

2020 IMPACT REPORT

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FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN
Portland



DEAR FRIEND OF FRIENDS,

Exactly one year ago, when I introduced myself to the organization, looking into a sea of beautiful square faces on my video chat, I knew this year was going to be unlike any other. Having grown up in Portland, I was familiar with the impact and legacy of Friends of the Children-Portland, but I could have never imagined the challenges we would overcome together. Thank you for exemplifying what it means to be all-in, No Matter What.

I am continuously inspired by the resilience, grit, and unwavering determination demonstrated by young people, their families, Friends, staff, and you—the people who stepped into their deeply held values amidst historic challenges and loss.

The reality is underserved communities have been navigating pandemic-like obstacles long before COVID-19. For the 78% of our youth who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC), systemic racism, early childhood trauma, and generational inequities have been exacerbated by the economic downturn, basic needs shortages, and overwhelmed public resources caused by COVID-19. Even as we find ourselves digging out of the pandemic, the long-term impacts of these compounding factors will unquestionably affect our youths' transition back to in-person school environments and challenge their stability in both the short- and long-term.

In the past year, we found ourselves well-positioned to lean on the longstanding partnerships we have built with the youth in our program and their families. We saw our unique role as an opportunity to eliminate barriers to critical basic needs and school resources. Immediately following school closures, we distributed a survey to hear directly from the families with whom we walk alongside: 50% felt concerned about their ability to put food on the table and 45% worried that their child would fall behind academically due to a lack of resources.

Since then, Friends have developed and launched youth driven, virtual micro-communities, called Spark Squads, including individualized academic supports and weekly snack and activity care packages. Thanks to generous support from our donors and community partners, we have responded to food insecurity and other basic needs challenges by assembling and distributing 660 food boxes to youth and families while also providing bill relief to those unable to pay for essential utilities.

COVID-19 has shown us the value of essential workers, as well as essential relationships—the social connections that support our mental health, empower us, and create belonging. The children enrolled in our program, those who already faced barriers to school and community resources, are likely to require additional supports as they transition back to in-school learning, especially as emergency relief subsidies. We will continue to walk alongside each child through these transitions and as they continue their achievements towards their long-term goals.

I wouldn't choose any other community to work alongside to help create the future our young people deserve. 2021 will not be easy—it shouldn't be—but I know that with great obstacles comes incredible, innovative work. I know our community will continue to rise to the occasion. I look forward to seeing you, virtually or in-person, as we continue to come together to create transformative change, pandemic or not. No Matter What.

With Gratitude,

Traci Rossi, Executive Director

OUR MISSION



Impact generational change by empowering youth who are facing the greatest obstacles through relationships with professional mentors—12+ years, no matter what.

ENGAGED FAMILIES

73% of caregivers felt their relationship with their youth improved and **63%** gained confidence in their parenting skills because of Friends.

Before COVID, **87%** of caregivers felt Friends positively impacted their family. During COVID, that percentage jumped to **94%**

We are not just focused on youth, we want to end generational poverty with a two-generation approach. We asked families how Friends has impacted their life.



COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, Friends moved quickly to fulfill our NO MATTER WHAT commitment to the youth and families we serve. Following school closures, Friends contacted each youth's caregivers to assess their immediate needs.



50% felt concerned about their ability to put food on the table with 30% of families reporting severe food shortages

20% reported no reliable internet access and/or no tablet or computing device

45% were worried their child would fall behind academically due to a lack of resources

INTO ACTION

660 food and essential supply packages assembled and distributed to **188** families in partnership with Northeast Emergency Food Program

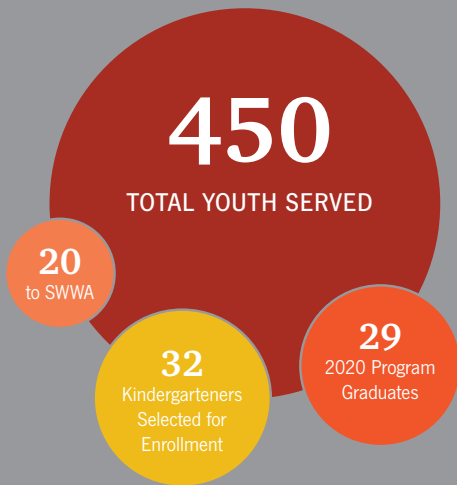
700 community referrals provided to program youth and family members

5,600 snack bags and activity care packages delivered to **382** youth

Friends jumped into action and reimagined their day-to-day work to ensure that even in these tough times, program youth have hope. Since COVID-19 closures, Friends have continued to meet the needs the youth and families we serve with determination and relationships built on love.



