For many children, the transition to middle school can be difficult, and some lack the skills they need to be successful. For these children, Friends of Youth offers ‘Check & Connect’ as a great solution. This prevention intervention program identifies children needing additional academic assistance and gives them the individualized support they need to help them stay on track. A great example of the power of this program is the following story.

Sam finished 6th and 7th grade with failing marks, including a 1.06 GPA in 7th grade – failing 4 out of 6 of his classes. Sam told us in no uncertain terms that he did not care about school.

In 8th grade, with the help of his Check & Connect Advocate, Sam joined a study class. Although he was initially resistant, Sam stayed in the class, and began to complete more of his classwork and homework, even though he still had some failing grades. Sam and his advocate concentrated on improving basic skills that would make him more successful in school, such as note taking, general organization, and time management. Slowly, Sam began passing every class, and he ended 8th grade with a 2.1 GPA – exceeding his goal of a 2.0 GPA.

Sam, like many young and struggling students, had a hard time feeling successful. His overall negative feelings about school led to poor work habits. With the support and patience of his Check & Connect Advocate, Sam was able to learn to set goals, find motivation in small improvements, and receive unwavering encouragement as he worked hard to make progress. We are lucky to have worked alongside such a talented young man, and we are excited to see Sam continue his positive journey through high school and beyond.

To learn more about our Check & Connect program, please visit http://www.friendsofyouth.org/preventionServices.aspx
During the last year, we have seen a steady and concerning increase in the number of young adults seeking emergency shelter. We are turning away an average of 3 young adults each night despite our summer capacity of 15 beds and our winter capacity of 20. Help us ensure that all youth have a safe place to sleep every night by supporting our Beds & Buses Campaign. No young person should have to spend the night under a bridge, in a doorway or wandering the streets. Friends of Youth emergency shelter, The Landing, is the only young adult shelter on the Eastside. In the past few years we have seen an increase of homeless young people who seek safe shelter with us, and the need for shelter beds now regularly exceeds our 15 bed capacity. To respond to this need, we are committed to increasing our capacity to 20 beds, year round. To achieve this goal, we need your help.

By donating to our Beds & Buses Campaign, you can help ensure that homeless young people will have a safe place each night – either a bed at The Landing or a bus ticket to another safe location. To ensure this commitment for the next year, we need to raise 78,000 additional dollars in FY15:

$15,000 - Funds an additional bed for the entire year
$1,000 - Funds an additional bed for one month
$500 - Funds 200 bus tickets
$200 - Funds an additional bed for five nights

To learn more about The Landing, please visit friendsofyouth.org/shelters.aspx
To support the campaign: community.friendsofyouth.org/pages/general-donation/landing-donation-form.

Thank you for your donation and your shared commitment to provide safety and support for our community’s youth.

MARILYN SIMPSON Volunteer Spotlight

In February, Marilyn Simpson began volunteering at New Ground Bothell, our housing program for formerly homeless young moms, 18-21. She is extremely supportive of both residents and staff, providing guidance for young moms about activities and routines that are developmentally appropriate for their children. Marilyn also advises our young mothers about parenting, helping them determine the values and behaviors they would like to instill in their children. She emphasizes the importance of modeling behavior and making purposeful choices to achieve desired outcomes. Marilyn is a fantastic support, team player, and is full of wonderful ideas and wisdom. Thank you, Marilyn, for all that you do!
THE WASHINGTON STATE HOMELESS YOUTH ACT
Protecting Our Most Vulnerable Young People

The Washington Coalition for Homeless Youth Advocacy (WACHYA) brings together over 60 members including service providers, funders, and community stakeholders—all dedicated to preventing and ending youth and young adult homelessness in Washington State. Friends of Youth is an active member of the group.

WACHYA members have developed a proposal for a Homeless Youth Act (the Act). The Act is intended to successfully address youth homelessness and help create self-sufficient young adults who can contribute positively to their communities. The Act will reduce the number of youth who become homeless by providing prevention services to communities and families.

