



Providing Massachusetts children in foster care with enriching activities, opportunities and experiences.

April 27, 2020

Kelsa Zereski
Reliant Foundation
311 Main Street, Suite 202
Worcester, MA 01608

Dear Kelsa,

Thank you for your gift of \$2,500 to Rise Above for laptops and tablets for youth in foster care. During this challenging time, we're honored you have chosen to support children in foster care, helping them stay home safely with bikes, laptops, basketball hoops, arts and crafts, tablets, swing sets and more.

For children in foster care, the COVID-19 pandemic is compounding trauma. Social distancing has torn away the network of supports- therapists, coaches, social workers, teachers, guidance counselors, psychiatrists- that youth in foster care depend on for stability. It is heartbreaking for children to no longer be able to have visits with biological family members, including siblings placed in other foster homes. Providing children who have experienced trauma with consistency and routine is crucial and the COVID-19 pandemic is obviously disrupting any established routines and is setting back the healing process.

In just the last several weeks, because of your help, Rise Above has served over 300 youth.

"I cannot thank Rise Above enough for helping our family in this challenging time. I have a foster son who requires a lot of physical activity to keep him stable and burn off all that anxiety driven energy. With gyms closed and then our local parks closed and our family strongly observing social distancing, we were not sure how we would help him through being at home all the time. Rise Above was so wonderful to help with a sturdy basketball hoop!"
-foster parent



On behalf of our board of directors and the children we serve, thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Sarah Baldiga
Co-founder & Executive Director

Thank you so much
for this generous gift
and for jumping in to help
so quickly!

For your tax records, this gift of \$2,500 is deductible to the fullest extent of the law; no gifts or services were given in exchange for this contribution. If you have any questions about this gift, please contact us at info@weriseabove.org.



“Rise Above provided a Chromebook for this child to get his school work done and meet with his providers. Most importantly this Chromebook and the two others you are providing for his siblings, who are also in care but in different foster homes, will allow them to see each other via video chat.” –foster parent

What Rise Above has provided this child has been enormously helpful. When things started to shut down with COVID-19 we were very worried about him and how the family would be able to safely maintain him in the [foster] home without community supports. (he had been struggling for a while) Although the [virtual] music therapy calms him, it was too expensive for the family to pay out of pocket. We can't thank you enough for the support as we tried to think out of the box to provide this little guy with healthy outlets to keep him safe and stable.” -foster parent

“I just wanted to send a thank you to your organization for the purchase of the climber for my 2 year old foster son. With such unknown times right now, this was a ray of light during all this. Seeing his face light up as he climbs up and through this, and hearing his laugh as he goes down the slide is amazing. Thank you all so much for everything that you are doing and that you continue to provide for foster children throughout the state.”
–foster parent



“Rise Above provided a gift card so the youth could purchase weights; exercise is a positive coping skill for this youth and the weights will help her combat her depression and work towards her long term career goals.” –social worker

“Rise Above is providing a laptop to a child whose foster family I am working with. With all MA schools out for the remainder of the year due to COVID-19, kids are relying on technology for remote learning. This kinship foster parent has multiple children in the home trying to share a computer to get their school work done and it has been challenging for them. An additional computer in the home will be a tremendous help for this foster child who is a sophomore in high school and was already struggling academically before the pandemic.” –social worker