WHO WE SERVE

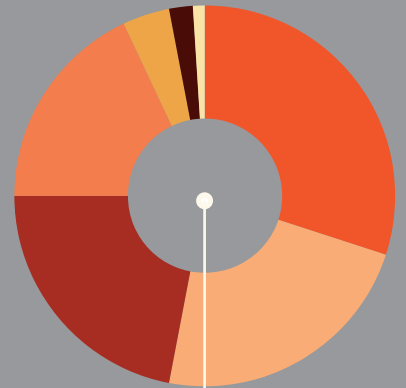


18% Early Elementary
Grades K-2

35% Intermediate Elementary
Grades 3-5

23% Middle School
Grades 6-8

24% High School
Grades 9-12



- 30% Black/African American
- 23% Latino/Hispanic
- 22% Multiracial/cultural
- 18% White/Caucasian
- 4% Undisclosed
- 2% Native American/Indigenous
- 1% Asian or Pacific Islander

With the launch of the SW Washington chapter, we worked with families to seamlessly transfer 20 Vancouver-area youth to the new chapter where they will have greater access to local resources and school partnerships. In spring 2020, plans to grow our youth roster were modified due to the impact of COVID on schools and our enrollment process. Despite many challenges, we were able to select 32 new youth for our program while simultaneously reinforcing our commitment to youth already enrolled, ensuring steadfast support during such unprecedented times.



SPARK SQUAD GOALS

Chances are you've taken up a hobby or learned something new about yourself since the start of the pandemic. Our youth and Friends are having similar experiences in Spark Squads—interest groups formed during this past year of virtual engagement.

Squads of youth are making cupcakes, telling jokes, designing clothing, learning to draw, and listening to author readings. **They are exploring passions, learning from each other, and connecting with their Friends in unexpected ways.**

One day, youth watched live cams of elephants at the Oregon Zoo eating huge pumpkins. “Whaaat!? First they squash the pumpkins and then they eat them?” a youth exclaimed. The group wondered what might other animals like to eat. A quick Google search ensued and down the rabbit hole of discovery they went.

In another group, youth followed step-by-step instructions on how to make a cake with Oreo cookie crust. While using their hands and giant spoons to mash up the Oreos, a Friend advised: “whenever you're angry or stressed, you can whack up these cookies to release your frustration.”

Youth often drive the topics covered in Spark Squads and even lead the conversations and activities. While the topics may be about baking or gaming, what's important is that **youth are taking the initiative**

in their own education and engaging in critical skills that help cultivate curiosity and a sense of belonging.

The small learning communities we have created are helping to connect youth from different schools and across grades. Youth are teaching the adults how to use the technology (think unmute and turn on your video) while experiencing unique opportunities to be successful leaders and positive influencers. Even the youth who prefer to remain quiet and keep their video off are still showing up each week to experience being a part of something.

Friends thrive on in-person connections, but they too are finding fun and joy in Spark Squads. “Throughout the past year I have been inspired by my fellow mentors for their commitment to the youth we serve. This year we have had to adjust and rethink how to inspire community-building while being apart. The youth I mentor have built stronger relationships with staff, other mentors, and peers as they engage in Spark Squads. The continuous efforts to inspire hope and belonging is as simple as dropping off a snack bag. Weekly snack deliveries are now the highlight of my week as they are **moments that remind me we will all hang out again once the pandemic is over.**”

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Spark Squads create community and belonging through virtual, interest-based groups of about 10 youth and 2 Friends and staff. In Spark Squads, youth build relationships and a love of learning.



Developed and launched **50** Spark Squads which supported the academics, future goals, and interests of **450** youth.

25% more youth engagement in our services as a result of Spark Squad activities.

Spark Squad **topics** include: Early Literacy, Gaming & Cooking, Civic Engagement & Volunteering, and Entrepreneurship.

THAT IS GRIT

by Lauren Kresta, Friend/Professional Mentor

We sit silently side by side in the moving car. She is texting, headphones in her pierced ears. No music. The discomfort is thick in the air. I remind myself that most everyone in this teen's life has left her. I remind myself that I will not be the next. **No matter how hard she tries to push me away, I drive on.**

I have known Tasha* for four years, since she was ten. We have gone to pet stores, movie theatres, community centers, parks, shopping malls, nail salons, soup kitchens, Mexican restaurants, friends' homes, and community events. She has been mostly silent for nearly 208 weeks straight.

Occasionally, her eyes have brightened at the sight of a cute animal, upon hearing one of my ridiculous jokes or stories, or while sipping on an Oreo milkshake at the mall. I often remind myself that her resistance is a safety mechanism she developed to protect herself, not a personal attack.

