For 181 years, Children’s Friend has put the well-being of children first. The children and families we serve face many obstacles in their lives, including: poverty, language barriers, a lack of education, substance abuse, and difficulty accessing health care. Because of these obstacles, many parents struggle to properly care for their children.

This is where the Children’s Friend community comes in. We help families build the foundation for healthy and productive lives by creating safe and nurturing environments for children during the crucial early years, and by helping parents gain access to essential resources, education, and support they need.

About Children’s Friend
Children’s Friend, a non-profit organization founded in 1834, is Rhode Island’s oldest child welfare organization and a leading provider of child welfare, family support, mental health, and child development services. Children’s Friend is a member of the Child Welfare League of America and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation.
Dear Friends,

2015 was a year of investment and innovation for Children’s Friend as we launched a number of exciting new initiatives to better serve our families.

We began 2015 by opening the doors to a new center in Providence for families. Our Hartford Center, located at 550 Hartford Avenue, offers Head Start services, child-care, family counseling, family visiting, mental health supports, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Our ability to do this is directly related to the federal government re-instating some of the sequestration dollars that so dramatically reduced Head Start previously. This is an investment in the families in this neighborhood as we work to ensure that all children start school on equal footing with their peers across the state.

Our program, Project Connect, has continued its effort to share the incredible program design that has evolved here over the past 25 years. This year, we have been consulting with the District of Columbia as part of their child welfare system of care change. Our Project Connect team has trained three separate teams to work across all eight wards in Washington, D.C. They have developed fidelity protocols to ensure that the effectiveness of the program is thoroughly replicated. Additionally, data from the positive outcomes of our Project Connect program was featured in the Journal of Public Child Welfare in December 2015.

We also took a bold new step in our agency’s Strategic Plan by investing a tremendous amount of design work in an integrated electronic client record. This will allow over 23 different program areas to communicate and understand what is happening for the children and families we collectively serve. The agency invested in the infrastructure, software, and equipment needed for this undertaking. Staff invested much time and effort in learning new skills and participating in designing and scenario testing as we prepared for a 2016 launch. Teams worked together to break down department silos as we continue to strive towards the goal of a seamless integration of services throughout our agency.

Our Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships also launched this year. Our innovative design has garnered the attention of New England federal leaders, as well as those in Washington, D.C. We are pleased to support children at the most powerful developmental point in their lives. WIC services expanded to meet an immediate need when other community WIC offices were closing. We opened a new WIC office at our Berkshire Center, in the Chad Brown neighborhood of Providence, and extended WIC office hours at our other sites to accommodate families.

New Head Start classrooms opened in elementary schools right in the communities we serve to help build lasting relationships and connections for families. Children are now able to attend Head Start right where they’ll later attend kindergarten. Our families immediately become part of the school community, which later aids in the transition to kindergarten for their children. We also opened two state-funded Pre-K classrooms, to help prepare four-year-old children for kindergarten. We are committed to high quality early childhood education, and are acutely aware of the need to support kindergarten readiness through high quality, research-based educational programming that supports individual needs. We involve family members as partners in their child’s education and in program decision-making.

Children’s Friend is able to do all this because we have a community of partners and supporters who help us each and every day. From the leadership of our Board of Directors, Board Committees, and our Head Start Policy Council and Parent Committees to our federal and state funders, as well as corporate, community, and individual donors, and our volunteers, we cannot do this important work without you.

In these pages, we celebrate the community we serve — the families who strive every day to create better lives for their children and the greater community who supports them in these efforts. We are all in this together and our shared goal is a better future for our children.

Thank you for all you do for Children’s Friend. Your support has a great impact on the families we serve.

Sincerely,

David Caprio, President and Chief Executive Officer
Andrea*, a woman in her mid-thirties, was referred to Children’s Friend by DCYF. She had a long history of using alcohol to cope with a traumatic life. Andrea was no stranger to the court system and due to a previous jail sentence, Andrea’s two daughters had been removed from her care and her mother was raising them.

At age 30, Andrea gave birth to healthy, twin boys and despite her history, she was able to take them home from the hospital. A few years later, she found herself struggling with her dependency on alcohol once again. Children’s Friend stepped in and immediately began working with Andrea. At Children’s Friend, we show our parents a better approach when dealing with life’s struggles. Project Connect staff are specially trained in substance abuse and child welfare risk assessment.

