



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0689, **Version:** 1

Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services, recommending the Board proclaim the month of May 2022 as “National Foster Care Month” in the County of El Dorado.

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:

The National Foster Care Month campaign recognizes the important role that members from all parts of child welfare play in supporting children, youth, and families. This year’s theme, “Relative and Kin Connections: Keeping Families Strong”, speaks to the positive impact relative and kin have during the journey to permanency. Placing children and youth with kin caregivers can uniquely support reunification and can often help minimize trauma. It recognizes that families are more than experts on their own lives, they are a source of stability and comfort. However, when a child cannot safely stay with their parents, kinship care must be the first path we take.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan issued the first Presidential proclamation that established May as National Foster Care Month. In the United States, there are more than 407,000 children in foster care. In the County of El Dorado, the Child Welfare Services program serves close to 400 foster children annually. The County has celebrated National Foster Care Month since at least 2007, acknowledging and thanking those families and community service providers who make it possible to improve the lives of our local children that they support.

In 2015, the State passed Assembly Bill 403, which aligns with its federal counterpart, the Family First Prevention Services Act. These programs work toward specific goals by providing greater access to mental health services, substance use treatment, wraparound supports, and improved parenting skills in order to increase the number of children who can remain safely at home with their families. They seek to achieve this by shifting how the courts advocate and make decisions for families, and by transforming the types of placements that youth in out-of-home care are provided by prioritizing kinship and cultural connections, reducing congregate care, and keeping youth in their home communities in order to avoid the trauma that results when children are placed in out-of-home care.

There is an overwhelming need for individuals, families, and communities to become involved as resource families, respite providers, volunteers, advocates or mentors of children who need an adult role model. Some ways to help include the following:

- Becoming a resource family.
- Volunteering as a court appointed special advocate (CASA) for children.
- Being a mentor or "supportive adult" in a youth's life.
- Joining or hosting a fundraising event.
- Donating services, goods, computers, etc. to older youth in foster care.
- Lending a hand to help current resource parents and caregivers with their day-to-day needs.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a resource family can visit the County's Human Services' webpage at <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/HumanServices/Protective%20Services/Pages/foster_care_program.aspx> and take the opportunity to learn more about how to become a resource family.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could decline to adopt the Proclamation.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION:

- 1) 05/18/21, 21-0705, HHSA 2021 National Foster Care Month Proclamation
- 2) 05/14/19, 19-0471, HHSA 2019 Resource Family Appreciation Proclamation
- 3) 05/08/18, 18-0626, HHSA 2018 Foster Care Month Proclamation
- 4) 05/16/17, 14-0585, 2017 Resource Family Appreciation Month Proclamation

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this Agenda item.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

- 1) Clerk of the Board to obtain the Chair's signature on one (1) Proclamation.
- 2) Clerk of the Board to return one signed Proclamation to the HHSA Contracts Unit at 3057 Briw Road.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:

N/A

CONTACT

Daniel Del Monte, Interim Director