



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 5/14/2019

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**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Human Services

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Nick Honey 565-4343 & Meg Easter Dawson 565-8383

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** All

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a resolution declaring May 2019 Foster Parent Recognition Month in Sonoma County.

**Executive Summary:**

The month of May has been designated as National Foster Parent Recognition Month. The Board of Supervisors is requested to recognize all Sonoma County caregivers who have taken on the invaluable role of caring for infants, children, and teens who are separated from their families due to abuse or neglect.

**Discussion:**

Excellent parenting is the most important intervention that we can provide to children. When parents are unable to care for their children, foster parents or relative caregivers step in to provide loving and committed care to meet a child's needs in partnership with the child welfare system. Children become part of the family for as long as they need out-of-home care. When possible, caregivers partner with the biological parents to provide support and mentorship. When children cannot be returned home safely, caregivers may provide permanency, including adoption or guardianship. Foster parenting requires patience, consistency, flexibility, and commitment, and is hugely rewarding for both foster parents and the children in their care.

Foster Parent Recognition Month acknowledges the dedicated caregivers in Sonoma County who provide around-the-clock love and care to children. In January of this year, 279 County foster homes cared for 265 children, including relative families, and 45 Foster Family Agency homes had 61 children in their care. In 2018, 51 children were adopted and 58 children were in a guardianship home.

A foster parent's work is difficult and challenging, but their dedication has changed the lives of many in our community. They stay by the bedside when a child is sick or in the hospital, meet with teachers when a child is struggling or at risk for expulsion, and console a child who is missing their birth family. They also get to help children learn to tie their shoes, celebrate milestones such as birthdays or graduations, and read favorite bedtime stories. Through their skilled care, children can grow and heal.

The Human Services Department values the role of local community partners to help support and develop new caregivers including TLC Children's Services, Alternative Family Services, Seneca, Family, Youth and Children's Services, Juvenile Probation and Lilliput Children's Services. Through our collaborative efforts, 192 new families have been approved to care for foster children by the county or local foster family agencies since the beginning of 2017. Yet the need is still there to continue to recruit and support new families so that every child has the opportunity to be in a family home.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of our community members who are willing to take on the very important role of opening their homes to care for Sonoma County children and youth. The Board is grateful for the compassionate care foster parents provide to the community's most vulnerable children.

**Prior Board Actions:**

May 2, 2018: Each year the Board of Supervisors has declared the month of May as Foster Parent Recognition Month in Sonoma County.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 18-19 Adopted</b>	<b>FY19-20 Projected</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

N/A

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A - I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (number)</b>	<b>Deletions (number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

Resolution

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A