Andrea arrived intoxicated for her second meeting with Children’s Friend staff and she had to be reported to DCYF. As a result, she temporarily lost custody of her boys. This was a wake-up call for Andrea. She did not want to go down this path again. She knew she had to make a serious change for this to happen and she could not do it on her own.

Children’s Friend staff and DCYF were there to get her back on track. With their assistance, Andrea was accepted into a recovery-based shelter. Everyone involved noticed the difference in her commitment to sobriety.

After she successfully completed her program, Andrea was reunited with her boys and transitioned into a more independent housing option that provided intensive case management, groups, as well as a clean and sober community. Children’s Friend Project Connect staff were there every step of the way, providing individualized services and support, as well as linking Andrea with important community resources.

Andrea continues to receive support through Project Connect and meets regularly with her family worker, who has been with her since day one. She receives monthly visits from a Project Connect nurse and she also participates in weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. Her case is now closed with DCYF and her children are happy and healthy. Andrea’s family worker stated, “Andrea always hits it out of the park with her parenting skills. She’s a trail blazer. I see her getting the proper certifications to become a mentor—at the very least. We teach people how to fish and Andrea is a pure example of that. It has been a true privilege to work with her over the past year. I always tell her that she is the one who did all the work.”

*The names of the children and families we serve have been changed to protect privacy and confidentiality.

Project Connect — A National Model with Remarkable Results

Project Connect is an evidence-based national model that provides intensive, home-based services for families identified by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Project Connect is the only program in the state that works with DCYF by helping parents achieve a sustainable substance-free lifestyle.
Tammy*, a young mother of two boys, an infant and a toddler, struggled to support and care for her children on her own. She worked long hours in a coffee shop to support her boys. With a low skill set and little education, Tammy could not secure a more stable, higher paying job. Caring for two young boys on her own was so overwhelming. Tammy felt ashamed that she could not give her boys a better life. Her biggest fear was that she would lose them because she could not provide for them adequately. Because of this fear, she had difficulty admitting she needed help and finding the services she needed. Tammy simply tried to manage as best she could on her own, but she often struggled.

The Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships program has changed this family’s life. Tammy was referred to the program and enrolled at Children’s Workshop, a partner of Children’s Friend. In a supportive, collaborative environment, Tammy is able to access the essential supports she needs and the center has become a safe haven for her to learn and grow, right alongside her children.

Tammy was once so leery about allowing “strangers” into her home, even with a shared goal of supporting her children. That is no longer the case. Tammy immediately bonded with the teaching staff and slowly learned to let them into her life little by little. As her boys flourished, she too realized the benefits of these services.

Tammy has made much progress in caring for her children, especially in health and nutrition. She now understands how daily hygiene factors into the overall health of her boys, as well as the importance of following through on medical and dental screenings. Her nurse works with her to prioritize medical appointments and care. The coaching and mentoring she receives is extremely beneficial. Most importantly, the boys are happy, healthy, and learning every day.

“Early Head Start (EHS) has been a game changer for our families,” says Kelli DiDomenico, VP of Family Engagement and Community Relations at Children’s Workshop. “It has allowed us to implement much needed supports and wrap around services that would not be possible without our relationship with EHS. The ability to forge and nurture these healthy relationships with our families is not always easy and as they say, it ‘takes a village’ to achieve. Our EHS programming has facilitated these positive ongoing relationships and in turn has effected real change.”

INnovative services

Partnering Across Rhode Island to Nurture Educational Readiness Statewide

PARTNERS, a partnership between Children’s Friend and licensed child care centers, is a collaborative program to implement a statewide birth-to-five program of excellence. Services provide school readiness for infants and toddlers through high-quality early care, education services and additional family supports.
Anna began working with Children’s Friend and the Healthy Families America (HFA) program when she was 20 weeks pregnant. She was living in substandard housing with her seven boys and needed a lot of help. Anna struggled to support her growing family and care for herself during her pregnancy. She was desperate to find more stability for her family before her child was born.

DCYF had just opened a case on the family for her oldest son. Anna’s first thoughts were: “When I first met my Family Support Worker, Michelle, I was at a time in my life that I didn’t know what tomorrow was going to bring. I was facing an unplanned pregnancy, having problems with my older children, and had no one to turn to. I felt scared and alone.”

With Michelle’s help, Anna found better housing for her family, as well as additional community supports. Anna’s oldest son was referred to a teen behavioral program and her two year old received developmental supports through Children’s Friend, and her other children were enrolled in Head Start services.

Within a month, Anna had moved into her new home. The family received furniture from a community furniture bank and essential nutritional supports from food pantries in the area. Anna also visited the Children’s Friend clothing closets for the boys, who were in serious need of clothing.

Just a few weeks later, Anna gave birth to her son, Jacob. As the family settled into their new life and home, Anna’s oldest son’s behavior began to improve and DCYF closed her case. Anna is now able to think about the future and how to better support her family. She participates in the HFA TINK KNIT group - allowing her to stay at home with her baby, knit items, and turn them in for cash.

Anna sought support when she needed it the most and her family is now thriving. Baby Jacob is now a year old and he loves to walk, talk, and play. Anna loves to learn about her baby’s social, emotional, and physical development, something she reviews with her Family Support Worker during home visits.

“I am so thankful for the resources and support HFA has provided me and my family. Even though I am not a first time mother, with each visit I learn more and more about doing what is best for my children to grow healthy and strong and to be a loving parent to them. Working with HFA has brought out the best in me. HFA has helped me realize the strength I have always had inside,” said Anna.
Maria*, a young mom, fled her native country with four children to escape a violent and abusive marriage. She came to the United States with the hope of a better life for her children. She dreamed of going to school, learning to drive, and having more freedom, as well as seeing her children grow up in a safe, nurturing, and loving environment, where they could flourish. Maria and her children settled quickly with extended family in the area and her two older children were enrolled at our Dexter Center.

Unfortunately, Maria quickly found that her new living situation and promised family support was more tenuous than she anticipated. Just as her new life was beginning to unfold, the realization of her dreams were again just out of reach. Alone and facing a significant language barrier, there was absolutely no place for this family to go.

Although she was new to the area and to Children’s Friend, Maria felt comfortable reaching out to Children’s Friend staff. The Children’s Friend team got to work. The support went across sites and departments. It was agency-wide. Everyone did what they could to support each other and the family.

Brainstorming between the Early Intervention (EI) and Healthy Families America (HFA) leadership teams resulted in identifying the right supports for this family. Children’s Friend staff visited the house and through a series of events that included the police and DCYF, Marie was moved to a safe location with her children, funded by the Emergency Crisis Fund. The team then searched for a longer-term solution for the family. The EI team coordinated with the Family Care Community Partnership to offer high fidelity wrap around services to the family and help connect them to community supports. The entire Children’s Friend team did everything possible to support this family. It’s the Children’s Friend Way!

With support of Children’s Friend, Maria has found employment, childcare and housing for her family and her older children remain in Head Start. Children’s Friend WIC services provide access to healthy, nutritious food for her young family. She continues to meet with a Family Support Worker.

Maria’s story is a testament to the power of integrated, wrap-around services and the dedication of the Children’s Friend team. Their commitment to identifying and intervening at-risk children and families is evident in their efforts to support Maria and her children. Integrated, Wrap Around Services Support Vulnerable Families Best

Children’s Friend services are proactive, seeking to identify children at-risk and to intervene as early as possible to prevent adverse outcomes. An integrated seamless system of services ensures that children and families receive the support they need, regardless of the point of entry into the agency. It centralizes the experience of the child and family and recognizes that they are the reason for everything that we do.
To Our Donors:  
OUR THANKS to YOU!

Children’s Friend is deeply grateful to the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations who generously invest in the lives of our most vulnerable children and families. Thanks to your investment, you have provided essential services for our families. Thank you for your generosity! You truly make the difference!

Please join us in recognizing those donors who supported Children’s Friend in 2015.

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**WE RECALL**

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We very much appreciate your generous support! The following lists have been prepared with great care. If you feel as though your name has been omitted or is incorrectly listed, please accept our sincerest apologies & notify Stacy Couto, Vice President External Affairs, at 401-276-4306 or scouto@cfsri.org. Thank you!
Holiday Drive

Each year, the Spirit of Giving Holiday Drive provides gifts of clothing and toys to make the winter holidays a special time for Rhode Island’s most vulnerable families. Children’s Friend matches sponsors with families who are currently receiving services from Children’s Friend and are in great need.

Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our donors, 2015 was our largest year yet. Thousands of donated coats, hats, gloves, blankets, warm clothing, books and toys are essential in making the holiday season brighter for our families.

Thanks to the support and participation of our generous sponsors and volunteers, the 2015 Holiday Drive served a record 1,465 families!

Special Thanks to Our Top Holiday Drive Sponsors

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We all have a responsibility
to help children in need. Through our readers, we are proud to support charitable causes like Children’s Friend.

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to help children in need. Through our readers, we are proud to support charitable causes like Children’s Friend.
In 1834, Harriet Ware, a young school teacher from Massachusetts, began her work to provide a refuge for children in desperate situations. The result of her vision is the Children’s Friend you see today, an organization serving over 38,000 people across our state with flexible, effective, and culturally-relevant services.

Since our founding, generous donors with a long term vision saw the need to perpetuate Children’s Friend for future generations. The Harriet Ware Society, named for the agency’s founder, Harriet Ware, honors those who help to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of our state’s most vulnerable children long into the future.

Doris Stearn Donovan, is one such person. Her introduction to Children’s Friend came when she was in charge of Programs at the Rhode Island Foundation. She saw that there was a great gap in children’s services in Rhode Island. As Children’s Friend grew, she felt drawn to this organization and saw it as an important part of the solution to this vacuum.

As soon as she left her position at the Rhode Island Foundation — thereby removing any conflict of interest — she joined the Children’s Friend Board of Directors. Over the next decade, she served in many leadership roles for the organization, including Chairman of the Board.

“In these capacities, I had ample opportunity to watch the organization increasingly fulfill a variety of the needs of young children and their families with superb professionalism, passion and excellent results. For me, it was a ‘no brainer’ to include Children’s Friend in my estate plans.”

Children’s Friend is amazingly close to having served Rhode Island’s vulnerable young children for 200 years. I believe that it will continue to be an irreplaceable resource for many, many years to come. I have become a member of the Harriet Ware Society. For me, it was a ‘no brainer’ to include Children’s Friend in my estate plans.

“By planning now, I have assured that my financial wishes will be met even after my death,” says Doris. Individuals who remember Children’s Friend in their will and who notify us of their intention qualify for future generations. The Harriet Ware Society, named for the agency’s founder, Harriet Ware, honors those who help to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of our state’s most vulnerable children long into the future.
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David & Eleanor Lewis

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In Honor of the Dailey,
Edward Laughlin

In Memory of
In Honor of Matthew Egan
Anniversaries!

In Memory of
In Memory of Norma

In Memory of Rosemary Dwyer
In Honor of my colleagues,

In Memory of Katherine Burke
Beverly & James Burke

In Honor of
In Honor of

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Our Team – The Children’s Friend Staff

Children’s Friend employees are dedicated and committed to the mission of the agency. Their combined skills, creativity, and knowledge have a great impact on the families we serve.
Foster Heroes

All children need safe and loving homes. Children’s Friend Foster Parents serve Rhode Island’s most vulnerable children—well after the work day is over and most of us go home at the end of the day. Our Foster Parents come from all walks of life and from all types of professions; however, they have one thing in common: a commitment to making a difference in a child’s life by providing a safe and loving home. Please join us in thanking our dedicated Foster Parents for opening their hearts and homes to children in need.

2015 Foster Parents

Charles Anderson & Lisa Chico
Michael & Maria Anthon
Timothy & Heather Ashworth
George & Laura Baptista
Christopher Benoit & Carol Garcia-Benoit
Chris & Dawn Berenson
Jay & Joy Bianco
Matthew & Elisabeth Blair
Nate & Lisa Blaser
Stephen & Amy Brock
Ed & Crystal Casey

Charles Anderson & Lisa Chico
Jeffrey & Sara Diarne
Mary Dowd-Struck
Ryan & Catherine Fecteau
Michael & James Flynn
Jeff Foster & Elaine Gabelli
David & Kimarae Giralis
Scott & Vanessa Hampson
Miquelena Henderson
Brad & Dawn Holveke
Barry Bibotsen & Tracy Garey Bibotsen
Robert & Joyce Jackson

Nicholas & Haley Jensen
Dean & Jill Kitzner
Jason & Meredith Matthews
Summer & Jody Matianger
Trisha Molloy
Elizabeth McCabe
Benn Mello
Andrew & Danielle Nelson
Timothy & Luigina Henderson
Barry Bibotsen & Tracy Garey Bibotsen
Robert & Joyce Jackson

Scott & Diane Rotondo
Kelley Ryan
Karen Scotti
Kevin & Tara Smith
Tony & Zoe Stekle
Timothy & Deborah Steen
David & Deborah Sutherland
Rebecca Wallace
Linda Wilkinson
Matthew & Allyson Wolfsazek

If you have thought about becoming a foster parent and would like to learn more, please contact Joyce Tormey at 401-276-4318 or jtormey@cfsri.org.

