

2024 - 2025  
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

# WHAT INSPIRES YOU?



Friends Center  
for Children



**WE BELIEVE IN THE VALUES** set forth by and founded upon the Quaker principles: simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equity, and stewardship. We believe these values to be an integral part of our daily lives. They are universal and steadfast, fortifying the human spirit and improving the human condition.

As a values-based program, Friends Center for Children strives to maintain best practices in early childhood education by nurturing the whole child and bringing together curriculum, teachers, parents and the larger community within a supportive, inspirational environment.

We welcome and encourage the uniqueness of each individual who passes through our doors; they give depth to our program and broaden our reach. We seek to have a positive impact on the crucial issues of early childhood education that will be lasting and far-reaching. Through demonstrating our commitment to every child's potential, we are dedicated to affirming the Quaker principles upon which we are founded.

Using a collaborative approach, we envision a time when all children are well-equipped to succeed in a culture that fosters acceptance of our common humanity.



### **OUR MISSION:**

- EDUCATE CHILDREN**
- EMPOWER FAMILIES**
- INSPIRE TEACHERS**
- ENGAGE COMMUNITY**
- EMBRACE DIVERSITY**
- EMBODY EQUITY**



# REPORT FROM THE BOARD

Dear Friends,

I first joined the Friends Center for Children community in 2010, when my daughter Lillian enrolled at the East Grand school at 3 months of age. In a year marked by seismic cultural shifts and historic policy changes, I find myself regularly reflecting on sources of inspiration: in the tireless work of advocates fighting a years-long battle, in the quiet comfort of watching a house turn into a home, in the repetitive motions of cooking a favorite meal for my family, and always in the joyful curiosity of children.

At Friends Center, we believe that inspiration thrives where our mission and values meet action. This year, we've seen that belief come to life in countless ways — from the laughter echoing through our classrooms to the transformative state legislation that redefines what's possible for early care and education in Connecticut.

Thanks to unyielding advocacy and collective vision, Connecticut has taken an unprecedented leap, committing \$860 million to early education and creating an endowment that brings all of us closer to equitable, universal access. I am so proud that Friends Center's voice and deeply held values helped lead and shape this legislation — and even prouder that the work doesn't stop here.

Our Free Teacher Housing Initiative, once a bold local experiment, is now inspiring systems change across the country — from Georgia to Michigan

to Massachusetts. What began as a response to a workforce crisis is now a replicable model for restoring dignity, sustainability, and opportunity to early educators.

And, at the heart of it all is the leadership of Allyx Schiavone. This year, we celebrate 16 years of her vision, resilience, and radical hope. Her leadership has not only built an organization — it has seeded a powerful team of leaders who are now carrying that vision forward, deepening and expanding its impact every day. Under her guidance, Friends Center has grown exponentially from the time when my daughter was one of only 12 children in the basement of the New Haven Friends Meeting, to now having served 1,500 children, and demanding a national conversation on what early childhood care can and must be.

In a world where inspiration can often feel out of reach, we are profoundly blessed to be reminded daily that it is alive — in small hands, big ideas, and brave acts of equity. Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

With gratitude,

**Scot Wrocklage**  
*Clerk of the Board*



Friends Center for Children

# MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

In a moment when so much in our country feels fractured, inspiration becomes more than a comfort. It becomes a necessity. It becomes the thing that helps us keep showing up for one another, building something better even when the world outside feels chaotic or divided.

At Friends Center, inspiration is not an abstraction. It lives in the eyes of a child as they discover something new, in the trust exchanged between caregiver and infant, in the strength of families who show up, again and again, for their children and communities. It lives in the courage of our teachers, who continue to do the quiet, essential work of shaping futures — even when that work is too often undervalued.

This year, that inspiration moved us to act boldly and intentionally. It shaped the opening of our Flint Street Family Campus, transforming a shuttered movie theater into a haven for learning, connection, and growth. It guided our efforts at the state level, helping pass historic legislation that sets a new national standard for early childhood investment. It grew beyond New Haven, as our Free Teacher Housing Initiative began inspiring similar models across the country.

But the most powerful expressions of inspiration, we believe, are still found in the everyday. In a toddler's laughter. In a teacher's quiet reassurance. In the way our classrooms hum with joy, resilience, and belonging. These moments might seem small, especially in contrast to the national headlines — but they are where real change begins.

During our time at Friends Center we've witnessed what becomes possible when we root our work in love, justice, and equity. We've seen how even amid turmoil, we can be the place where families feel safe, where teachers feel valued, and where children are free to imagine and become.

So as you read this report, we hope you'll feel what we feel every day: that inspiration is not fleeting. It is fierce. It is foundational. And in a world that needs healing, it is our way forward.

With love and appreciation,



**Allyx Schiavone**  
*Executive Director*



**Miriam Sutton**  
*Program Director*



2024-2025 Report to the Community

*“Through her leadership at Friends Center for Children, Allyx has built a model for high-quality, equitable childcare and advocacy for continued progress. Her push for housing solutions for childcare workers reflects a deep understanding of the challenges facing the workforce, and a long-standing commitment to improving conditions for underserved communities. Allyx has continued to lead with compassion, connecting day-to-day realities with meaningful, systemic change. Her work continues to inspire policymakers and community advocates alike.”*

*- Senator Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore*

This spring, Friends Center Executive Director Allyx Schiavone was named Connecticut’s Woman of the Year. This honor recognized Allyx’s role in pioneering models that build equity and access in early childhood education, like the Free Teacher Housing Initiative that creates a sustainable solution for much-needed increases in early childhood educators’ compensation.

While Allyx’s recent accomplishments have garnered headlines and inspired local and national progress in addressing systemic obstacles in early childhood education, the full scope of her impact is reflected in her 16 years of dedicated leadership at Friends Center. Allyx joined Friends Center in 2009, compelled by the vision of its founders to build a progressive, child-centered program to meet the tremendous need for high-quality early care in New Haven. At the time, Friends Center served half a dozen children with no curriculum, business plan or permanent home.

Within three years — driven by Allyx’s expertise in education, real estate, and business — Friends Center broke ground on its first location. Since then, her guidance has helped the Center expand to (soon to be) four locations serving 222 children with 88 staff.