Tasha has a quiet strength that cannot be matched. I have seen this young woman do any and everything for her siblings and grandmother. She has hope for a future where she thrives and serves the community that shaped her. Her brown eyes have seen more than mine ever will, and yet she chooses to push forward every day. That is grit. I am

lucky to have this girl sit next to me in the car once a week, silence or not.

When COVID-19 hit one year ago, I thought confining our relationship to texts and calls would break the connection. She didn't seem to enjoy spending time with me in-person, why would she want to do it in this unknown virtual space? I was wrong.

Our relationship has flourished. We text almost daily, write letters, and I deliver food boxes whenever she gives me permission. Some of our most precious times have been shared through five-minute chats with masked faces and standing on her apartment porch. I think Tasha needed to know that I would stay.

I made a commitment to Tasha four years ago that I would be there for her no matter what—that includes silence, working from home, being confined to video chats, tragedy, tears, and a pandemic. Nothing will keep me or the other mentors at Friends of the Children—Portland from standing by our youth and their families' sides—giving them the support they deserve and learning more from them than we could ever teach. **I am proud to be Tasha's mentor and will remain by her side, whatever it takes, no matter what.**

*Youth's name has been changed to protect their privacy.

ALUMNI IMPACT

With newly added alumni engagement staff and resources to our program, we look forward to building community among our 300+ alumni and to supporting graduates' self-fulfillment and realization as they transition to adulthood.



A recent alumni survey revealed important insight into our self-sufficiency goal.

Of the **78%** currently employed, **68%** were employed full-time and **40%** were working toward achieving their educational/career goals. **89%** felt confident advocating for themselves and problem-solving when issues arise, and **75%** answered "completely true" when asked if the Friends program had helped them succeed in life. Overall, **68%** of alumni feel proud of who they are.



97%

of youth made quarterly progress on their goals for the future.



59%

of program graduates are planning to pursue post-secondary education



83% of BIPOC youth have plans to pursue post-secondary education.

93% of youth who identify as Black/African America or Latinx have plans to pursue post-secondary education.



83%

of program graduates complete high school or earn a GED

Compared to **74%** in Multnomah County School Districts as a whole. **93%** graduation rate among program graduates identifying as Black/African American or Latinx, compared to **77%** in Portland Public Schools.

Of our **29** program graduates in 2020, **15** have enrolled in college/vocational training as March 2021 (52%).

The national average in 2020 for immediate college enrollment was **56%**. For students from low income schools, the average was **47%**.



CELEBRATING IDENTITY

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is reflected in youth-led, culturally specific programming. Friends receive training on cultural responsiveness, which we define as the ability to develop critical understanding of youth within their cultural context, including race, and to understand and utilize cultural strengths in empowering youth to set and achieve their goals.



78% of youth surveyed reported their Friend helped them learn new things about their identity, culture or background.

84% of youth reported their Friend was interested in their identity, culture or background.

84% of youth reported their Friend helped them feel proud of their identity, culture or background.

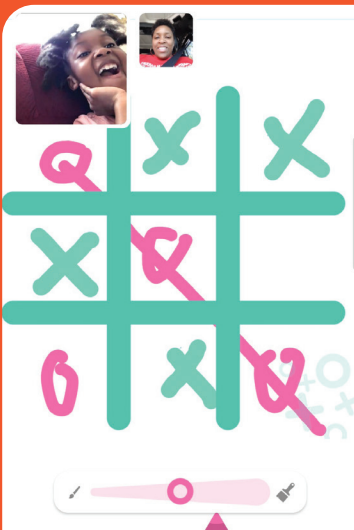
We offer **peer-to-peer youth mentoring** that is culturally responsive.

We offer **affinity groups** for staff who identify as LGBTQ+ and Black.

Youth and staff participate in **culturally specific** literacy, art and guest speaker series.

Youth, families and staff **honor diverse cultures** as a community through celebrations such as PRIDE, Black History Month, Latino Heritage, AAPI.

Family engagement activities **elevate family voice** in organizational decision-making and develop resources that are relevant.





DEMAND EQUITY

Demanding equity for everyone is a value at Friends of the Children-Portland and across our network.

We are committed to being an antiracist organization by embodying this value through our actions as colleagues, community members and collaborators with the next generation of youth.

This important work begins with healing by creating an environment and culture that values the individual lived experiences of communities of color and celebrates the diverse ways of expressing our identities. As a relationship-based organization, demanding equity is put into policies and practices each and every day.

In 2020, the smog of an invisible virus and persistent symptoms of racism bombarded us all with an overwhelming sense of suffering. Institutional oppression disproportionately impacts the youth, families, and communities we walk beside. In many ways, the conditions of this last year only increased the struggle and called us to act more urgently to address the needs of youth and families we serve.

Throughout it all, we have also witnessed youth and families' strength and beauty as they survive, thrive, and bounce back after adversity on a daily basis. We are inspired and motivated by this innate resilience.

We continue to examine our organizational policies and structures to root out oppression and inequities. We are using an equity lens to more accurately celebrate the unique and beautiful identities of youth. All staff are participating in quarterly conversations on race and monthly equity trainings.

Our youth are guiding us in this work as well. They are organizing group conversations and artistic expression of their experience living with oppression and discrimination. We are partnering with culturally specific community organizations in order to strengthen the connections among our youth and staff. We are undergoing an equity audit and making necessary operational and cultural changes which will improve the experiences of our staff, youth, families and community. Our Equity Team expanded to include staff from every department of our organization to ensure our equity practices are embedded in all of our activities. We also created a framework for affinity groups—community spaces led by and dedicated to our youth who identify as people of color and/or LGBTQ+.

On this journey toward equity, justice, and liberation, we have much work ahead of us. We remain committed to supporting the next generation of leaders and **creating a world where every youth, every day, has equity, justice, and opportunity.**

FRIENDS FOREVER SOCIETY

Each year, Friends of the Children–Portland seeks to serve more youth who could benefit the most from having a Friend. As the number of youth increases, the Friends Forever Society is necessary to ensure our 12+ year promise to each of our youth. We thank our generous donors for their long-term commitment to our work.

Giving can benefit you and Friends of the Children–Portland in many ways.

Contact our Donor Relations Team at 503.281.6633 or email legacygiving@friendspdx.org.

LEGACY

The following individuals are supporting Friends of the Children–Portland by designating a bequest through their will or estate plan:

Anonymous (4)	Karen & William Early	Estate of Gene & Mary Mason	Jennifer & Daniel Schmidt
Diane & Mark Burnett	Bill & Colleen Gardner	Andrew Mauss	Estate of Vivian Schuldt
Steve & Vicki Byers	Jeanne Gaylord	Max & Lori Miller	Terri & Tom Sorensen
Duncan & Cindy Campbell	Pete & Diana Hall	John & Geri Miner	Ken & Marta Thrasher
Don & Billie Carlson	Estate of Lois Hall	Heather Moats	Paul & Lory Utz
Brent & Laura Carreau	Henry & Sharon Hewitt	Mildred Moore-Voll & Richard Voll	Evans Van Buren
Estate of Frederick Martin	Lois Isbell	Richard & Donna Peach	Brian & Denise Velaski
Chambers	Kirk & Judi Johansen	Steve & Paula Plambeck	Helen Wright
Estate of Joyle Dahl	Jerry G. Jones Trust	Sherri Romaniello	Bill & Julie Young
Lindy Delf & Anthony Wolk	R. James & Kathryn Lillis	Marv & Rindy Ross	Mark & Robin Young
Harry & Kaaren Demorest	Sally Long	Lori Flexer Sackett & Jeff Sackett	

ENDOWMENT

The following individuals are making a difference by contributing a cash gift or pledge to Friends of the Children–Portland Foundation:

Diana Bianco & Anthony Effinger	Margaret Dey & Lawrence Custer	Thomas Keller & Shelly Field	Chris Shank
Cathy & Jerry Brodie	Frank & Mary Gill	R. James & Kathryn Lillis	Mark Simmons & Sherie
Burns Brothers	John & Emma Gilleland	John & Geri Miner	Weisenberg
Duncan & Cindy Campbell	John Gray	Madeline Nelson & Jim Lafky [†]	Norbert & Ann Wellman [†]
Jeff & Jessica Campbell	Henry & Sharon Hewitt	Stanley Renecker	Cary & Barbara Young
Don & Billie Carlson	Bernard & Melody Hyde	Ben Root	
Gary & Penny Combs	Kirk & Judi Johansen	David Rumker & Susan Phillips	
Harry & Kaaren Demorest	Kathleen Kee & Craig Wong	Lori Flexer Sackett & Jeff Sackett	

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

Friends of the Children–Portland is proud to have received top recognition from the nation's premier charity watchdog and accreditation groups, reflecting our firm commitment to sustainability, accountability, and transparency. We are also honored to be a long-standing partner of the Portland Children's Levy and the Classic Wines Auction. In 2020, we were named the number one Most Admired Nonprofit by the Portland Business Journal. In 2018, we were awarded the Torch Award Charity of the Year by the Better Business Bureau Northwest + Pacific.

Friends of the Children–Portland is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization.



We would like to recognize our donors who made gifts of cash, stock, and in-kind goods and services that totaled \$1,000 or more in the 2020 calendar year. Friends of the Children–Portland served as a fiscal sponsor for Friends of the Children–SW Washington in 2020. Donations made in support of Friends of the Children–SW Washington from January–September are recognized here alongside other contributions to our organization and mission.

Thank you for your generous support of the youth in Portland and SW Washington in 2020.

THANK YOU

\$100,000 +

Anonymous (2)
AT&T
Classic Wines Auction
Friends of the Children - National
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Oregon Health Authority
Portland Children's Levy
Quest Foundation
James and Shirley Rippey Family Foundation
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\$50,000 – \$99,999

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Meyer Memorial Trust
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\$10,000 – \$24,999

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The Collins Foundation
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\$1,000 – \$4,999

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Marcia & Chuck Floberg
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Jennifer & Eric Gabrielson
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\$1,000 – \$4,999 *continued*

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Kroger Zero Hunger Zero Waste

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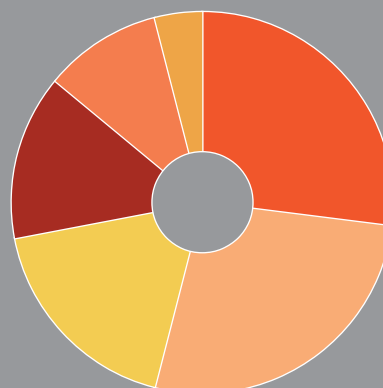
2020 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Financial position from audited statements for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2020

OPERATING REVENUE

Special events	\$1,772,553	27%	
Individual	\$1,812,096	27%	
Foundations	\$1,211,582	18%	
Government	\$951,591	14%	
Corporate	\$642,109	10%	
Other revenue	\$255,863	4%	

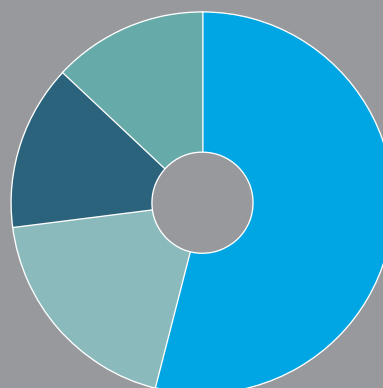
Total unrestricted revenue **\$6,645,794** **100%**



OPERATING EXPENSES

Program service staff	\$3,925,406	54%	
Program expenses	\$1,302,147	19%	
Fundraising costs	\$1,045,796	14%	
Administrative services	\$944,827	13%	

Total operating expenses **\$7,218,176** **100%**



ASSETS

Cash and investments	\$3,306,567
Pledges receivable	\$1,446,202
Prepaid expenses	\$153,610
Cash restricted scholarship program	\$1,000
Equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	\$4,221,060

Total Assets **\$9,128,439**

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$411,530
Paycheck Protection Plan Loan (PPP)	\$1,036,881
Due to Friends of the Children-SWWA	\$1,259,290

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted net assets	\$5,892,693
With Donor Restrictions	\$528,045

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$9,128,439**

INFORMATION

In September 2020, we celebrated the official launch of Friends of the Children–SW Washington Chapter. We are so grateful for the incredible guidance of the Friends of the Children–Portland Staff and Board who worked alongside the SW Washington Advisory Committee and joined over 150 donors who made the new chapter possible. In addition to providing youth programming to SW Washington youth, the Portland chapter served as the fiscal sponsor for SW Washington to support fundraising while the new chapter waited for its 501c3 designation. After September 1st, the funds raised over the last two years for youth served in SW Washington were transferred to the new chapter.

FR1ENDS of the CH1LDREN

Portland

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We are incredibly grateful to all our community partners who stepped up and helped us get through the challenges of the year. We would like to give a special thank you to the following organizations for their generosity and support:

Apple • Bank of America • Cambia Health • Caruso Produce • Hanna Andersson • Kuni Family Foundation • National Market Share Group
New Seasons Market • Nike Jordan Brand • Northeast Emergency Food Program • Oregon Health Authority • Pinolo Gelato
Tillamook County Creamery Association • Vision Capital • Vital Life, a Marquis & Consonus Foundation • Why Not You Foundation • Wild Fang

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Join us in our mission to end generational poverty by visiting our website at friendspdx.org and following us on social media at our handle @friendspdx.