



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee recognizes that every child deserves a loving, permanent home and that there are children in our communities who may not have a safe and stable placement with their family, or whose families may be experiencing great difficulty and hardship; and

WHEREAS, the development of our children begins at home, and in Tennessee, there are approximately 8,800 youth in foster care being cared for by a foster family; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's nearly 5,000 foster families provide nurturing and supportive homes in which children's emotional, physical and social needs can be met, while providing a meaningful connection to a caring adult who becomes a supportive and lasting presence in their lives; and

WHEREAS, foster, kinship, and adoptive families who open their homes and hearts to support children whose families are in crisis play a vital role in helping children and families heal and reconnect; and

WHEREAS, dedicated foster families frequently adopt foster children, resulting in a greater need for more foster families, especially those willing to take older children, children with special needs, and sibling groups; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the State of Tennessee launched Tennessee Fosters Hope, a statewide collaborative campaign led by The Governor's Faith-Based and Community Initiative to meet the needs of our foster and adopted youth and the families that step up to serve them; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the State of Tennessee, with the partnership of the General Assembly, enacted the Forever Homes Act to make the foster care and adoption process more child-centered, efficient, and user-friendly while providing expanded supports for foster families and expectant mothers; and

WHEREAS, all Tennesseans can play a role in helping every Tennessee child find a loving, permanent home through advocacy and engagement, including answering the call to foster; and

WHEREAS, we honor the Department of Children's Services, as well as other individuals and organizations throughout Tennessee who work diligently to serve the needs of children in foster care, as well as the enduring and valuable contribution of foster parents;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as

Foster Care Month

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this thirtieth day of April, 2024.

Bill Lee

Governor

Joe Rusk

Secretary of State