



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 and trauma exposure can have long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects that have lasting consequences for its victims; and,

WHEREAS, according to 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, local law enforcement, and members of the multi-disciplinary team; and,

WHEREAS, The Lighthouse Children’s Advocacy Center served 523 child victims of abuse and/or neglect in 2025; and,

WHEREAS, this April, The Lighthouse Children’s Advocacy Center is celebrating 10 years as serving the Gaston County community; and,

WHEREAS, through community partnerships and support, The Lighthouse Children’s Advocacy Center continues to serve as a beacon 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 2026 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, Vice-Chairman

Cathy Cloninger

Tom Keigher

Allen R. Fraley

Scott Shehan

To be Adopted the 28th Day of April 2026