

# Nonprofit Friends Of The Children - Los Angeles Completes Countywide Growth Strategy with San Fernando Valley Milestone

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, May 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Friends of the Children – Los Angeles (Friends LA) announced today the completion of its multi-year countywide growth strategy, confirming its expansion into the San Fernando Valley and establishing service coverage across every Service Planning Area in Los Angeles County, aligning with the start of Foster Care Awareness Month and Mental Health Awareness Month.

**FR1ENDS** of the  
**CH1LDREN**

**Los Angeles**

**Generational Change, One Child at a Time**

Friends LA

With 44 long-term, professional mentors (“Friends”) now serving 286 youth and their families, Friends LA operates a permanent, countywide network committed to supporting each child for 12+ years — from kindergarten through high school graduation.

Additional details regarding the San Fernando Valley site location and launch timeline will be shared once finalized. Today’s announcement reflects the completion of Friends LA’s countywide expansion plan and its commitment to sustained presence across Los Angeles County.

Friends LA makes a 12+ year commitment to every child it serves. From a student’s earliest days in kindergarten through high school graduation, a paid, professional mentor shows up consistently — no matter what challenges arise. This sustained presence provides stability during the most formative years of a child’s life and creates a foundation for academic achievement, confidence, and long-term success.

“With this milestone, we are fulfilling our commitment to serve the many diverse communities across Los Angeles County,” said Jorie Das, Executive Director of Friends LA. “What began as a careful growth strategy is now a permanent countywide network of support rooted in trust, consistency, and deep community relationships — the kind of support that strengthens not just outcomes, but the overall wellbeing of children and families.”

Los Angeles County is vast and constantly in motion — families relocate, schools change, systems shift. In a region defined by scale and movement, long-term consistency is rare. Friends LA was built to change that — ensuring that no matter how life shifts across the County, a young person has the steady support and guidance of a trusted adult.

At a time when both mental health and child welfare systems are under increasing strain, consistent, long-term relationships play a critical role in supporting children’s wellbeing and helping families stay safely together.

“Friends of the Children – Los Angeles has reached a wonderful milestone of expanding its access to long-term, relationship-based mentorship for children and families across LA County, especially Black girls. I am proud to have authored the motion that enabled this expansion, and I am deeply grateful for this partnership that our youth deserve.” - Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell

“The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) is proud to partner with Friends of the Children - Los Angeles in advancing a model that truly reflects what early intervention should look like,” said LACDMH Director Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D. “Their long-term, relations-based approach is producing meaningful outcomes for children and families, particularly those most impacted by systemic inequities and trauma. What makes this work especially powerful is the alignment across systems – child welfare, education and behavioral health – coming together to support the whole child and family. This type of collaboration is exactly what is needed to drive lasting change, strengthen communities, and ensure our young people and families have the opportunity to thrive.”

“Children and families involved in the child welfare system need more than short-term interventions—they need stability, consistency, and trusted relationships they can rely on over time. What sets Friends LA apart is their commitment to walking alongside young people for the long term, not just at moments of crisis. At DCFS, we confidently refer children—especially those in crisis—because we know they will be met with unwavering support and a model that delivers real, measurable outcomes. This kind of sustained, relationship-based care is critical to helping children heal, build resilience, and ultimately thrive, and it’s exactly the kind of partnership we need to create lasting change across Los Angeles County.”

Brandon T. Nichols – Director, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

With countywide growth complete, Friends LA now shifts from expansion to long-term sustainability.

“Becoming countywide is not the finish line — it is the foundation,” added Das. “Our focus now is ensuring that every child and family who joins Friends LA receives the full 12+ year journey we promise.”

About Friends of the Children – Los Angeles Friends LA empowers youth facing the greatest systemic barriers by providing each child with a paid, professional mentor from ages 4–6 through high school graduation — a 12+ year commitment, no matter what. Through a two-generation approach, the organization strengthens families, supports long-term wellbeing,

builds social capital, and advances whole-family stability.

Friends LA partners closely with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and community-based partner organizations to identify and support children and families at highest risk of foster care involvement. By investing in prevention-focused, relationship-based mentorship, Friends LA works to mitigate trauma and interrupt cycles of system involvement before they begin.

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