Our proposed act includes a Homeless Youth Act Fund (HYAF) to support services for homeless youth across our state. Funding will be provided for programs that offer:

1. Stable Housing,
2. Education and Employment,
3. Permanent Connections, and
4. Social and Emotional Wellbeing

We believe that by working together, we can resolve youth homelessness in Washington State. Learn more by emailing us at info@friendsofyouth.org.

SEVEN NEW BUILDINGS FOR HOMELESS YOUTH
Gratitude for Your Support From Our CEO

On September 4th, we celebrated the completion of seven capital projects to shelter, house and support youth and young adults experiencing homelessness in our community.

After two years of intense activity, made possible by our ‘Housing Our Future’ Capital Campaign, we have opened a new young adult shelter and drop in center; a new home for homeless, runaway and in crisis youth under the age of 18; ten units of new housing for homeless youth ages 16 to 21; ten units of new housing for youth ages 18-21 in extended foster care; and a brand new community based building where our case managers, employment services, and counselors can provide much needed support.

In all of this work, Friends of Youth has been guided by our vision of a world where every youth has every opportunity to succeed.

We appreciate the many supporters, volunteers, staff members, construction teams, board members, public officials, funders, foundation and donors that have played a meaningful role in this campaign to support homeless youth. Each one of you has made a personal contribution, and each and every contribution has made a significant impact in the lives of a young person. Thank you!

Photos of our two new extended foster care homes.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

New Positions

New Ground Totem Lake, our newest transitional living program, is in need of volunteers. Do you like to garden, teach, or cook? We need volunteers to help with pre-cooked or on-site meal donation and teach classes including gardening, cooking, and resumes. Learn more by contacting us at volunteer@friendsofyouth.org or by phone at 425-869-6490 x309.

Thanksgiving Supply Drive

Thanksgiving is around the corner, and we need your help to ensure that our youth have a delicious Thanksgiving meal. We are asking for the following donations:

• Stuffing mix
• Canned yams
• Pie crust
• Cranberry sauce
• Instant potatoes
• Aluminum roasting pan
• Gravy mix
• Pumpkin pie mix
• Cream of mushroom soup
• Perishable food (such as a turkey) can be given through a grocery gift card.

We ask that donations be dropped off at the Kirkland Youth Service Center (13116 NE 132nd St., Kirkland) by November 14th. Also, we encourage donors to assemble their own gift baskets for easy storage and distribution. A complete gift basket will feed a group of four.

If you are interested in volunteering at Friends of Youth, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at 425-869-6490 x309 or volunteer@friendsofyouth.org.
OCTOBER

Issaquah Salmon Days
Oct. 4-5
Salmon Days, a community celebration, is presented by the Issaquah Chamber of Commerce.
Visit us at the Friends of Youth booth as you celebrate the annual return of the salmon. We’ll have coloring activities for the kids and a quiet spot for nursing moms.

NOVEMBER

Youth and Family Services Breakfasts
Riverview - Nov. 5
Issaquah - Nov. 12
Snoq. Valley - Nov. 18
Please join us to support school counseling services for youth in the Riverview, Issaquah, and Snoqualmie Valley School District Communities. RSVP at community.friendsofyouth.org/pages/events-general/yfsbreakfasts

Thanksgiving Supply Drive - through Nov. 14

DECEMBER

Giving Tree
This December, we will be distributing over 5,000 gift request tags for our Giving Tree program, a personal way to brighten the holidays for a young person. If you want to donate cookies and snacks, decorate our storage space, or help organize the gifts as they arrive, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, at 425-869-6490 x309 or volunteer@friendsofyouth.org.

JANUARY

United Way MLK Day of Service
Jan. 19
Join your community, United Way, and Friends of Youth in a day of service to others.

“Everybody can be great because anybody can serve.”
-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.