

Helping Young Girls Help Themselves



The first girls found by Patty Zinkowski and Jane McBride



Inside the abandoned school



With Shelter, Education and Support



The dilapidated buildings in Doi Luang



FTD's first generation of Daughters

Seeds of Change

While traveling through northern Thailand in 2002, Jane McBride and Patricia Zinkowski discovered fifteen girls living in an abandoned school in the village of Doi Luang. The girls had little adult supervision and were trying to survive as best they could in an area known for human trafficking agents. The situation was extremely worrying.

Jane and Patty provided financial assistance and promised the girls they would not forget them. They returned to Thailand and made a documentary about the girls' lives in their villages. Each girl had a tragic story to tell. Many were AIDS orphans or had parents in prison. Most lacked ID cards, leaving them 'stateless' and highly vulnerable to traffickers. Something had to be done to protect them before it was too late.

The solution was to offer them safe shelter, education and support. Friends and family pitched in until Friends of Thai Daughters was incorporated as a non-profit in 2005.

The First Five Years



Our first 3 daughters, Pui, Mee and Khai, left, were sent to Varee School in Chiang Mai where they lived with a teacher/chaperone. In 2007 they were joined by several more girls and moved into a small rental property under the care of our first official housemother. This became the model we have followed ever since.

Mee, pictured center above left and below left aged 9, has now become FTD's in-country general manager.

From the start we believed that the girls could not grow up to be what they could not see, so we have made every effort to introduce them to the outside world. Below right, our first Daughters visit the Boothbay Rotary Club, Maine, in 2006, along with Teacher Mammie. Rotary has been an outstanding supporter of FTD from the start.



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The first Sunflower House, in Chiang Rai



Mee and the next generation with a drawing of the new house

Putting Down Roots

Once we had recognized the need that existed amongst the girls and young women of the hill tribe communities, our program grew rapidly. Mee, one of our first graduates, was determined to help, so initially we rented a small house for our growing family, which she ran and which we soon outgrew.

In 2015 we purchased a house in Chiang Rai that became our first Sunflower House. This permanent base provided a new sense of stability for both our organization and our Daughters.

While education is front and center for our Daughters, we do everything we can to give them a well rounded upbringing. They take part in all the extra curricular activities available to them and, as funds allow, we have made it a priority to take them on study tours to different parts of the country. For many, it is the first time they will have left their immediate area and is a huge and valuable learning experience.

FTD 2.0 the Second Generation



Donating blankets in winter



Scuba diving study tour, Koh Mak



A day trip to the Mekong River

Hats Off to Our Graduates



The girls and young women who come through our doors demonstrate emphatically that, given the right type of encouragement, stability and support, they can overcome the most desperate starts in life.

Between 2010 and 2015 our family-scale program began to grow. New young Daughters arrived and our first Daughters became university graduates and moved on to take up interesting and varied careers and we now have a graduate rate of 97%!

Many of our daughters now speak English as well as Thai and their native hill tribe dialect. They have studied languages, accountancy, agriculture, dentistry, nursing, psychology, social work, teaching and the arts, among others. We remain in awe of their resilience and determination.



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Daughters in traditional dress give a concert at Chiang Khong Sunflower House



P'Too, second right, with Chiang Khong Daughters

Growing Fast

With our Sunflower House in Chiang Rai up and running, in 2016 we expanded farther north into the city of Chiang Khong, located on the Laos border.

An existing girls' shelter in the town was in imminent danger of closing due to lack of funding. FTD came to the rescue and created the Chiang Khong Sunflower House under the very capable leadership of long-time trusted collaborator Puangthorn 'Too' Takan. The program was then expanded to mirror FTD's more comprehensive and long-term program.

In 2019 we purchased the land to build the Sunflower Farm outside Chiang Rai in Mae Chan whilst also working hard on our outreach both in Thailand and overseas. We established popular volunteer and Daughter Sponsor programs, both of which provide important connections between our Daughters and the wider world.

