

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the future of our Tribal Nation rests with our children. We must invest in their futures, instill in them the values of family, faith, and culture, and ensure they have every opportunity to realize their full potential. The development of our children begins at home, and my Administration is fully committed to strengthening Tribal families.

WHEREAS, this month, we recognize that there are children in our towns and communities who may not have a family, or whose families may be experiencing great difficulty and hardship. We believe in standing beside these children, walking with them through their trials, and finding temporary safe families for each of them. Kindhearted Tribal Members embody this belief, dedicating their time and efforts in doing so. Currently there are 104 Tribal families across the state of Oklahoma who have opened their homes to 2,926 tribal children in custody. Of those 104 homes we are extremely grateful for our 54 Choctaw Nation licensed homes. During National Foster Care Month, we honor these Champions for Children, who opened their hearts to children who need a home, and who care for the most vulnerable among us. We also acknowledge the profound contributions of the individuals and organizations supporting foster and kinship caregivers, and those of the community providers and professionals who are helping children in in foster care find safe and stable families.

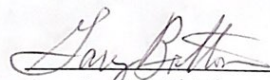
WHEREAS, children deserve stable family environments, and foster care provides a wonderful opportunity for selfless and compassionate men and women to nurture children while we work to help their family to ensure they can safely return home or find their forever home. This month, and always, we express our gratitude to all the Tribal families who generously open their doors to our Tribal children in need and provide them with love and support. We recommit to support our children by helping provide increased opportunities to recruit more Native Champions of Children to invest in the lives of our vulnerable young people, and we celebrate those who tirelessly serve our Tribal children in foster care.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gary Batton, Chief of the Choctaw Nation, acting under the power vested in me under the Constitution of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma do hereby proclaim May 2021 as

Choctaw Nation's Foster Care Awareness Month

I call upon all Tribal Members to observe this month by taking time to help children and youth in foster care and to recognize the commitment of those who touch their lives, particularly celebrating their foster parents and other caregivers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand to this instrument on this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-one.



Gary Batton, Chief
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma