



Proclamation

- WHEREAS,** the family is the foundation of any strong and healthy community; and
- WHEREAS,** every child deserves to grow up in a supportive, loving home where they can thrive and prosper, but during those unfortunate times when children cannot remain safely in their own homes, the individuals and families who open their hearts and homes to foster children provide a vital service to their communities; and
- WHEREAS,** foster parents, including relatives and non-related extended family members, provide an essential service to the community in caring for children and youth in foster care; and
- WHEREAS,** the importance of the family structure is best served in foster homes that model family living, as opposed to group care; and
- WHEREAS,** every child in foster care deserves to find permanency, which is defined as a permanent connection with at least one committed adult, which may include the biological parents through reunification, or with another adult family member, nonrelative extended family members, adult siblings, or other important individuals in the child or youth's life who commit to the child through adoption or guardianship; and
- WHEREAS,** dedicated care providers model strength-based and solution-focused engagement with the children and youth in their care and with the community-based and government entities providing services and support.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATTHEW SERRATTO, Mayor of the City of Merced, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH and urge all community members to volunteer their talents and energies to honor children and youth in foster care and to honor those foster parents/families who have selflessly opened their hearts and their homes to nurture at risk children and promote healing in their most desperate time of need.

Signed this 20th day of May 2024.

Matthew Serratto, Mayor of Merced