As Friends Center has expanded, Allyx has continuously launched measures to ensure all families have equitable access to high-quality early education opportunities. These efforts include building subsidy relationships with Care4Kids, Early Head Start Childcare Partnership with LULAC, and

State Funded Subsidies; creating a sliding scale tuition system where families pay based on their income; and championing diversity by ensuring that 70% or more of our students, staff, and leadership are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Allyx’s commitment doesn’t stop within the Friends Center classrooms. As Chair of Child Care for CT, Allyx’s advocacy efforts recently helped pass the most comprehensive early childcare legislation in the country.

In addition to championing equitable access, Allyx remains laser-focused on ensuring high quality throughout the program. She spearheaded the development of the Friends Center for Children child-centered emergent curriculum pedagogy. And nationally — as an original member of Trust for Learning’s Ideal Learning Round Table — worked with other world renowned progressive philosophies to create the Principles of Ideal Learning.

Knowing that early learning is intrinsically tied to the well-being of the whole self, Allyx also developed Friend Center’s Emotional Well-being Program, which promotes resilience, inclusion, and growth by fostering emotional awareness, social intelligence, bias awareness, and supportive strategies for staff and families.

This year, we celebrate 16 years of Allyx’s exemplary service. During this time, she has built a program that has provided transformative early education opportunities to more than 1,500 children and their families...with so much more still to come!



*Allyx and Senator Looney*



*Allyx and Friends*



*Allyx with President Biden and Congresswoman DeLauro*



*Allyx receiving funding through Congresswoman DeLauro*

*“Under Allyx’s leadership, this school has grown into—and surpassed—every expectation we had for our “dream” school. It is a testament to what happens when deep care for children, dedication to community, and the practices of Quaker values come together in daily life.”*

*- Michael Anderson, Friends Center founder*

*“Allyx is a gift to Friends Center and to the whole early childhood community in CT. She has vision, execution, grace, and determination. For me she has been a thought partner, and a friend as we have worked to transform child care in CT. While the accomplishment has many to credit — its fair to say that it would not be as bold or focused on workforce and quality without Allyx’s leadership.”*

*- Commissioner Beth Bye, CT Office of Early Childhood*

*“Allyx’s consistent drive to create meaningful change has motivated me—and so many others—to keep going, to do more, and to push harder toward closing the gap in childcare accessibility. Her leadership and passion have been a guiding light, reminding us all of what’s possible when you remain rooted in purpose. She is not only a force for good—she is a gift to our community and beyond!”*

*- Jess Herrington, Friends Center alumni parent and board member*

*“Allyx’s leadership at Friends Center is beyond inspiring—you can feel her care in everything she does. She doesn’t just serve the community; she values each person in it. She sees us, she sees our families. Allyx has shown me what it looks like to lead with grace, strength, and purpose. I’m proud to be part of the work we do at Friends Center, and even more proud to have someone like Allyx guiding us.”*

*- Paris Pierce, Friends Center teacher*

# 16 YEARS OF INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP



# INSPIRING THE NATION

Friends Center for Children

*“There is nothing more inspiring than creating a local first-in-the-nation initiative that simultaneously has a direct immediate impact on the user and also creates a model for permanent systems change to tackle our most pressing societal crises: workforce, child care and housing.”*

*- Miriam Sutton, Friends Center Program Director*



At Friends Center, we’re inspired by the children, families, and communities we serve. We’re committed to pioneering strategies that give more families access to the high-quality early care every child deserves. By sharing our models and practices, we’re thrilled to see the inspiration spreading across our communities, our state, and beyond.

After months of focused advocacy, we celebrated a major victory as Connecticut passed the most comprehensive early care and education legislation in the country with an initial investment of \$860 Million. This groundbreaking budget also creates an online portal to streamline access to early education slots, and establishes an endowment that makes childcare costs free for families making less than \$100,000 per year and caps costs at 7% of income for families making more (read more on our Embody Equity pages).

Our trailblazing Free Teacher Housing Initiative, already well-rooted and successful in New Haven, is inspiring similar programs throughout the country.

In Battle Creek, Michigan, we are working with Pulse at the W.E. Upjohn Institute, in partnership with Community Action, Neighborhoods, Inc. of

Battle Creek, and other Michigan stakeholders, to tailor our teacher housing model to the needs of their community. Pulse is working to scale the free teacher housing concept with the goal of providing units for early care and education teachers across the city of Battle Creek.

In Georgia, our teacher housing program inspired the First Presbyterian Church of La Grange to create the Groundspring Initiative, a partnership with a local nonprofit housing developer that will provide free housing for teachers who serve at the church’s childcare center.

In Greater Boston, Friends Center is working with the Shlomo Fund and We Are ALX (Amplifying Latin Excellence) to help home-based childcare providers access housing, stay in business, and invest in their own financial security. Through this initiative, public or private entities purchase and renovate homes, offering rent-free housing to providers committed to running high-quality childcare for a set period, after which ownership of the home is transferred to the provider.

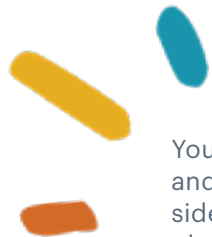
Partnerships like these are a testament to the power of connection to inspire profound changes to early childhood education beyond our own community.



# WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Friends Center for Children

## INSPIRATION OFTEN COMES IN THE SIMPLEST AND MOST SURPRISING WAYS...



Young children exemplify this in their wonder and curiosity: studying a parade of ants on the sidewalk or imagining cloud worlds in the sky; playing peek-a-boo, singing songs, chasing bubbles, collecting acorns, or making mazes in the sand. At Friends Center, our child-led curriculum encourages children to pursue their inspirations, allowing them to learn and develop through their play and through their interactions with the world and each other.

As children develop, sparks of inspiration literally build their brain architecture. Basic neural connections form and develop into complex circuits, laying the foundation for future learning, behavior, and even health.

While inspiration is typically associated with awe and wonder, for very young children, inspiration abounds in the seemingly simplest moments of consistent and secure connections with their caregivers. These attachments are critical for infant and toddler development. Studies demonstrate that the deprivation of healthy caregiver relationships in the first three years can result in persistent deficits in cognitive, emotional, and even physical health.

The foundations for self-determination begin in the earliest years as children build the

foundational skills of problem solving, decision-making, self-regulation, goal setting and self-awareness. Research by Teresa Amabile showed that inspiration in the early years fosters higher levels of creativity and problem-solving skills, key attributes for future academic outcomes and personal well-being.

At Friends Center, we're committed to creating environments of inspiration for our children, families, teachers, and our community. We intentionally cultivate all areas of our program to foster children's optimal development: from nurturing secure attachments through our emotional well-being program, to cultivating curiosity with our emergent child-led curriculum, open-ended play, and nature-based learning. We inspire families with workshops, resources, and opportunities to build connections with other parents through our cooperative program and monthly social gatherings.

To inspire teachers, we offer a myriad of professional development opportunities and our first-of-its-kind Free Teacher Housing Initiative, both of which bring inspiration in the form of well-deserved compensation. This year, our average teacher salary was \$19,000 above the average state salary for early educators in Connecticut.



We are pleased to announce the Flint Street Phase I building was honored with the 2025 CREW CT Blue Ribbon Award for Best Specialty Project: Adaptive Reuse - Building Positioning. Special thanks to Controlled Air Inc., Langan Engineering, MHAJ, O,R & L, and Patriquin Architects who brought our vision to life.



**“THE FLINT STREET FAMILY CAMPUS EXEMPLIFIES HOW ADAPTIVE REUSE CAN REVITALIZE UNDERUTILIZED SPACES WHILE ADDRESSING CRITICAL COMMUNITY NEEDS. BY REPURPOSING THE FORMER CINE 4 THEATER, FRIENDS CENTER HAS CREATED A REPLICABLE MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. THIS PROJECT NOT ONLY EXPANDS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BUT ALSO STRENGTHENS THE LOCAL WORKFORCE AND ENHANCES NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT, SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR MISSION-DRIVEN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT.”**

**- CREW CT BLUE RIBBON PANEL**

It began with a dream and a driving purpose to expand Friend Center’s schools to meet the urgent need for more accessible high-quality early care and education. Specifically, we sought to create a thriving early childhood family campus that could consolidate our administration spaces, offer community resources, and serve and support hundreds of children and families through our values-based program.

The challenge was finding the right space.

For decades Cine 4 served as a beloved movie theater in the Quinnipiac Meadows neighborhood, but dwindling attendance paved the way for it to have a new and exciting purpose. In October 2024 — two years after the theater permanently closed — Friends Center opened the doors to the Flint Street Family Campus, a vibrant space that currently serves 32 infants and toddlers and their families, and will, when complete, serve a total of 80 children.

# EDUCATE CHILDREN



*“For parents and families, monthly community gatherings are offered where families can better get to know each other, children can play and deeper relationships are cultivated.”*

*When I found myself unexpectedly pregnant with my third child, I was able to turn to Friends Center as a resource for baby needs. Parents shared contacts with me and additional resources were donated. I was also able to take advantage of the seasonal clothing drive and bi-weekly food donations.”*

*- Friends Center parent*

While curiosity and imagination abound in our classrooms, we also work intentionally to extend inspiration to the families of the children in our care. And this commitment takes all shapes and forms — from curating library resources to help parents navigate picky eaters to facilitating family field trips to local museums.

As a cooperative program, families volunteer in various capacities. This hands-on involvement builds connections and community. This year, we launched a new cooperative role dedicated to family engagement. Parents at each center assist staff with planning monthly family activities, such as celebrating Earth Day together with park clean-ups or gathering for mindful walks in the neighborhoods around our center.

**“THE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM HAS BEEN SO WONDERFUL FOR OUR FAMILY! IT HAS GIVEN US A CHANCE TO SPEND TIME WITH OUR SON’S CLASSMATES’ PARENTS, AND BUILD REAL FRIENDSHIP OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL. NOW WHEN OUR CHILDREN HAVE A PLAY DATE, WE GET TO HAVE ONE TOO! WE HAVE ALSO LOVED BEING ABLE TO WITNESS THE KIDS ALL TOGETHER AND HAVE A SENSE OF THEIR CLASSROOM DYNAMIC! OVERALL, WE HAVE FELT SO ENRICHED BY THE PROGRAM AND SEE IT AS YET ANOTHER WAY THAT FRIENDS CENTER FOR CHILDREN FACILITATES A HOLISTIC, THRIVING COMMUNITY, EVEN BEYOND THE CLASSROOM.”**

**- FRIENDS CENTER PARENT**



# EMPOWER FAMILIES





*In October, Friends Center educator Eric moved into the latest teacher house built in partnership with the Yale School of Architecture Jim Vlock First Year Building Project.*



As with any great idea or invention, once launched, we wonder how we ever lived without it. Friends Center’s first-of-its-kind Free Teacher Housing Initiative provides a solution to the systemic struggle of how to provide much-needed increases in compensation for early childhood educators without raising tuition beyond what families can afford.

The model is simple, sustainable and has significant impact. A one-time investment to acquire or build teacher housing provides ongoing cost savings that enables us to raise the salaries of ALL of our educators. In 2024 - 2025, we paid our teachers more than \$19,000 above the state average for early childhood workers, and, as the Initiative expands, we expect that increase to keep rising.

For the teachers living in the houses, the Initiative removes one of their most costly expenses, offering them the stability and opportunity to pursue their career and personal goals. To date, 77% of the teachers in our Free Teacher Housing Initiative are back in school to obtain new degrees and

certifications, allowing them to secure their future while continuing to support their communities.

Launched in 2019, our Teacher Housing portfolio currently consists of four rent-free properties providing housing to 16 New Haven residents and we’re on track to support 24 teachers and their families by 2028, which will represent 30% of our workforce at that time.

This past year we completed our second house in partnership with Yale School of Architecture Jim Vlock First Year Building Project, and broke ground on the third, a unique home that provides one dwelling unit as well as a separate community gathering space.

*Scan the QR Code for more info on our newest teacher house designed by students at the Yale School of Architecture*



# INSPIRE TEACHERS

In an age when screens and entertainment are overwhelmingly solitary, the value of a shared theater experience is paramount. So when Friends Center purchased the recently shuttered Cine 4 to become its central campus, we made it our mission to preserve one of the theaters to serve the community as the only operational cinema left in New Haven.

