



WHEREAS, children are our most valuable resource in Gaston County and all children in our community deserve to grow up in safe and healthy homes; and,

WHEREAS, child abuse can have long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects that have lasting consequences for its victims; and,

WHEREAS, according to the National Children's Alliance, more than 11,000 children are abused each year in North Carolina and more than 380,000 children are abused each year in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention strategies are created, nurtured, and implemented through strong partnerships with the Gaston County Department of Social Services, The Lighthouse Children's Advocacy Center, Gaston County Schools, the faith community, and local law enforcement; and,

WHEREAS, The Lighthouse Children's Advocacy Center served 489 child victims of abuse or neglect in 2024; and,

WHEREAS, through community partnerships and support, The Lighthouse Children's Advocacy Center continues to serve as a beacon of hope for families in Gaston County, providing a place of healing and hope for children and their families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners proclaims the month of April 2025 as

## **Child Abuse Prevention Month**

and calls upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, elected leaders, and businesses to increase their participation in efforts to support families, thereby strengthening the community in which we live.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chad Brown, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Bailey

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Hovis

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathy Cloninger, Vice-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Keigher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Allen R. Fraley

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Shehan

To be Adopted the 22<sup>nd</sup> Day of April 2025