



FRIENDS of the
CHILDREN

Defying the odds of generational poverty.

We invest in salaried, professional mentors who build relationships with youth to achieve their hopes and dreams; 12+ years, no matter what.

THE CHALLENGE

Extreme obstacles – generational school failure, parental substance use, incarceration, violence in the home and community and teen pregnancy – create a cycle where children fail within education, behavioral health and foster care systems and frequently land in the justice system. Traditional youth-serving organizations struggle to adequately support the most vulnerable children. Friends of the Children has an innovative solution.

OUR SOLUTION

We provide every child in our program with intensive, individualized guidance from full-time, highly trained, salaried mentors we call Friends. For 12+ years, from 4-6 years old to graduation, each youth spends 16 hours per month with their Friend. No matter what. Friends of the Children is breaking the cycle of poverty and intergenerational repetition of low educational attainment, teen parenting and criminality. We work with foster care systems and high-poverty schools to intentionally find and enroll children facing the highest risks: poverty, homelessness, neglect, abuse, foster care, parental incarceration, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

OUR STORY & VISION

Entrepreneur Duncan Campbell's own troubled youth provided the impetus for founding Friends of the Children in 1993. We began with 3 Friends and 24 children. Now, we employ hundreds of Friends who serve thousands of children in 22 locations across the United States and the United Kingdom, with ongoing international interest. Expansion is led by CEO Terri Sorensen, who has raised more than \$100 million in public and private funding. Our ambition is to expand to 50 locations around the world.

Friends of the Children has proven itself capable of successful replication. We recently completed an early close-out of a \$25M expansion campaign, which included a multimillion dollar, multi-year investment from Michael Jordan and a \$4M investment from the Social Innovation Fund. As a result, we now have greater capacity to manage and implement successful expansion around the country and the world.

We believe that every child who needs it, deserves a Friend.

Published April 2021

OUR IMPACT

Our model reaches the root causes of poverty and empowers youth to overcome multiple risk factors. We begin tracking intermediate outcomes and social-emotional skill development as soon as youth enroll in the program. Progress toward our outcomes is determined monthly, quarterly and annually, and the data is reported in a Program Performance Scorecard that leverages a universal youth database. Our youth break cycles of violence, poverty, and disadvantage:



83% of youth receive their high school diploma or GED



93% remain free from involvement in the juvenile justice system



98% wait to parent until after their teen years



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

For youth who experience foster care, they will stay in care less time and re-enter care at lower rates than youth in similar situations without a Friend.

VIDEOS:



FR1ENDS of the CH1LDREN

Generational Change,
One Child at a Time

OUR APPROACH TO MEASUREMENT + EVALUATION

We evaluate, measure, and improve. We are assessed annually by an independent third-party evaluator. This allows us to continue to identify ways to make our program stronger.

The National Institutes of Health, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation invested in a multi-site, longitudinal randomized controlled trial study of the Friends of the Children model. Now in its 12th year, the study is already showing positive preliminary results. The Harvard Business School Association of Oregon (HBSAO) conducted a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis of our model and found that for every \$1 invested in Friends of the Children, there is a savings to society of over \$7. Over the lifetime of each graduate, that is \$900,000 in savings. The Annie E. Casey Foundation recently completed a qualitative caregiver study that re-affirmed the ripple effect on siblings and caregivers in our youth's lives. The results of this study have informed our Two-Generation (2Gen) approach for supporting youth and families.

OPPORTUNITY FOR REAL CHANGE

We have an incredible opportunity to partner with you for real, sustainable change. Your investments will empower more vulnerable children to change the trajectories of entire communities:

- \$1M - Launch 1x additional site. Friends will secure additional \$500K in matching funds.
- \$5M - Launch 5x additional sites. Friends will secure additional \$1.5M in matching funds.
- \$10M - Launch 10x additional sites. Friends will secure additional \$5M in matching funds.

To achieve our goals, we will leverage the following activities:

Planning + Evaluation

Training, Program Implementation & Sustainability

Grow Program & Fundraising Capacity for Sustainability

Planning + Evaluation

- Hire Local Expansion Officer & select city for expansion.
- Hire evaluator & create the program & implementation evaluation for scaling to new city.
- Hold champion meetings: bring together social entrepreneurs & leaders from education, child welfare, nonprofit, government & philanthropic communities in the local city.
- Vet feasibility of each city for implementation & sustainability.
- Hire Executive Director.

Training, Program Implementation & Sustainability

- Hire & train Program Director, Development Director & Friends for each community.
- Select children from foster care system & high poverty schools in each community.
- Select a control group of an equal number of children in each city for evaluation comparison.
- Establish baseline data on all children and program implementation.

Grow Program & Fundraising Capacity for Sustainability

- Hire Friends and select new class of children.
- Evaluate data and outcomes, implement learnings and share with the community.
- Build fundraising sustainability in each community with diverse revenue streams.

We were recently featured in the The New York Times and Stanford Social Innovation Review.

We also have support from Michael Jordan and Russell Wilson.



Learn more at [friendsofthechildren.org](https://www.friendsofthechildren.org)