



Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners

PROCLAMATION

A PROCLAMATION TO DECLARE MAY FOSTER CARE MONTH IN KALAMAZOO COUNTY

WHEREAS, Recognizing May as Foster Care Month in the State of Michigan is an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges of youth in the foster care system and to encourage legislators to implement policy to improve the lives of youth with experience in foster care;

WHEREAS, National Foster Care Month was established over 25 years ago to bring foster care issues to the forefront of our minds, highlight the importance of permanency for every child; and recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children throughout the United States;

WHEREAS, All children deserve a safe, loving, and permanent home and the primary goal of the foster care system is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each child;

WHEREAS, In Michigan there are approximately 10,000 children living in foster care and as of March 2023, 396 in Kalamazoo County, and approximately 3,800 youth entered the foster care system in Michigan, and 41% live in a non-relative foster home and remain in care for an average of 18 months;

WHEREAS, 28.5% of Michigan youth in foster care experienced three or more placements. Placement changes disrupt education, routines, extended family connections and familiar surroundings;

WHEREAS, Children of color are more likely to stay in the foster care system for longer periods of time and are less likely to be reunited with their biological families;

WHEREAS, In 2021, 643 youth emancipated or "aged out" of foster care in Michigan without a permanent legal connection to an adult or family. 25% of these youth had been in care for 3 or more years;

WHEREAS, Many youth in foster care are at risk of aging out of foster care in Michigan and youth who age out of the foster care system lack the security, resources, and support of a biological or adoptive family and struggle to obtain affordable housing, pursue higher education, and acquire adequate employment;

Meredith Place
Meredith Place
County Clerk/Register of Deeds