

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

PROCLAMATION NUMBER 23-18

COUNTY OF DORCHESTER

**PROCLAIMING NOVEMBER 2023 FAMILY COURT AWARENESS  
MONTH IN DORCHESTER COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of Family Court Awareness Month is to increase awareness of the importance of a family court system that prioritizes child safety and acts in the best interest of children; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Family Court Awareness Month Committee (FCAMC) is to create awareness and change in the family court system for the conservatively estimated, 58,000 children a year ordered into unsupervised contact with abusive parents, while honoring the hundreds of children who have been reported as murdered during visitation with a dangerous parent; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the FCAMC is to increase awareness on the importance of empirically based education and training on domestic violence and child abuse, including emotional, psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as childhood trauma, coercive control, and post separation abuse for judges and all professionals working on cases within the family court system; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the FCAMC is to increase awareness on the importance of using scientifically valid, evidence-based, treatment programs and services that are proven in terms of safety, effectiveness, and therapeutic value; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission at the FCAMC is to educate judges and other family court professionals on evidence-based, peer-reviewed research. Such research is a critical component to making decisions that are truly in the best interest of children. This research includes The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study (co-principal investigator: Vincent Felitti, Kaiser Permanente-CDC); Child Custody Evaluators' Beliefs About Domestic Abuse Allegations (principal investigator: Daniel Saunders, University of Michigan, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice); and Child Custody Outcomes in Cases Involving Parental Alienation and Abuse Allegations (principal investigator: Joan S. Meier, GW Law School, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice); and

**WHEREAS**, Dorchester County Council joins dedicated advocates and organizations in reaffirming the rights of children to grow up with the care, support, and resources they need to thrive and in working towards a family court system that protects our most vulnerable citizens.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Dorchester County Council hereby proclaims November 2023 Family Court Awareness Month and encourages all residents to support their local communities' efforts to prevent the harm of children in the hands of family members and to honor and value the lives of children.

**ADOPTED THIS 20<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER 2023.**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
S. Todd Friddle, Chairman  
Dorchester County Council

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tracey L. Langley  
Clerk to Council