



FRIENDS of the
CHILDREN

Boston

Friends of the Children-Boston

We Are Relentless, So They Can Be Resilient



What We Do

Friends of the Children was built around a simple solution: enter their lives early, provide them with a dedicated, caring adult and stay by their side, no matter what.

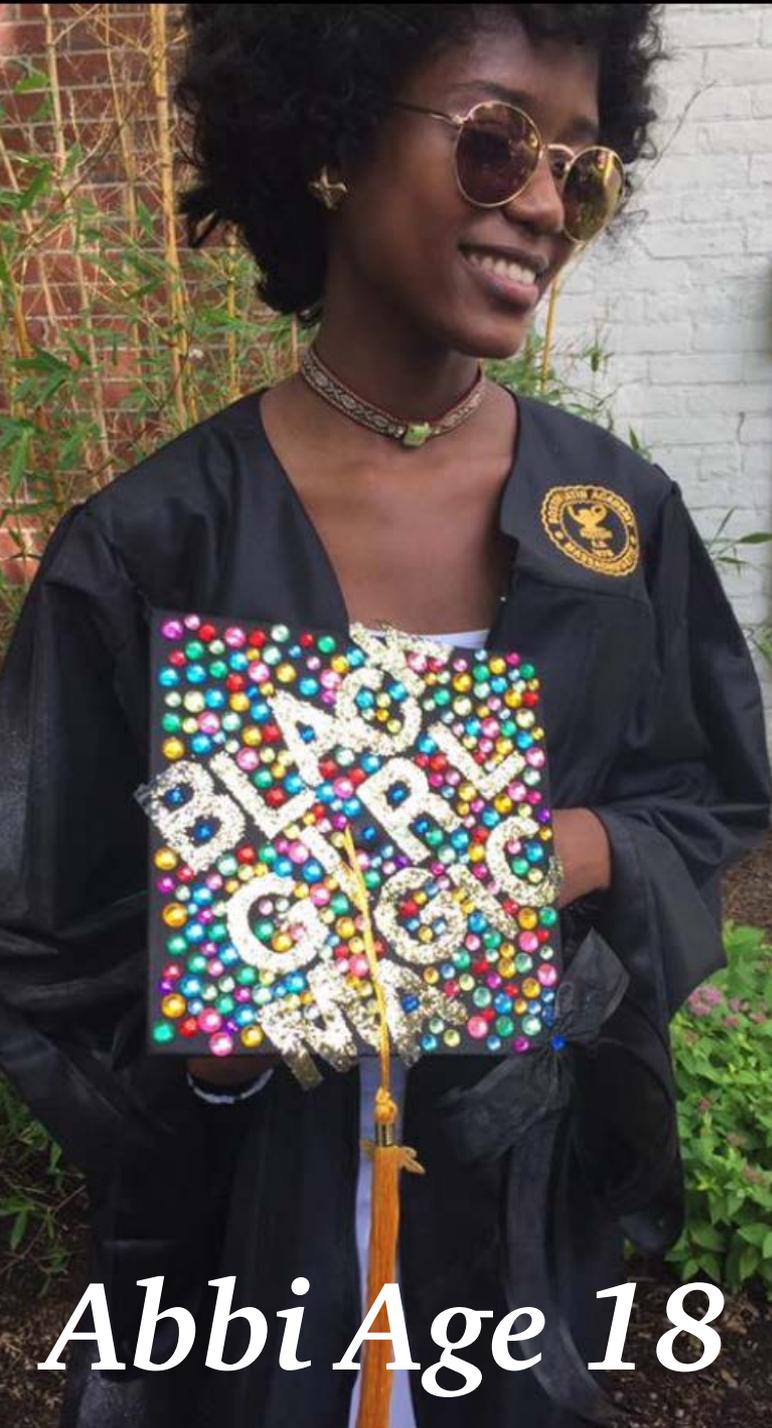
Through deep, transformative, long-term mentoring relationships we start early and stay active in young people's lives, empowering them to:

- Graduate from high school
- Form healthy relationships
- Avoid early parenting
- Avoid juvenile justice system
- Write a new story for themselves

We break the cycle of generational poverty

Our Model consists of six (6) critical components:

- 1) We seek out and select the highest-risk children;
- 2) We commit to each child from kindergarten through graduation, No Matter What;
- 3) We employ salaried, professional mentors called "Friends";
- 4) We focus on the complete transformation of each child;
- 5) We work in and with our community; and
- 6) We evaluate, measure, and improve.