**“AT FRIENDS CENTER WE BELIEVE THAT COMMUNITY IS A BASIC NEED. PEOPLE THRIVE WHEN THEY ARE SEEN AND VALUED. WE WANT TO CREATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE TOGETHER THAT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, AS WELL AS THE GREATER NEW HAVEN COMMUNITY.”**

**- ALLYX SCHIAVONE, FRIENDS CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

In January, Friends Center hired a theater coordinator to help develop the theater into a hub for the community, which includes curating films and expanding the space into a true multi-purpose venue that can host a variety of opportunities including weekly family movies, art exhibitions, storyteller series, indie film screenings, acoustic music performances, talent shows, educational workshops, school programs, and more.

Creating a space to cultivate community engagement aligns with our Quaker values and mission. We are exploring innovative programming that inspires learning and amplifies the voices of those who are often underrepresented and marginalized.

The lobby already retains Cine 4’s original popcorn maker and has been enhanced with a professional art hanging system and a grand piano donated by The Towers at Tower Lane. The theater space is growing with a new collapsible stage, immersive sound and lighting.

Currently, the Flint Street Theater offers family flicks every weekend — movies for kids on Saturdays and screenings for all ages on Sundays. The movies are free, as is the popcorn! The theater has also already hosted a number of special events, such as a Childcare for CT’s screening and discussion of *Clarissa’s Battle*, a documentary exploring one woman’s fight to advocate for improved child care in California, and a full-house panel discussion on the future of early childhood education in Connecticut, moderated by Connecticut Comptroller Sean Scanlon.



In addition to our own programming for the theater, Friends Center is making the space available to community groups through a sliding scale fee program for events that align with our mission.



Friends Center for Children



2024-2025 Report to the Community

They may be on opposite ends of life experiences, but that makes their interactions all the more inspiring. This year, Friends Center launched a new program to foster intergenerational connections. We hosted two visits from Essex Meadows Retirement Community at our East Grand location, and a group from The Towers at Tower Lane spent time at our Flint Street campus. In each case, the seniors shared lunch and laughter with our young friends in their classrooms, as they built friendships that spanned generations. We also had the opportunity to introduce our program to residents with a talk at Whitney Center.

By offering opportunities for senior adults to spend time with our young friends, we further our commitment to embracing diversity of all types — including age — and foster connections where both groups benefit. The elderly can offer young children their decades of wisdom, as well as the patience and attention that children need to develop social-emotional skills and thrive. “Older adults are exceptionally suited to meet these needs,” researchers at Stanford noted, “in part because they welcome meaningful, productive activity, and engagement.”

For older adults, cross-age interactions can provide a sense of purpose and self-esteem, as well as decrease social isolation, a significant problem in today’s age when families are more generationally stratified than ever. In the past, many generations shared proximity and caregiving responsibilities, but now, due to increased family migration and the decline of nuclear and extended families — older adults may live thousands of miles from their grandchildren or live in elder care centers surrounded only by peers of their own age.

*“Our elders have much to offer and are also a population given to marginalization. Members of our Essex Meadows community who visited Friends Center have been enriched by the experience. Those of us above the age of 65 are lifelong learners, mentors, coaches, parents, grandparents, historians, storytellers and a critical group of “friends” that must be woven into the fabric of shaping the future for the next generation. We all have something to offer and something to learn at every age and stage.”*

*- Susan Carpenter, Essex Meadows Community Life Services Director*



# EMBRACE DIVERSITY



**“WE ARE LITERALLY NUMBER ONE – THE FIRST STATE IN THE NATION TO LAUNCH A CHILDCARE ENDOWMENT CENTERED ON ACCESS, QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY. IT’S A HUGE VICTORY, BUT SUCH SIGNIFICANT STRIDES DON’T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT. THEY HAPPEN OVER DECADES WITH BEHIND THE SCENES, RELATIONSHIP BUILDING, NAVIGATING TENSIONS, STITCHING TOGETHER WORK THAT CAN ACTUALLY HOLD. BUILDING ON THIS GROUNDBREAKING FOUNDATION IS HOW WE WILL FINALLY FIX CHILDCARE IN CONNECTICUT.”**

**- ALLYX SCHIAVONE, FRIENDS CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



We took a stand for what matters and inspired change! This year, hundreds of our families, staff, and children joined Friend Center’s longstanding efforts to urge Connecticut legislators to address the acute funding crisis in early childhood care. We rallied, wrote, spoke, and organized our way to a significant victory.

This June, at the end of the 2025 legislative session, Connecticut passed the most significant childcare legislation ever, and the most comprehensive in the country right now. With a commitment of more than \$860 million — including \$417.5 million in fiscal year 2026 and \$443 million in fiscal year 2027 — the legislation will:

- Increase the number of childcare slots by 16,000
- Create a centralized admissions portal to allow all families access to childcare
- Achieve wage parity between early care and education teachers and public school teachers
- Offer health coverage for early childhood educators

- Cap tuition at 7% for families earning over \$100,000 per year, and make it free for those under \$100,000
- Create a permanent early care and education endowment
- Establish facilities grants enabling both center- and home-based childcare providers to access expansion funds

Leading up to this pivotal legislative session, families and teachers painted signs with powerful messages and led a crowd of 400+ on the New Haven Green for the 4th Morning Without Childcare, an annual rally organized by Childcare for CT to underscore the desperate need for increased investment in early care and education.

Thanks to Childcare for CT, we also gathered at the Capitol during the legislative session to ensure our representatives fully understood the childcare crisis. And it worked! The families in our state who need it most will now have free childcare.





# NEXT STEPS

## INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION

This past year, we officially opened Phase I of our Flint Street Family Campus — and we’re not slowing down. In Summer 2025, we began work with GOA Architecture on the design for Phase II. This next phase will include a new school building for 48 infants and toddlers, a centralized library, and an indoor gross motor space. Once both phases are complete, the campus will serve 80 infants and toddlers, supported by 28 teachers.

Meanwhile, progress on Friends Center’s Dixwell location is steadily moving forward. The center is expected to open in Summer 2026, pending the completion of ConnCORP Plaza, its future home. Once open, it will serve 48 infants/toddlers and 20 preschoolers.