Giving Back to the Community



Play at her high school graduation



Biking in Chiang Rai



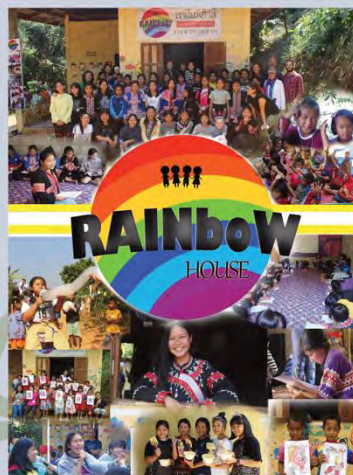
Graduate Aoy, back row left, returns to teach a literacy class for FTD

Finding Gold at Rainbow House

FTD's *pay it forward* philosophy was put into action in the summer of 2018 when our Daughter Nara, from our Chiang Khong house, decided to honor her late mother by converting her concrete house into a village learning center.

Christened *Rainbow House*, it was freshly painted and equipped with donated books and art supplies. There, our Sunflower Daughters and FTD staff teach English, art, music, reading and life skills to village children, both girls and boys.

The Rainbow House project is modeled on FTD's partnership with LIT World's LIT Clubs and, as a result, FTD was invited to participate in Global G.L.O.W.'s Annual Global HerStory Summit that same October in New York, which several of our Daughters attended.



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Pickleball at Jasmine Farm



Jasmine Farm in Chiang Khong

Twenty Years of FTD

For the past five years our emphasis has been on building for the future, moving from our ad hoc accommodation to purpose-built organic farms. Our new homes in Mae Chan and Chiang Khong are wonderful, and we thank everyone who made them happen.

But while we celebrate these successes, we remain focused on our central goal of preventing child trafficking in northern Thailand by providing at-risk girls with shelter, education and love.

For 20 years, that has been about so much more than bricks and mortar. We also build:

- *Trust* - through working closely with the communities we serve.
- *Resilience* - by offering a good education and strong family values to our Daughters.
- *A Sustainable Future* - incorporating social enterprise into our planning so that we can continue to support our Daughters now and for generations to come.

Towards a Sustainable Future



Daughter Lutha with the Sunflower Farm flock



Sunflower Farm in Mae Chan

Two Decades of Success Stories

Our model is intensive, comprehensive and long-term, providing for all our Daughters' day-to-day and educational needs until they graduate from college. And we know it works.

The girls discovered by Jane McBride and Patty Zinkowski in that abandoned school all those years ago, all came from families that had fallen victim to drug addiction, poverty, early death and incarceration, putting the girls at greater risk of being trafficked.

In addition to having college degrees, healthy families and fulfilling careers, all three young women continue to give back to FTD in their roles as Board Director, Board Advisor and Country General Manager. We could not be prouder.





Friends of Thai Daughters is an U.S. nonprofit organization founded in 2005 to protect and empower at-risk ethnic minority girls in Northern Thailand. Through safe housing, education, healthcare and long-term mentorship, FTD prevents human trafficking and exploitation while helping girls reach their full potential as confident, educated leaders.

Action Location: Chiang Rai Province - Mae Chan and Chiang Khong

Size	Core team: 16 full- and part-time staff Volunteers: 25+ local and international volunteers annually Beneficiaries: Over 1,500 girls and community members reached each year Operational sites: Two main centres – Sunflower House (Chiang Rai) and Jasmine Farm (Chiang Khong)
Beneficiary Nationality	Primarily ethnic minority Thai girls and young women from underserved hill-tribe communities in Northern Thailand (e.g., Akha, Lahu, Hmong, Yao).
Action Impact	- 500+ girls supported annually through education, housing, and mentorship. - 97% high school graduation and 95% university enrolment rate among supported girls.- - 100% of participants protected from trafficking and early marriage.- Former “Daughters” now serve as nurses, teachers, social workers, and mentors, creating a ripple effect that uplifts families and villages.
Use of Donation Funds	Funds received will directly support FTD's Empowerment & Protection Programme (EPP), covering essential costs including educational materials, nutritious meals and healthcare for our Daughters.
Long-term Vision & Alignment	FTD's vision is a Northern Thailand where every girl is safe, educated, and empowered. This aligns with the Franco-Thai Chamber's values of sustainability, responsibility, and inclusive growth. Through long-term education, empowerment, and sustainability programs, FTD advances UN Sustainable Development Goals, notably SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work), promoting inclusive and sustainable development locally and internationally.