Abbi Age 18

Our Results

Our high intensity/high impact model, proven through rigorous evaluation, increases graduation rates, and decreases teen parenting and juvenile justice involvement while focusing on the growth potential of each child.

Our youth, or as we call them Achievers

- Perform better in school;
- Show improved social emotional development;
- Make better choices;
- Show improved health and wellness; and
- Are developing solid plans and skills for the future

Our Achievers

- Graduate from high school; Although 41% of our youth have parents who did not;
- Avoid the juvenile justice system; Although 48% of our youth have parents who were incarcerated; and
- Avoid early parenting; Although 25% of our youth were born to a teen parent

We create a ripple, teachers report that *Friends of the Children* has a **direct impact on their classroom. Families report less stress** knowing that their child has a Friend in their lives.



What it Means to Be a Friend



Imagine...

If every child regardless of circumstance had a caring adult by their side from kindergarten through high school graduation. To **mentor** them, **advocate** for them and serve as a **leader**.

At *Friends of the Children*, this is our reality. The vision we have for every child we serve.

We call our professional mentors "**Friends**" because it isn't just a job. They are forming meaningful relationships with our youth that last for years.

Friends ensure their Achievers are getting the education, support, and wrap-around **services they need to thrive** to break the cycle of generational poverty. This could look like:

- Helping an Achiever find constructive outlets for stress and frustration
- Advocating for a special education service at an Achiever's school
- Being the consistent adult in an Achiever's life as they move from placement to placement in the foster care system
- Often, the Friend is the only person the family calls when a crisis occurs.

This is what it means to be a Friend.



Why 12.5 Years?

Because every child deserves the chance to write a new story for themselves.

Children born into poverty and who have experienced trauma are at risk for dropping out of school, substance abuse, incarceration and teen parenting. [At Friends-Boston, we do not shy away from actively seeking out and serving the highest risk kids.](#)



In fact, we believe that these are indeed the kids we must embrace and do so by providing them with a paid professional mentor from kindergarten until they graduate - no matter what!



Research has shown that the single most important factor for [building resiliency in children](#) who face the highest risks is a caring and [consistent relationship](#) with an adult.

To that end, we've developed a unique and revolutionary model that ensures quality, consistency and commitment to the highest-risk children so that we can make [transformational change](#) that [breaks the cycle of generational poverty](#).



Our 12.5 year commitment to children facing the greatest number of risk factors initiates a remarkable transformation that impacts not only the Achievers, but their families and creates a ripple that extends to their community.

We know that every child has untapped potential and their stories can be changed.

Generational Change Starts With...

A Rigorous Selection Process

As part of our mission to seek out and select youth who have experienced multiple traumas, we partner with Boston Public Schools in communities with high concentrations of poverty and limited access to resources. Our annual child selection process is based on a research based rubric and has been found to be a proactive and effective system to target interventions to children that are traditionally difficult to reach. Our screening criteria for selection closely mirror those of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths-Comprehensive (CANS) assessment used by child protective/foster care systems nationwide.

Family Risk Factors Factored Into Selection*

- Housing instability
- Child welfare
- Poverty
- Food instability
- Born to a teen parent
- Lack of paternal involvement
- Parent incarceration
- Low parental education
- Parent criminal behavior
- Single parent households
- Parent substance abuse
- Parent health problems
- Parent domestic abuse

**By the age of 5, 77% have experienced four or more of the 13 indicators of risk listed above.*

Child Risk Factors Factored Into Selection*

- Aggressive behavior
- Social withdrawal
- Very low self-esteem
- Poor school attendance
- Ineffective social/relationship skills
- Poor work habits and performance
- Highly sexualized behavior
- Low tolerance for frustration
- Poor problem solving skills
- Grief issues, depression or anxiety
- Anger management problems
- Poor personal hygiene

***Over 50% of our youth had four or more of the above risk factors in their in the past 2 years.*

...And Builds Toward

A Celebration of Resiliency

Protective factors increase resiliency and support positive outcomes.