## LITERACY ACCESS AND TEACHER LEARNING

When complete, our central campus on Flint Street will feature a library dedicated to serving our centers and families. To extend the benefits of early literacy beyond our walls, we’re launching our Books With Friends trolley, a mobile library and teacher learning hub, in Fall 2025 — bringing books, curriculum, and a full-time educator directly to family childcare providers and center-based programs in our community.

## TEACHER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Friends Center for Children’s Teacher Week is an annual professional development program designed to help Friends Center educators strengthen their teaching practices, nurture their leadership abilities, and advance toward their career goals of becoming head teachers. This program offers paid development hours for Friends Center educators.

Each year, Teacher Week offers eight days of intensive professional development with an emphasis on Ideal Learning Principles, social/emotional learning and well-being, and critical emerging topics that impact our students, teachers, staff, and families.

## TEACHER HOUSING INITIATIVE

As this report reaches you, we’re thrilled to share that our third teacher house — built in partnership with the Yale School of Architecture’s Jim Vlock First Year Building Project — is complete. This newest home not only welcomes a new teacher, but also includes a dedicated community space to support connection and collaboration across our growing Teacher Village. In January 2026, we’ll begin design on a fourth home in partnership with the Yale SOA.

In addition, we have secured both the budget and pathway to purchase another 12 dwelling units. Combined with our existing four units and the new YSOA constructions, this will bring our total number of free teacher housing units to 24 — enough to house nearly 30% of our teaching staff.



## EMOTIONAL WELLBEING CURRICULUM

At Friends Center, we believe emotional well-being is foundational to early learning and community care. Our Emotional Well-being Program supports the social, emotional, and physical needs of children, families, and staff. To guide and share this work, we are developing a comprehensive Emotional Well-being Curriculum — a best practice guide frequently requested by national organizations. The curriculum will be written throughout Winter 2026 and, once complete, will be shared across our centers and with early childhood programs in New Haven and beyond.

## FOOD EQUITY DELIVERED (F.E.D.)

In Fall 2025, we launch a Food Equity Delivered Task Force of local food entrepreneurs to explore innovative, community-led solutions to food insecurity. Our aim is to provide quality, delicious daily meals and family baskets to ensure every child receives the nutrition they deserve.



# ACCREDITATION



Friends Center for Children



## Friends Council on Education

This year, Friends Center was honored to have successfully renewed its membership with the Friends Council on Education, which serves as the voice for Friends Schools in the national dialogue on education. Every ten years, the Friends Council on Education members engage in a renewal process that includes an intensive self-study and reflection followed by two days of school visits from Friends Council on Education representatives. Far more than a procedural requirement, this process offers us a meaningful opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen our Quaker identity.

Feedback from our review affirmed that Friends Center's model, board, leadership, and community are guided and equipped by our Quaker values as we serve children, improve access, and provide high-quality, child-centered care.

**"FRIENDS CENTER'S INITIATIVES ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF CREATIVE COLLABORATION AND RECIPROCAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR OVERALL GROWTH AND POSITIVE CHANGE. FRIENDS CENTER FOR CHILDREN IS A BEACON OF HOPE AND A MODEL OF REPLICABLE CHANGE."**

**- FRIENDS COUNCIL ON EDUCATION**

"We deeply appreciate [Friends Center for Children's] dedication to fostering a school environment that nurtures the light within each student and sustains the transformative power of Friends education. Your work strengthens not only your own school but also the collective vision of Friends schools as a means of upholding and advancing Quaker values in today's world."

**- Rodney Glasgow, Friends Council on Education Associate Director**

## National Association for the Education of Young Children

It's more than just a score. Earning 95%+ on all ten standards created by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) exemplifies Friends Center's unwavering commitment to quality. As the world's largest organization of early childhood professionals, NAEYC literally sets the standard for early learning programs. They rigorously review all aspects of early childhood programs, from physical environment and health to staff competencies and teaching.

We work hard to maintain exceptional care in all areas of our program and service, which reflects in our NAEYC accreditation numbers. This year, with the opening of our new Flint Street Family Campus, we are pleased to highlight the physical environment standard. In designing and outfitting our physical spaces, we are mindful of how external environments inform and inspire internal well-being. In Friends Center's classrooms — both indoor and outdoor — and throughout all of our spaces, we seek to cultivate a sense of belonging, to promote health and safety, and to encourage exploration, learning, and community.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Latrice Allen-Frasier\*\*

Founder, Growing The Good Seed Consulting LLC  
Senior Manager of Financial Stability, United Way of Greater New Haven  
Certified Tax Preparer, VITA Tax Preparation

## Keyri Ambrocio

State Press Secretary, Office of U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal

## Jane Coppock (m)

Retired; Assistant Dean  
Yale School of the Environment  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

## Jessica Herrington\*\*

Program Manager, U.S. Department of Defense, OIG

## Kaaren Janssen

Editor, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press

## Jean Lamont

Former Co-managing Partner, Educators Collaborative  
Former Head, Foote School

## Greg Melville (m)

Retired, Journalist, freelance editor & writer  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

**Emeritus:** Michael Anderson (m)

Wendy Kravitz (m)

Linda Miller (m)

Greg Moschetti (m)

## Shaylice Meserole\*\*

Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, DNP,PMHNP-BC, APR  
Lifespan Collaborative Services, Grow Therapy,  
Yale School of Nursing

## Joanna Meyer\*\* (m)

Research Associate, Yale School of Medicine  
Co-director, Partnership for Early Education Research

## James Morrissey

Partner, Massumi & Consoli LLP

## Jim Murphy

Business Manager, St. Thomas's Day School

## Nnamdi C. Obukwelu\*

Corporate strategy and restructuring consultant,  
McKinsey & Company

## Thayer Quoos (m)

Retired, Masonicare; On-call Chaplain, YNH

## Allyx Schiavone

Executive Director, Friends Center for Children  
Chair, Childcare for Connecticut's Future Coalition

## Scot Wrocklage\*\*

Technical Fellow, Sikorsky - Lockheed Martin

## NON BOARD COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

### Connie Baxter

Member, Amesbury Friends Meeting in Amesbury, MA

### Sarah Boone

Owner/Manager, Guilford Racquet & Swim Club

### Jane Coppock

Retired Assistant Dean, Yale School of the Environment  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Connie Dickinson

Retired, Principal, DickinsonGroup (Chicago)

### Susan Fox

Retired, Scientist

### Robert J. Harrity, Jr

Professor of Finance, Fairfield University

### Susan Holsenbeck\*\*

Executive Director, Read to Grow

### Robert Jaeger

Retired, Associate Professor, Yale Philosophy Department  
Subsequently Chief Investment Officer  
Evaluation Associates Capital Markets

### Katherine Kahan

Former Board Member  
New York City non-profit organizations  
supporting the arts, women, and children

### Richard Kahan

Retired, Founder, Urban Assembly - public education in nine states  
Retired, CEO, New York State Urban Development Corporation  
Retired, CEO, Battery Park City Authority  
Retired, CEO, Convention Center Development Corporation (Javits Center)

### Wendy Kravitz (m)

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Isaac Barnes May

Resident Fellow, Information Society Project, Yale Law School

### Greg Moschetti

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Peter Newman

Retired, Principal, Newman Architects

### Caroline Park\*

Partner, Wiggin and Dana LLP

### Ann Baker Pepe

Retired; Director of Development, Foote School

### Stacy Eder Smith

Development, Eder Family Foundation

### David Soper

Retired; Assistant VP of Management & Budget, Columbia University

### Orlando Yarborough, III\*

Leadership Coach, Yarborough Coaching  
Pastor, Black Church at Yale

## QUAKER ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Quaker Advisory Council is a group of Quaker leaders who recognize the positive impact that a quality, early childhood experience can have on a child's future and are committed to addressing the need for high-quality Quaker early childhood education. Members of the Quaker Advisory Council act as advisors to Friends Center about aspects unique to Friends Schools. As ambassadors and advocates, they provide connections to individuals and institutions, opportunities for collaboration, and access to funding. The Quaker Advisory Council serves the critical function of expanding Friends Center's impact and presence in the Quaker community.

### Michael Anderson

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Unaffiliated Quaker

### Connie Baxter

Member, Amesbury Friends Meeting in Amesbury, MA

### James Clay

Board Member, Friends Council on Education

### Jane Coppock

Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Joe Evans

Member, Newtown Friends Meeting  
Board member, Germantown Friends School  
Previous Board Member, Friends Council on Education  
Trustee, Anna T. Jeanes Foundation

### Bill Graustein

Founder, Community Leadership Program  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Wendy Kravitz

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Greg Melville

Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Linda Miller

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Barbara Price Monahan

Interim Director of Advancement, Pendle Hill Retreat and Conference Center  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting  
Member, Haverford College Corporation

### Mary Lee Morrison

Member, Hartford Friends Meeting

### Greg Moschetti

Founder and Emeritus Board Member, Friends Center for Children  
Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Ronald Netter

Member, New Haven Friends Meeting

### Allyx Schiavone

Director, Friends Center for Children

### Drew Smith

Director, Friends Council on Education

\* Friends Center parent

\*\* Friends Center alumni parent

(m) Member of Quaker Meeting

# OUR DONORS

Anonymous (3) ●●●  
 Leslie & Joe Aceto ●  
 Rachael & Tony Aceto ●●●  
 Abigail Adams ●  
 Marcia Addil ●  
 Beth Agapiou ●  
 Latrice Allen ●  
 Lucy Ambach ●  
 Celia Lewis & Michael Anderson ●  
 Keyri Ambrocio & Michael Anderson ●  
 Barbara & Chip Angle ●  
 Betsy Gribble & Doug Baldwin ●  
 Margaret & John Balint ●  
 Antonia Baroga ●  
 Rebecca & Brian Barth ●  
 Allyx Schiavone & Ken Beeman ●●●●  
 Shavaun & Edward Bennett ●  
 Bridget & Roger Berman ●  
 Alexandra Shor & John Bianchi ●●  
 Teasie Blassingame ●  
 Ivory & Tevis Blount ●  
 Sarah & Andy Boone ●  
 Mavis Lockwood & Jonathan Borak ●  
 Jonah Bossewitch ●  
 Jacqueline Bova ●  
 Phoebe & Jim Boyer ●  
 Shelley Bradley ●  
 Gail Brekke ●  
 Camille Brown ●  
 Kate Stith & Jose Cabranes ●  
 Timisha & Nathan Carr ●  
 Jonatha & Jim Castle ●  
 Belinda Chan ●  
 Jan & Paul Childs ●●●  
 Carolyn & Ian Christmann ●  
 Stephen Ciarcia ●  
 Karen Cichon ●  
 Lorraine Civitello ●  
 Bitsie Clark ●  
 Judy & Stocky Clark ●  
 Arthur Blecher & Jim Clay ●  
 Stephanie Fitzgerald & Frank Cochran ●●

Ron Coleman ●  
 Beth Collea ●  
 The Community Foundation of Greater  
 New Haven ●●  
 Jane Coppock ●●●  
 Jennifer & Peter Cowie ●●  
 Dody & Jay Cox ●  
 Kathleen Crisafi ●  
 Claire Criscuolo ●  
 Betsy & Dan Crofts ●  
 Patricia Cross ●  
 Kathy Kuryla & Francis Dance ●  
 Johanna Colon Davila ●  
 Lori DeMilo ●  
 Susan Denicola ●  
 Connie & Peter Dickinson ●●●  
 Jordanna Dioli ●  
 Laura Evans Durant & Stephen Durant ●  
 Tasha Eccles ●  
 The Echlin Foundation ●  
 The Eder Family Foundation ●  
 Susan Eident ●  
 Linda Lorimer & Charley Ellis ●  
 Jan Walzer & David Etzel ●  
 Carolyn & Joe Evans ●  
 Jennifer Lighthall & Peter Evans ●●  
 Katharine Evans ●  
 Maggie Moffett & Tom Ferrell ●  
 Dawn & Dan Farricielli ●  
 Ann & Daniel Fisher ●  
 Susan Robinson & Martha Fisher ●  
 Kathy Flores ●  
 Robert Fournier ●  
 Marie & Patrick Fourteau ●  
 Landa & Jefferson Freeman ●  
 Sherley Furgueson ●  
 Mary Jane & Chris Galvin ●  
 Shelley & Gordon Geballe ●  
 Liz Cox & David Gibson ●  
 Margie & Chip Gillis ●  
 Marianne & Henry Godfrey ●

