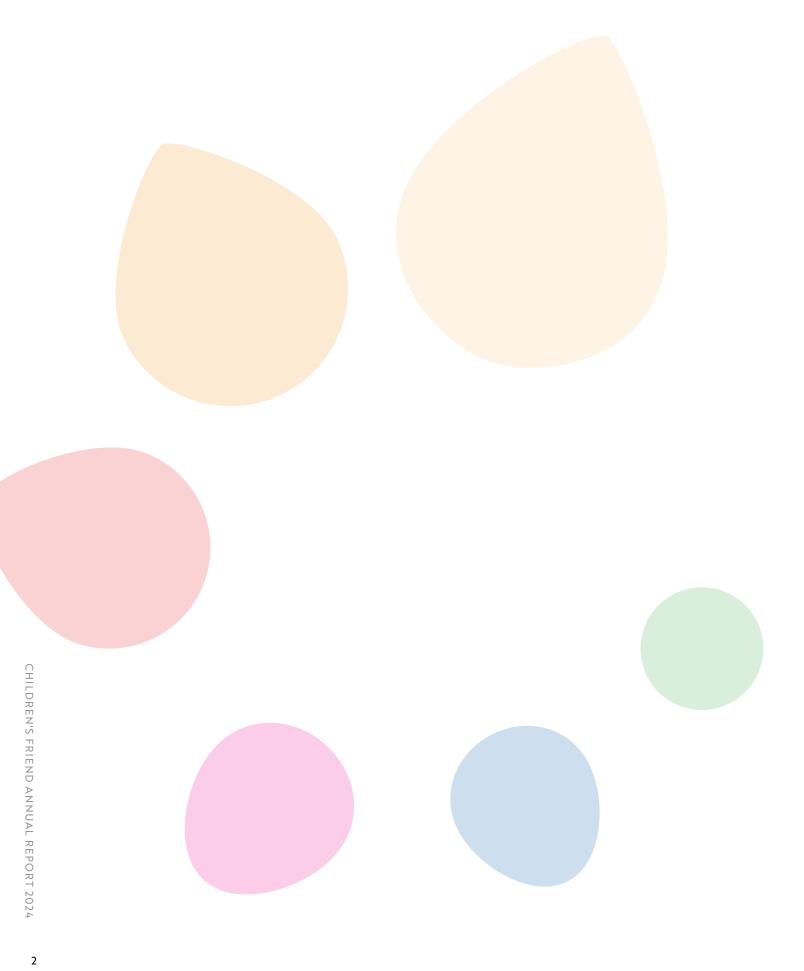


Annual Report





Dear Friends,

As we proudly present Children's Friend's 2024 Annual Report, we reflect on a remarkable milestone - *190 years of unwavering commitment to nurturing children and empowering families.* Throughout our long and storied history, Children's Friend has remained steadfast in our mission, evolving to meet the changing needs of our community while staying true to the values that have defined us for nearly two centuries.

This year, we have seen a growing need for our work. The challenges children and families face in our community persist, and our services remain a critical source of support and stability. Whether through early childhood programs, family assistance services, or advocacy efforts, we continue to be a pillar of support for those who rely on us. Our dedicated team remains committed to adapting and expanding our efforts to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

While we celebrate our progress and growth, we also acknowledge the challenges we have faced over the past year. Economic uncertainties and resource constraints have tested our resilience, but they have also reinforced the strength and dedication of our team, supporters, and partners. Together, we have navigated these difficulties with determination and a shared belief in the power of our mission.

As we look ahead, we remain inspired by the possibilities that the future holds. Our commitment to ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive remains stronger than ever. We are grateful for the steadfast support of our donors, partners, and staff, whose dedication continues to fuel our work and inspire positive change.

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey. With your continued support, we are confident that the next chapter in Children's Friend's legacy will be filled with hope, growth, and lasting impact.

With gratitude,

David

David Caprio

President & Chief Executive Officer



Our Principles

Our unwavering principles help develop unlimited potential.



Our approach is family centered.

- We discover each child's and family's needs, then work collaboratively to best meet them.
- We provide opportunity for families to be meaningfully engaged in the design of services.
- We are deeply committed to serving all families in an unbiased and nonjudgmental way.



Our services are seamlessly delivered.

- We coordinate and integrate our services to ensure children and families receive the support they need.
- We partner with high-quality organizations when children or families face challenges outside our expertise.



Our work is driven by outcomes.

- We carefully measure the impact and effectiveness of our services.
- We engage in ongoing learning and innovation to ensure we're offering the most appropriate services.
- We identify areas for improvement and measure our performance against national benchmarks.



We are passionate advocates for children and families.

- We are leaders in educating policymakers and the public about the needs of children and families.
- · We will take risks, if the reward will benefit those we serve.



We are vigilant stewards of our resources.

- We take seriously our responsibility to grow and sustain our human and financial capital.
- We expect and demonstrate respect and cultural sensitivity for our community, staff, and board.



MISSION

Children's Friend is the innovative leader in improving the well-being and healthy development of Rhode Island's most vulnerable young children.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Too many of the youngest and most vulnerable children in Rhode Island are experiencing devastating outcomes, including death, as a result of abuse and neglect. As stewards of the resources entrusted to us, Children's Friend is realigning itself to proactively respond to this crisis.

Children's Friend is a founding member of the Child Welfare League of America and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation and the National Head Start Association Program of Excellence.













Our Community

Race

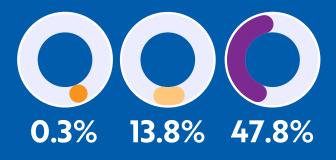


American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

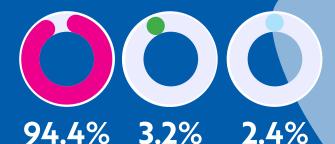
Multiracial



Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Unknown

White

Income Poverty Level

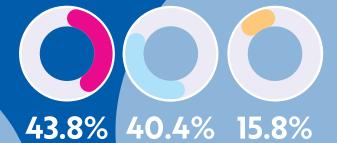


Under 100%

Between 100% and 175%

Over 175%

Gender



Female

Male

Unknown

Age



74.4%

1.6%

24%

0 to 9

10 to 19

20+

Ethnicity



67 7%

28.7%

3.6%

Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino

Unknown

The Strong Start

Amanda struggles with polycystic ovarian syndrome, a condition that can cause painful menstruation and infertility. She tried for a year and a half to get pregnant. Just as she was about to start fertility treatment, she got pregnant. Amanda had anxiety throughout her pregnancy. It had been such a long journey to this point, and that added to the nerves of being a first-time mom.

Although she was thrilled to welcome a healthy baby boy, Carter, the anxiety continued. Becoming a new parent is difficult, regardless of socioeconomic circumstances. Research shows that perinatal mental health can affect the well-being of the entire family. First Connections, a short-term home visiting program offered by Children's Friend, helped ease the transition and anxiety for Amanda and her family.

"It was so helpful to have access to a medical professional during that time. From reassurance that we were doing the right things for Carter to connecting me with resources to make sure that my mental and physical health were taken care of, the support was incredible," said Amanda. "We have a robust support system, but First Connections gave us the strong start that all families deserve."

This program is focused on the health of the baby and mother, ensuring both are supported and receive the care they need in those precious early days.

Home visiting programs offer parents and children support in their own environment. This reduces the burden on families with little ones and allows them to be comfortable in their own space for education on breastfeeding and infant care. In addition, they are receiving support based on the tools and resources they have in their home.



66

We have a robust support system, but First Connections gave us the strong start that all families deserve.

Amanda



WIC on Wheels

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, transportation was a major obstacle for many pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding mothers and young children who could have benefited from Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) services. WIC is a federally funded program that provides families with nutritious food, nutrition and breastfeeding education, and critical health and social service referrals.

To break down that barrier, the WIC team at Children's Friend developed an innovative solution: bring the services directly to families.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Champlin Foundation, that vision became reality in 2024 when Children's Friend launched New England's first mobile WIC service. The van is designed to deliver care and support directly to communities across Rhode Island.

"While we're still limited in what we can offer due to staffing, the van has been incredible," said Lucia Santiago, Director of Nutrition Services. "We're reaching clients who might have otherwise gone without WIC services, and our team loves being out in the community. It's been a real morale booster."



The 2023 Ram ProMaster® 2500 Cargo Van offers 353 cubic feet of cargo space. But when you add a built-in sink, bench, nutritionist, assistant, and family of four, the setup becomes an extremely cozy clinic on wheels.

"It was tricky at first figuring out how to make the space work," said Lucia. "But being able to complete a full appointment right there in the van is amazing."

WIC participation is linked to numerous positive outcomes: lower rates of infant mortality, premature birth, and low birthweight; improved childhood development; reduced child neglect; increased immunization rates; and better access to preventive care. In its first year, the mobile unit made regular and ad hoc visits to community partners.

"We're seeing people just as they find out they're pregnant, thanks to walk-up appointments," Lucia shared.

Looking ahead, the WIC team hopes to expand mobile services to community events, deliver infant formula and other essentials directly to families' homes, and deepen outreach efforts in the City of Pawtucket. As Rhode Island's largest WIC provider, Children's Friend continues to expand the boundaries of access and community-based care, ensuring that more families can benefit from the life-changing support provided by WIC.

Being Kathleen



When Kathleen was seven years old, her parents told her she was adopted. She always considered it an interesting fact about her life. Her parents gave her everything a child could need, and they had built a community for her. She knew other children who were adopted, including her sister.

By the time Kathleen gave birth to her son in 2007, she had grown curious. She couldn't answer medical history questions with any certainty, and she wanted to know more. Legislation was passed in 2011 allowing adult adoptees from Rhode Island to request a copy of their original birth certificate. Kathleen decided to submit her request.

As she opened the envelope, she was most surprised to learn that she had a different name at birth. It didn't fit the image of the woman she had become. Then the details of her entrance into this world started to come into focus.

She learned she was adopted through an agency called Children's Friend. She learned about her biological parents. She learned she had a full biological brother. She also learned that four of the neighborhood kids she'd grown up with were actually relatives. These connections brought a new and deeper meaning to fond childhood memories.

One day she mustered the courage to call the work phone of her biological mother. She had decided to leave a message there so that she wasn't disrupting anyone's life, should her mother have family members who didn't know this detail about her past.

Kathleen kept her expectations in check. She was pleasantly surprised to receive a call back. As she learned more about her biological family, and met a new cast of relatives, thanks to the ubiquity of social media and the internet, her appreciation for her adoptive parents and their love grew, too.

She gained a new perspective on the opportunities her parents – both biological and adoptive – had given her.

Children's Friend is a small but essential part of Kathleen's story. It brought her to her parents, who raised her with the opportunities every child deserves, and her life as she knows it.



Meet Melissa: The Role of a Family Advocate

Melissa Sanchez is a Family Advocate in our Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Program. The role of a Family Advocate is critical to family and child success. It's what sets Early Head Start and Head Start apart from other early learning programs.

Every family enrolled in our Early Head Start and Head Start programs is paired with a Family Advocate, whose focus is on improving family well-being and child outcomes. The family advocate works in partnership with the parents or guardians to establish goals, provide support, and assist with community referrals.

When Melissa reflects on her caseload, she says it can be overwhelming at times. It's hard to believe the occurrence and intensity of poverty and violence that is reality for too many families in our community. She navigates this by focusing on the individual family and the actions they can take to improve their lives for the benefit of their children.

"Families need different things from us. They are all at different stages when they come through our doors," said Melissa. "Our job is to meet them where they are and empower them to make the changes they are capable of making to support their child."

The work she does is life-changing.

Melissa sees clients who go back to school when their child comes to Children's Friend, and by the time the child heads to kindergarten, the parent is graduating with their master's degree. She's helped parents navigate custody battles, domestic violence, housing insecurity, health challenges, and major life circumstances, all while keeping their child safe and connected to stability through their Head Start community.



Melissa (right) with a family at their adoption hearing.

"What sets Children's Friend apart is our ability to walk with families. They trust us, and in turn, they are supported and can make incremental changes to better their lives," said Melissa. "There is a reason we've existed for over 190 years. There are a lot of nonprofits but none like this, none with the level of experience, community connections, and commitment."

Melissa says parents often express disbelief at the amount of support Children's Friend can offer, stating, "I have gone to so many organizations, and nobody has actually helped me, but you did."

Family advocates, like Melissa, work behind the scenes to ensure that children and families in Early Head Start and Head Start can have better opportunities and outcomes that last for generations.

CHILDREN'S FRIEND ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Donors Make It All Possible

Thanks to your support, Children's Friend provided essential services to our most vulnerable children throughout Rhode Island.





136

Substance-affected families participated in intensive home-based services through Project Connect, designed to help parents overcome addiction while safely parenting their children.



