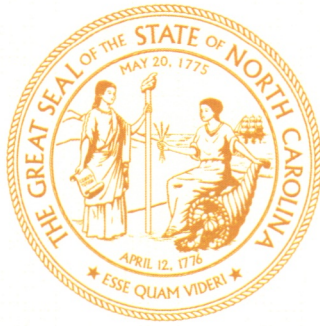




State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

FOSTER YOUTH VOICE MONTH

2026

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, every young person deserves to be respected, valued, and given meaningful opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives, their families, their communities, and their futures; and

WHEREAS, more than 10,000 children and youths in North Carolina experience foster care and other forms of out-of-home care, each young person with their own strengths, dreams, experiences, and hopes for the future; and

WHEREAS, young people who have lived in foster care possess unique knowledge and expertise about the child welfare system and are essential partners in identifying what is working, what needs to change, and how North Carolina can better serve children, youths, and families; and

WHEREAS, youth voice means ensuring that young people are meaningfully included, listened to, respected, and empowered to help shape the decisions, policies, programs, and services that affect their lives; and

WHEREAS, organizations such as Strong Able Youth Speaking Out (SaySo) provide opportunities for youths and young adults who are or have been in out-of-home care to develop leadership skills, educate communities, advocate for positive change, and speak directly about the experiences and needs of young people in care; and

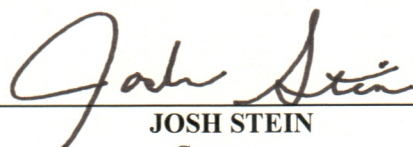
WHEREAS, meaningful youth engagement can help foster greater connection, belonging, permanency, educational success, workforce readiness, independence, and successful transitions into adulthood; and

WHEREAS, Foster Youth Voice Month provides an opportunity for communities, child welfare professionals, caregivers, policymakers, educators, service providers, families, and advocates across North Carolina to listen to young people with experience and create meaningful opportunities for them to influence change for a stronger child welfare system; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is committed to creating a child welfare system in which every young person is treated with dignity and respect, has opportunities to advocate for themselves and others, and is supported in achieving their goals and reaching their full potential;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim October 2026 as “FOSTER YOUTH VOICE MONTH” in North Carolina and commend its observance.




JOSH STEIN
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-fifth day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-sixth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifty-first.