Bill Graustein ●●  
 Dorthula Green ●  
 Millie Grenough & Oasis in the Overwhelm ●  
 Kurt Gunter-Helton ●  
 Liz & Tom Halsey ●●  
 Janet Madigan & Bob Harrity, Jr. ●●  
 Harriet Kral & Wendy Hathaway ●  
 Jessica & Robert Herrington ●  
 Kit Luckey & Charles Hickox ●  
 Linda & Paul Hodges ●  
 Susan Holahan ●  
 Cathryn Holinger ●  
 Diane & Penn Holsenbeck ●  
 Alison & Christopher Illick ●  
 The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation ●  
 Susan Todd Jackson ●●  
 The Jaffe Family Foundation ●  
 The Jane & William Curran Foundation ●  
 Kaaren Janssen ●●  
 Sally S. Johnson ●  
 Joan & Keith Jones ●  
 Katherine & Richard Kahan ●  
 Jane Kammerer ●  
 Joan & Jerome Karter ●  
 Elizabeth & Dennis Keenan ●  
 Michele and Kevin Kelly ●  
 Susan Kerley ●  
 Gretchen Kingsley ●  
 Anne & Rob Klee ●  
 Holly Hanan Koncz & David Koncz ●  
 Linda & Ken Koretz ●  
 Wendy Kravitz ●●●  
 Maria Lamberto ●  
 Jean & Nick Lamont ●●  
 Elizabeth Leary ●  
 Jessie Legere ●●  
 Chris Leoni ●  
 Nikki Lindberg ●  
 Alta Hodges & John Lisker ●  
 Ellen & Martin Looney ●  
 Maureen & Dwight Lopes ●  
 Therese Luetzgendorf ●●  
 Dee & Bruce Lundberg ●  
 Jasmine Lyle ●  
 Carol & Bob Lyons ●●  
 Margaret MacMullen ●  
 Martha & Terry Maguire ●  
 Craig Martin ●  
 Pam Matocha ●  
 Anne S. McCook ●  
 Susan McDonnell ●  
 Diane & Randy McNamara ●

Susan Fox & Greg Melville ●●●  
 Shaylice & Gilbert Meserole ●  
 Joanna & Spencer Meyer ●●  
 Sharon & Daniel Milikowsky ●●  
 Linda Miller ●  
 Paula Rembac Miller ●  
 Barbara Price Monahan ●  
 Mary Ann Moran ●  
 Lynne & John Morgan ●  
 Mary Lee Morrison ●  
 Sandra Morrison ●  
 Kaitlyn & Jimmy Morrissey ●  
 Connie Baxter & Greg Moschetti ●●  
 Augusta Mueller ●  
 Bonnie Muller ●●  
 Carolyn Milazzo And Stephen Murphy Jr. ●  
 Charles Murphy ●  
 Charlotte & Charlie Murphy ●  
 Leslie & Jim Murphy ●  
 Valerie & James Neary ●  
 Joan & David Nee ●  
 Ronald Netter ●  
 NewAlliance Foundation ●  
 Michelle & Peter Newman ●  
 Ilene Cooke & David Newton ●  
 Shawna Reed & John Nixon ●  
 Lucy Norris ●  
 Sydney Green & Nnamdi Obukwelu ●  
 Lindsey Kravitz & Eric Olson ●  
 Ana M. Oman ●  
 Richard Pacelle ●  
 Margo & Jeff Packer ●  
 Ivonne Padilla ●●  
 Susan & Christopher Palma ●  
 Elaine & George Parsons ●  
 Ann Baker Pepe & Gregory Pepe ●  
 Leah Pepe ●●●  
 Karin Peterson ●●  
 Trudy & Michael Piscitelli ●  
 Thayer Quoos ●●  
 Jennifer Kravitz & Erik Remsen ●  
 Nancy & Ken Remsen ●  
 Katherine Downs-Reuter & Robert Reuter ●  
 Barbara M. Riley ●  
 Diane Sortito Ritucci ●  
 Janet Robinson ●  
 Tiffany Robinson ●  
 Heidi Rosenberg ●  
 Elizabeth & Richard Rubin ●  
 Sandra Ruoff ●  
 Carol & Felix Sarubbi ●  
 Allyn Schiavone ●●●

## UNRESTRICTED

- Annual Fund
- Great Give
- In Kind
- Johnsky Fund

School Administrator's Association Union ●  
 Sea & Sierra Fund ●  
 Francine Sears ●  
 Seedlings Foundation ●●  
 Meghan Shea ●  
 Tanya & Kevin Shively ●●  
 D. Ellen Shuman ●  
 Gayle & Michael Silverberg ●  
 Margaret Ann Singer ●  
 Amos Smith ●  
 Aundrea Tabbs-Smith & Matthew Smith ●  
 Carolee Tanbee Smith ●  
 Shelagh Smith ●  
 SNAVE Foundation ●  
 Brenda Carter & Adam Solomon ●  
 Laura Davis & David Soper ●  
 Ori Spiegel ●  
 Jennifer Spinach ●●  
 Julie Paquette & Derek Steinbacher ●  
 Barbara Stern ●  
 The Stone Fund ●  
 Deborah Streale ●  
 The Sturtz Family ●  
 Miriam & Marquet Sutton ●●  
 Susan Taddei ●  
 Nancy & Donald Taylor ●  
 Laura & Leland Torrence ●  
 Lisa Pacelle Torrini ●  
 Lisa & David Totman ●  
 Ben Trachten, Trachten Law Firm ●  
 Mallory Triest ●  
 Martha Trowbridge ●  
 Sally Tyler ●  
 Sara S. Tyler ●  
 Margottina Verch ●  
 Alice Verhoeven ●  
 Lauren Vermouth ●  
 Margaret Vigorito ●

## RESTRICTED

- Expansion
- Financial Aid
- Development
- Mark Kravitz Fund
- Teacher Housing Initiative