5,745

Families received healthy food, nutrition, and education referrals from WIC.



32

Children were placed in safe and stable foster homes.



1,118

Children and their families participated in our high-quality Head Start program.

287,703

Nutritious meals were provided for children in our classrooms.



696

Children with developmental challenges were supported through our Early Intervention program.



582

High-risk moms and their children, from birth to age three, were served through First Connections.



156

Families received quality bilingual child care services.



384

Children attended our Universal Pre-K program.



151

Families with children under age two received regular home visits from a Registered Nurse.



Our Thanks to You!

Thank you to all the generous donors who made Children's Friend a philanthropic priority in 2024. Children's Friend is grateful to the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations who are dedicated to ensuring the well-being and healthy development of our state's most vulnerable children and their families. This commitment to our work enables us to provide essential and life-changing services to children throughout Rhode Island.

We appreciate the generous support of our donors. The following lists were prepared with great care. If you feel as though your name has been listed incorrectly or omitted, please accept our apologies and let us know by emailing fundraising@cfsri.org.

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Harriet Ware, the founder of Children's Friend, planted seeds that have grown for almost two centuries. From a small orphanage in Providence to a statewide organization serving over 22,000 individuals, Children's Friend has grown to a leader in programs that nurture children and empower families. Members of our Harriet Ware Society demonstrate their care and commitment to ensuring that Children's Friend continues to have an impact for generations to come.

Harriet Ware Society members are dedicated to Children's Friend and their devotion to the well-being of children today, tomorrow, and beyond is truly appreciated. Their foresight in making planned gifts, including us in their estate planning, and prioritizing philanthropy for our organization, ensures our continued success in serving the community.

Curious about joining this dedicated group? Notify us of your planned gift intent, whether through an estate provision, naming Children's Friend as a beneficiary in your retirement plan or life insurance policy, or other means. We would be honored to acknowledge your generosity and include you as a valued member.

In the future, the demand for crucial services will persist. Thanks to those who have chosen to leave a legacy gift to Children's Friend, we have the confidence to meet these needs for years to come.

If you are interested in exploring planned giving options with Children's Friend, please contact us at fundraising@cfsri.org.

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Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. - Margaret Mead

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I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. - Maya Angelou NURTURING CHILDREN. EMPOWERING FAMILIES

Investing In Our Children Luncheon

The 22nd annual *Investing in Our Children Luncheon* celebrated Children's Friend's 190th year of leading the way in working with children and families. It remains a signature event for Children's Friend, and it raised close to \$200,000 to support the agency's vital work. Hosted at the Friendship center in Providence, the luncheon celebrates the individuals and corporations who are committed to nurturing and supporting our work. The generosity of attendees, sponsors, and organizers ensures the continuation and expansion of programs that make a difference in the lives of children and families throughout Rhode Island.

Interested in joining the planning committee or becoming a sponsor, contact fundraising@cfsri.org.

Children's Friend would like to express our appreciation to those listed below for their generosity to our *Investing* in Our Children Luncheon.

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Holiday Drive

The holiday season can be a stressful time for families. Over 90 percent of the families we work with at Children's Friend live at or below the poverty line and, with the increasing cost of living, there are many more families who are struggling to pay for essential things such as housing, food, medications, and clothing. The Spirit of Giving Holiday Drive is a way we can help alleviate some of that stress and make the holidays a more joyful time.

In 2024, over 2,100 children and their families experienced a happier holiday thanks to donors who sponsored a family, donated, coordinated a toy or clothing drive, or purchased items from our holiday wish list. These donors made sure that families had joy, laughter, and peace of mind. On behalf of all the children and families who enjoyed the holiday season, thank you.

Special Thanks to Our Holiday Drive Supporters

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Children's Friend relies on the support of individuals and businesses to improve the lives of the children and families we serve. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) is an outstanding example of an organization that cares.

BCBSRI has been a dedicated partner of Children's Friend for over 25 years. Through "Blue across Rhode Island," BCBSRI's annual day of service, and the Spirit of Giving Holiday Drive, nearly 100 employees volunteered in 2024. When BCBSRI volunteers arrive, they have energy, abundant enthusiasm, and a willingness to help wherever it is needed.

