there is something new he carries with him everywhere he goes: a book.

When Adrian first joined Friends of the Children – Utah, reading felt like a chore. He had absolutely no interest in it. After long days of required reading at school, he'd ask his Friend Will—a long-term, professional mentor—"Can we do ANYTHING else?"

Determined to spark his interest, his Friend got creative. Will started by having Adrian practice by reading everyday text: plaques at the aquarium, arcade game directions, texts from his parents. Anything to make the words matter. They spent hours visiting different libraries all over the city, hunting for the right book, and searching for the perfect story. While he enjoyed *Fly Guy* and *Dog Man*, everything changed when Adrian discovered the *Percy Jackson* series.

Suddenly, Adrian was carrying his book everywhere he went. Car rides transformed into deep discussions about the chapters, with Will asking comprehension questions, and tying the plot to history, social cues, emotions. They even discovered and listened exclusively to the *Percy Jackson* musical soundtrack.

Recently, when Will picked him up for an outing, Adrian paused at the car door and asked, "Wait, can I bring my book?" He sprinted back inside to grab it, choosing to read quietly in the rearview mirror rather than listen to the radio. His passion has grown so much that he recently started a small book club at school with his friends, making connections between the characters and his own peers.

Adrian's story is one of many taking shape at Friends of the Children – Utah, where a love of reading is built on purpose. To address the critical nationwide literacy gap, the chapter is intentionally transforming its clubhouse into a literacy-rich environment.

Friends utilize Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) reading assessments to pinpoint each youth's reading level and benchmark growth, using these insights to carefully guide their individualized support. The chapter ensures every youth receives a library card and participates in monthly activities—such as book clubs, poetry stations, and a Summer Reading Quest read-a-thon—designed for all ages and abilities.

Friends of the Children - Utah brings that same magic home to families. At a recent Family Engagement Event, a local bookstore's "Book Nerd Mobile" rolled up donating hundreds of free books to families—more than 30 new books to help build the clubhouse library. At the celebration, youth and caregivers played literacy games, made bookmarks, decorated book bags, and had a custom soda bar serving reading-themed drinks.

Adrian's spark didn't come from being told to read. It came from someone who kept showing up until they found the story that was his. When a child is given the time, resources, and individualized encouragement to find what they love, their entire world opens up.

At Friends of the Children, the goal isn't just teaching youth to read. It's helping them develop a love of learning—one spark at a time.

**Youth name changed to protect privacy*

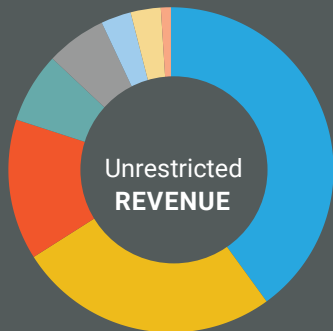


A HEALING-CENTERED APPROACH TO LITERACY:

WHEN CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT BY PEOPLE WHO THEY KNOW CARE ABOUT THEM, IT CREATES A TRUSTING ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOUTH FEEL SAFE TRYING NEW THINGS, BEING VULNERABLE, AND MAKING MISTAKES AS THEY LEARN TO SUCCEED.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

FISCAL YEAR 2025



- Individual (40%)
- Foundations (26%)
- Government (14%)
- Consulting Fees (7%)
- Endowment & Investment Income (6%)
- Other & In-Kind (3%)
- Chapter Affiliation & Database Fees (3%)
- Corporate (1%)



- Program Expenses (90%)
- Administrative Services (6%)
- Fundraising Costs (4%)

UNRESTRICTED REVENUE

Individual	\$8,370,627
Foundations	\$5,451,859
Government	\$2,876,011
Consulting Fees	\$1,516,583
Endowment & Investment Income	\$1,166,323
Other & In-Kind	\$677,835
Chapter Affiliation & Database Fees	\$587,944
Corporate	\$456,540

Total Operating Revenue	\$21,103,722
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EXPENSES

Program Expenses	\$21,595,114
Administrative Services	\$1,398,189
Fundraising Costs	\$928,531

Total Operating Expenses	\$23,921,834
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ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$26,157,377
Receivables	\$5,957,192
Equipment	\$371,351
Prepaid Expenses	\$257,021

Total Assets	\$32,742,941
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LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$7,158,861
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NET ASSETS

With Donor Restrictions	\$13,770,728
Unrestricted Board Designated	\$6,417,387
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$5,395,965

Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$32,742,941
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#StartSmall

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

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A photograph of two women sitting in a garden, smiling and holding small orange and yellow flowers. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a black t-shirt. The woman on the right has dark hair and is wearing a white sleeveless top. They are surrounded by green foliage and purple flowers. In the background, there is a green chain-link fence.

FR1ENDS of the CH1LDREN

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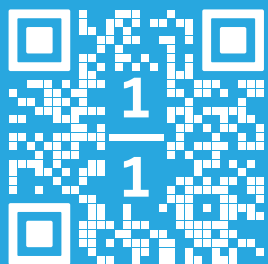
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