

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

PROCLAMATION

Foster Care Awareness Month: May 2026

Foster Care Awareness Month raises visibility about the experiences of children and youth in foster care, while honoring the individuals who support them – foster and biological families, child welfare professionals, mentors, policymakers, and community members. Each plays a vital role in helping young people find safety, stability, and connection.

Foster care provides a safe, temporary home for children and teens who cannot remain with their families due to abuse, neglect, or other serious challenges. Whenever possible, the goal is reunification with their biological families. When it is not, the focus becomes finding a stable, permanent home through adoption or guardianship. Behind every placement is a story of hardship – and hope.

While Minnesota has seen a 31% decrease in the number of children in care over the past five years, the need for stable, caring homes remains urgent, especially for sibling groups and teens. As of 2025 reporting, approximately 5,865 children were in foster care in Minnesota on an average day, based on 2024 year-end data.

Foster parents come from all walks of life – single, married, with or without children, grandparents, or individuals hoping to adopt. What matters most is being at least 21, completing the licensure process, and having a safe space, an open heart, and a willingness to walk with a child through their healing journey. Successful foster parents support a child's well-being, invest in their future, accept their past, and work as part of a team.

This month, we express deep gratitude to the foster families who open their hearts and homes, to biological parents striving for reunification, and to the professionals and volunteers who walk beside foster youth every day. Most of all, we honor the incredible strength and resilience of the children and youth in foster care, whose courage inspires us all.

I, Amáda Márquez Simula, Mayor of Columbia Heights, proclaim **May 2026 as Foster Care Awareness Month** in Columbia Heights and encourage all residents to support and stand in solidarity with foster youth, their families, and those who care for them.

Amáda Márquez Simula, Mayor
May 26, 2026