"BCBSRI has been committed to community engagement for decades, reflecting the social mission upon which we were founded more than 85 years ago. Supporting volunteerism strengthens our bond with local communities, sharpens our focus on community needs, and aids community-based organizations that are crucial to our shared mission of improving the health and well-being of all Rhode Islanders," said Carolyn Belisle, Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility. "This service to the community is core to our culture at BCBSRI and fosters a significant sense of purpose and pride among our associates."

BCBSRI awarded Children's Friend the BlueAngel Community Health grant for our work and sponsored the 2024 Investing in Our Children luncheon. Our long-time partnership with BCBSRI has benefited thousands of children and families throughout the years. Their generosity, dedication, and community-mindedness have a deep impact on our work.

1834 Society

The 1834 Society is our leadership giving program that recognizes donors who make a deep investment in Children's Friend through annual contributions of \$1,000 or more. They invest in our work and serve as an inspiration to other donors. They champion our mission and choose to make Children's Friend a philanthropic priority. We thank them for their commitment to the children and families we serve.

William and Amabel Allen Anonymous (4) Lori Bateman Gary Block and Justine Johnson Tammy and Christopher Camillo Joseph and Susan Capobianco David and Maureen Caprio Lucille and Al Carmody Joel Cohen and Andrea Toon Josh Coletta Regina M. Costa Thomas Cousineau Mary and David Cram John and Grace Cregan Melissa Dellena Theresa DeMello Michael and Mary DiSandro Lynne Ende Martin Fernandes and Robert

Goodwin

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Lee and Jenny Owen Elizabeth Paroli and Wayne Kezirian Robert and Barbara Pease Yahaira Placencia Daniel T. Quinn and Honglian Jin Jill Richardson-Coppolino Jeffrey and Debby Saletin Christopher and Giorgia Shaban Marianne Stanton Katharine and Joel Stark Carolyn Stevens The THHCS & LBH Team Pamela and Jeffrey Verklan Michael Wallent Elizabeth Walsh John and Carolyn Weiss Andrea Wizer and Robert Vecchi Michele Yun and Family

Mary Nugent

Foster Care is Community Care

In their early years, children are learning to form connections, communicate, and express affection. They are building self-esteem and a sense of self-worth. To do this, it is crucial that they have a secure and nurturing environment. Children's Friend's foster parents provide this environment and help children have a brighter future. Our foster parents come from diverse backgrounds but share the desire to have a positive impact on a child's life. A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated and caring foster parents who generously open their homes and hearts to children in need.

2024 Foster Parents

Didia and Ricardo Aguiar
Lori Basile
Nathan and Tamara Bonds
Abigail Borden
Michael and Thea Brennan
Jiz and Phillip Caspers
Julie and Rick Doire
Tammy Eaton
Erica and Steven Emond

Shirley Fraticelli and Alex Miller
Melissa and Amanda Graves-Faella
Janet and Brian Lacroix
Gail Lufkin
Lisa and Dino Messina
Stacy and Julio Murga
Dianna Odell and Matthew White
Krystal and Anthony Pezza

Eugenia Ferreria and Kevin Cliff

Stephanie and Matthew Plain
Tyler and Chris Ramos
Deidre and Dawn Manchester/ Rowles
Tara Simonini and Noah Ganzer
Deborah and Tim Steen
Brian and Alexander Terry
Tiffany Townsend
Tiffany and Appinio Typus

Tiffany and Apricio Zunum

If you would like to learn more about becoming a foster parent, visit childrensfriendri.org/foster-care.

CHILDREN'S FRIEND ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Our Leaders



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A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader, a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves. - Eleanor Roosevelt

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Maria Vernaza

Our Team - Children's Friend Staff

Lisa Calderon

Caroline Calhoun

Elisa Dematos

Jennifer DeMeneses

The dedicated team at Children's Friend is changing the world one child at a time. Our team works together to provide the highest quality services to children and families across all our programs. Their dedication to our mission, vision, and values is apparent each and every day.

Children's Friend is proud to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our valuable employees. Thank you for your hard work and continued commitment to our success. This list is current as of April 17, 2025.

Aliyah Elizabeth Revi Affrunti Tammy Camillo Jessica DeNoncour Rosa Gomez Cristina Afonso-Gore Marquis Capellan Renee Deschamps Veronica Flores de Gomez Akintunde Akinlapa Joseph Capobianco Paula DesLauriers Angelina Goncalves Isabel Diaz Carmen Gonzalez Vanessa Albanese Alyssa Capozzi Calla Jade DiGiovanni Clarissa Aleman David Caprio Karla Tobar Gonzalez Tanya Anderson Therese Carpentier Katelyn DiSano Yairis Marte Gonzalez Carla Goode Jenni Carrascoza Bertha Dischert Ariana Aracena Sonia Arboleda Jill Caslowitz Jerelyn De La Cruz Dominguez Andrea Gosselin Susan Dounetos Osiris Grafals Kaitlyn Arraial Lina Castillo Kimberly Arraial Victoria Castle Yomari Duarte Kavcie Green Erica Guerrero Carol Lopez Castro Michael Dulin Dalia Arriaza Darieliza Polanco Guzman Bienvenida Aybar Rebecca Celio Andrea Engle Dennys Isabel Pena Aybar Ana Chacon Johanna Espinal Emilee Guzman Rosaly Polanco Guzman Dilma Azevedo **Zachary Charette** ljeoma Acqueen Ezeugoh Jessica Baez Maria Chionchio Misty Faella Lisa Halko Julie Haskell Brianna Barlow Yienajye Nawan Chukwuezi Olajumoke Famuyiro Martin Fernandes Owen Heleen Julia Barros Sophia Cimbron Yasmin Mola Fernandez Stephanie Henderson Jessica Beaupre Julie Colangeli Jasmine Benton Maria Colon Gina Ferri Isolita Henry Allison Hernandez Ada Berdecia **Erin Combs** Jessica Figueroa Nikole Bermudez Rachel Cooper Johanna Flores Orlando A. Hernandez Tatiana Martinez Hernandez Rerenice Retancur Jill Richardson Coppolino Jose Flores Jovanna Villaman Bisono Aydalina Cordova **Judy Flores** Jennifer Heywood Michelle Courchaine Alesia Ford Leila Hill Tracy Blackham Michelle Hirst Megan Dias Blais Hope Starkey Cox Sandra Fraenkel Filomena Blanco Madeline Cox Rosana Ramirez Franco Ann Homer Karen J. Torres Gabriel Donna Hulstyn Analicia Simone Bonelli Evelyn Ramos Crispin Shayla Bouchard-Mora Yolanda Crockett Claudia Galeano Rosa Inirio Inirio Llosmina Interiano Lindsey Brannon **Christine Crohan** Adrianna Rhea Galzin Aubrey Beverlianne Jacavone Tracey Braz Elizabeth Czerwein Jose Galzin Jessica D'Alessio Genesis Garcia Esperanza Jaime Angelina Brennan Kerri Breton Tina Darling Jennifer Jarvais Kayla Garcia Jeneen Paris Brito Justice DaRosa Marguerite Jeremie Elizabeth Garganese Madelyn Brito Dyana De Jesus **Bethany Gauthier** Satta Josiah-Faeduwor Stella Jurado Melissa Brum Lydia De Jesus Alissa Gauvin Fresa Burgos Maryerlin De Jesus Rosa Michelle Gazzero Oretha Karweh Olivia Kass Briana Rasheeda Burtt Jose Pena De La Cruz Bernadette Gibbs Yolanda Kennedy Mary Burtt Brianne DeFaria Joanne Gilbert Kristen Caine Marjorie Kate Dela Cruz Bianely Estrada Giron Mailee Khang Katharine Killilea

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NURTURING CHILDREN. EMPOWERING FAMILIES

Annual Income Statement

Revenue	
Contracts	24,682,588
Fee for Service	7,344,192
Investment Income (losses)	1,509,554
Contributions/Grants	5,016,809
Donated Goods, Services, Facilities	1,010,502
Other Income	23,314
Total Revenue	\$39,586,959

Expenses	
Early Intervention	3,581,660
Family Preservation	4,220,824
Family Support	24,520,630
Health and Nutrition Services	7,053,900
Total Program Expenses	\$39,377,014
Administration/Development/Fundraising	1,885,757
Total Expenses	\$41,262,771

Audited financial statements are available upon request. Please contact info@cfsri.org.

Make your sustaining contribution today!

A recurring gift to Children's Friend will ensure that at-risk families receive the resources and information they need throughout the year. Please visit our website at childrensfriendri.org, and click on the "Make a Donation" button.

We appreciate your generosity. You make all this good work possible. On behalf of the thousands of families we reach, we thank you!