Alison Levie & Michael Wajda ●  
 Wendy Walden ●  
 Patricia Wallace ●  
 Jennifer Walsh ●  
 Rachel Doft & John Wareck ●  
 The Wareck Family ●  
 Mary-Jo Warren ●  
 Robert Watts ●  
 Linda & Jeff Weber ●  
 Kathleen P. White ●  
 Betty & Jim Whitney ●  
 Kyle Williams ●  
 Kathryn Frund & Steve Winfield ●●  
 Deborah Wingreen ●  
 Julianne Winkel ●  
 Susan Winkel ●  
 Kristen & Scot Wrocklage ●●  
 John Wyse ●  
 Iain York ●  
 Jennifer & Mark Youngblood ●  
 Carl Youngman ●  
 Shelley Zelman ●  
 Albertus Magnus College ●  
 Albertus Magnus College  
 Student Government Association ●  
 BLOOM ●●  
 Brown Rudnick LLP ●  
 Delta Kappa Gamma Educators Society,  
 Zeta Chapter ●  
 Grampy's Charities Gives ●  
 Hope Chest CT ●  
 Sandoval's Landscaping & Masonry Inc. ●●  
 Saul Zaentz Early Education Initiative ●  
 Suzio Concrete ●●

# FAMILY STROLL



Friends Center for Children

Each year, our annual New Haven Family Stroll delivers a day of family fun with purpose. Hundreds gather at Quinnipiac River Park to celebrate community and support early childhood education. The event kicks off with a scenic bridge walk, followed by a festival featuring children's activities, entertainment and family-based community resources. This year, we celebrated our 13th stroll with special guests including Senator Martin Looney and Mayor Justin Elicker, along with over 600 of the families, staff and friends who make our community great.



## DONATIONS

Anonymous (3)  
Tony D'Occhio DMD  
Jo-Anne Escandon  
Jonathan Florman  
Sara Franke  
Kathleen and Paul Gonzalez  
Melissa Haskell  
Gail Howard  
Kyle Kaufman  
Alka Menon and Marcel Knudsen  
Bonnie Muller  
Susan Netter  
Malik Okoro  
Ivonne Padilla  
Leah Pepe  
Laurel Peterson  
Bennett Prescott  
Ronald Pusey  
Caroline Tanbee Smith  
The Soffer Family  
Anne Rhodes & Carl Testa  
Sara Bennett Wolfe



Avangrid, Inc.  
Child Care for CT  
The Community Foundation of Greater New Haven  
F.O.C.U.S., Inc.  
Fournier Pro Cleaning  
Groundworks Companies  
Guilford Racquet & Swim Club  
High Rock Water & Mechanical Service  
Innovative CPA Group  
Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC  
Liberty Bank  
Mutual of America  
Neubert, Pepe & Monteith, LLC  
Nicholson Associates, Inc.  
O,R&L Construction  
Pebbles Toys & Gifts  
St. Thomas's Day School  
Yale University Community For New Haven Fund



## IN-KIND DONATIONS

Nohra Bernal  
Claire Criscuolo  
Kathy Flores  
Jessica & Robert Herrington  
Kaaren Janssen  
Tanya Lee  
Jessica Legere  
Therese Luetzgendorf  
Susan Fox & Greg Melville  
Tanya & Kevin Shively  
Aundrea Tabbs-Smith & Matthew Smith

All Our Kin  
Auntie Rose  
Calvin Hill Day Care  
Elm City Montessori School  
Full of Joy Yoga  
Guilford Racquet and Swim Club  
Hull's Art Supply & Framing  
Koffee Katering  
Leila Day  
Nica's Market  
Pebble's Toys  
Sankofa  
Tractor Supply Co.  
The Well for Women  
TYCO Printing  
Vintanthro Modern & Vintage  
Whitneyville Foods  
YMCA

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

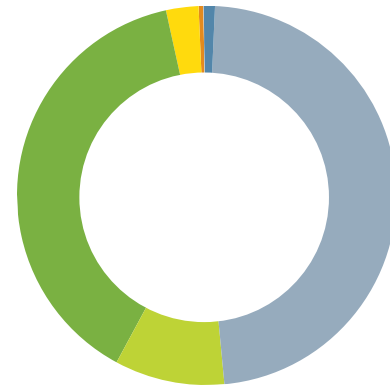
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

MAKE YOUR GIFT HERE

While we celebrate recent strides in funding, significant gaps remain. Fulfilling our mission would not be possible without the generosity of our donors. Your gifts help us expand access to the high-quality early care that builds strong foundations in young children. There are many ways to give, and one of the most enduring is through estate planning. Legacy gifts are a powerful way to make an enduring difference. Please scan the QR code to learn more about planned giving and other ways to invest in the future of our children and communities.



## Contributions



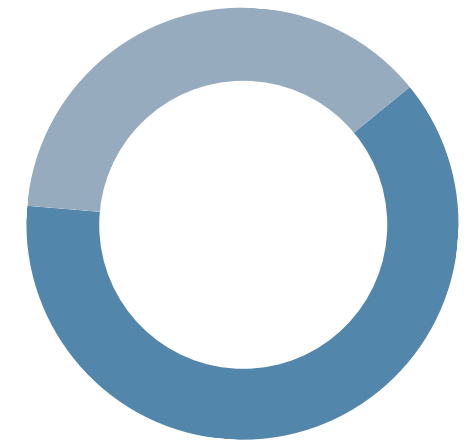
In Kind	\$ 142,737
Family Stroll	\$ 20,844
Financial Aid	\$ 1,500
Mark R. Kravitz Fund	\$ 48,943
Unrestricted	\$ 483,216
Restricted	\$ 1,992,500
Expansion	\$ 2,463,443
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,153,183</b>

## Operating Revenue



Care4kids	\$ 755,447
New Haven Day Care	\$ 750,359
School Readiness	\$ 733,369
Total Government Grants	\$ 2,239,175
Contributions	\$ 5,153,183
Tuition and Other Income	\$ 1,327,166
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,766,051</b>

## Operating Expenses



Salaries and Benefits	\$ 3,191,970
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 1,938,519
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,130,489</b>

Operating Revenue	\$ 5,130,489
Expenses	\$ 5,130,489
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

Restricted Expansion Revenue	\$ 3,635,562
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 3,635,562</b>



**Friends Center**  
*for Children*



**FriendsCenterforChildren.org**

**203-FRIENDS (374-3637)**

25 Flint Street  
New Haven, CT 06513

227 East Grand Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06513

495 Blake Street  
New Haven, CT 06515

881 - 883 Whalley Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06515