The more protective factors a child has, the more likely it is that s/he will be able to remain resilient in the face of extreme stress.



Friends of the Children-Boston **increases protective factors** by providing:

- A **caring and consistent adult relationship throughout their school-aged years**
- Role modeling **healthy relationships**
- A set of high **expectations** and **aspirations for a future** each Achiever
- Help in **skills development** (social, self-esteem, problem solving, etc...)
- Help in identifying and developing special talents such as art or sports; or as we call it **finding their spark**
- A sense of **hope and belonging**
- **Advocacy** for appropriate supportive services in and out of school
- Development of a **growth mindset** through learning and new experiences
- **Resources** for family support, referrals when appropriate



It Makes Economic Sense

\$1 = \$7

The Harvard Business School Association of Oregon showed that for every \$1 invested in *Friends of the Children*, the community benefits over \$7 in saved social costs.

Helping one Achiever saves the community \$900,000!

A Powerful Network Already in Place

And poised to engage more of Boston's highest risk young people

Leaders in the Youth Development Movement

We are proud to partner with:

- MENTOR – The National Mentoring Partnership
- Mass Mentoring Partnership
- Friends of the Children National Network
- The Rhodes Lab at UMass Boston
- Boston University School of Social Work
- Boston Center for Youth & Families

Leaders in the Philanthropic Community

We have earned the support of:*

- Santander Bank
- Cummings Foundation
- Mabel Louise Riley Foundation
- Wellington Management Foundation
- State Street Foundation
- Edwin S Webster Foundation
- Amelia Peabody Foundation
- The Boston Foundation
- Liberty Mutual Foundation
- Nordblom Foundation
- The Philanthropy Connection

**\$25,000 and up supporters*

Leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility

We are proud to partner with:

- BCG Connect
- Foodies Urban Market
- KPMG
- FH Perry Builders
- Eaton Vance
- McCarter & English
- Boston Private Bank
- MaidPro
- Constant Contact
- Building Impact

And Will Create Transformative Impact Through Generational Change

Last Year Alone:

- Engaged 124 Achievers with one on one professional mentoring
- Provided over 24,000 hours of direct professional mentoring services to Achievers
- 100% of program graduates are either enrolled in post-secondary education or gainfully employed
- 90% of Achievers progressed on time to the next grade.
- 81% of Achievers attended school regularly, as defined as missing less than 16 days
- 98% of Achievers have avoided school suspensions
- 94% of Achievers made progress toward or met their school success goals as detailed in their Roadmap for Success, including classroom behavior with feedback from teachers and schools.
- 90% of our high-school Achievers were employed over the summer.
- All teen Achievers received targeted career and work readiness trainings such as resume building and mock interview, and college-focused support including college visits and academic counseling.
- 93% of Achievers made progress toward or met their social/emotional skill goals as detailed in their Roadmap for Success.
- 99% of our Achievers have avoided the juvenile justice system
- 100% have avoided early parenting



Are You Ready to Help Them Write a New Story?

We envision a world where the cycle of poverty and disadvantage are broken, and children are able to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Friends of the Children is committed to breaking cycles, changing attitudes, developing skills and shifting mindsets. We are the only organization in Massachusetts committed to supporting children for twelve and a half years.

By catching children when they're young, bringing professional rigor to the task and making a long-term, virtually unconditional commitment to our Achievers, we are working to shift expectations about the kinds of changes that can be achieved in a social program that targets children who face multiple risk factors.

Join us as a partner and become a an agent of generational change. We will customize a sponsorship package that meets your unique needs, budget and objectives.

Be part of the story, together we can make generational change possible.