Many Thanks!

We are grateful to the many individuals, and corporate and community groups who volunteer with us each year. Your support allows us to make a positive difference for the families we serve every day. You put our mission in motion. The investment you have made in supporting our families is essential to all we do, all year long.

Heather Ashworth
Sunday School Coordinator Westridge Congregational Church
Chair of the Children’s Friend Foster Parent Advisory Council

Your Investment Has Great Impact

Thanks to your support, Children’s Friend provided essential services to our most vulnerable children throughout Rhode Island. Let’s do the numbers...

38,813 children and their family members benefited from Children’s Friend in 2015.

117 children and families received concurrent permanency planning services, foster care placement, and adoption services—including children with special needs.

4,752 vulnerable children and their families received child and family development services, including education, health, nutrition, social services, and other supports.

283,537 nutritious meals were provided to children in our programs.

309 children were placed in high quality, bilingual childcare services.

552 children and their families received individual and family counseling services addressing issues of loss, parent-child conflict, school and behavioral issues, etc.

321 early care and school age educational professionals participated in training and technical assistance.

540 infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities were provided therapy and educational services.

112 substance-affected families participated in intensive home-based services designed to help parents overcome addiction while safely parenting their children.

2,018 families received home-based outreach services intended to promote the health and well-being of mothers and their newborn children.

10,325 families participated in a nutrition program that provides healthy foods, nutrition education, and referrals to doctors, dentists, and other community services.

238 families received home visits by a registered nurse including prenatal and parenting education, developmental screenings, social supports, as well as support for educational and professional goals for the client.

282 expectant mothers and families with newborns received home visiting services to promote and strengthen positive parent-child relationships, promote positive growth and development in children, and build strengths of families and their protective factors.

34 pregnant or parenting teens received essential support in building daily life skills, educational goals, and a strong foundation for their child’s future.

101 at-risk families received high fidelity wrap around services.

28 families participated in parent-child relationship-based therapeutic intervention and support services to improve parenting abilities.
**Statistics**

**Revenue**

- Contracts: 19,965,669
- Fee for Service: 5,154,707
- Investment Income (losses): 836,286
- Contributions: 901,996
- Donated goods, services, facilities: 519,481
- Other Income: 67,749
- **Total Operating Revenue**: $27,445,888

**Expenses**

- Early Intervention: 1,418,373
- FCCP: 457,481
- Family Childcare Food Program: 2,059,835
- Family Counseling: 513,603
- Family Support: 16,074,728
- Foster Care/Permanency: 814,904
- Health & Nutrition Services: 3,895,906
- Project Connect: 1,362,020
- **Total Program Expenses**: $26,596,850
- Administration: 345,062
- Development/Fundraising: 502,948
- **Total Operating Expenses**: $27,444,860

**Annual Income Statement**

- **Wise Stewardship of Resources**
  - With limited funding at the local, state, and federal levels, disciplined spending allows Children’s Friend to provide a remarkable level of services and staffing when our families need us the most. This is accomplished thanks to wise stewardship of our resources and a disciplined “spending rule” that holds our annual spending to 5.5% of the rolling 3-year market value average of the endowment.
  - You can invest in the future of Children’s Friend and earmark donations to the endowment by contacting Stacy Couto, Vice President External Affairs, at 401-276-4306 or scouto@cfsri.org.

- **100% of Your Gift Supports Our Programs**
  - Our Endowment is as important as ever to the financial security of the organization. Our endowment earnings cover administrative and fundraising costs, allowing us to assure our donors that 100% of their gift will make the difference in a child’s life rather than being used for a fund raising event or for administration.

- **Become a Monthly Donor and Make a Sustaining Contribution**
  - You can ensure that our most vulnerable families have the resources they need throughout the year. Give a recurring monthly gift and sustain the needs of our children every day. Your monthly gift provides Children’s Friend with regular and reliable income to respond to the needs of our families.

- **See Our Mission in Action!**
  - Come in for a tour and learn more about what we do! Contact Maryellen O’Mahony, Director of Advancement, at 401-752-7624 or momahony@cfsri.org to arrange a personal tour at one of our sites.

- **Looking for Ways to Help?**
  - We need you! There are countless ways to make a difference in the lives of our youngest and most vulnerable children. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Maryellen O’Mahony, Director of Advancement, at 401-752-7624 or momahony@cfsri.org.