

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, sound mental health is critical for the well-being and vitality of our families, communities and businesses; and

WHEREAS, mental disorders collectively make mental illness the most prevalent health problem in America today; and

WHEREAS, emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders cut across all income, educational, racial, ethnic and religious groups; single, and two-parent families, and in birth, adoptive and foster families; and

WHEREAS, one in five children suffers from a diagnosable mental, emotional or behavioral disorder, and one in ten has a serious disorder which, if untreated, can lead to school failure, placement away from their homes, and even suicide; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria has assisted in changing the focus of children's mental illness in Alexandria to support a family-centered planning process for families of children and adolescents with serious emotional, behavioral, and mental disorders; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria has worked relentlessly to help families in Alexandria by bridging the gap between families and professionals; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria has struggled tirelessly to provide critical information, assistance and guidance to all Alexandria families through needs-based workshops; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria has ceaselessly labored to build a solid construction of community partnerships and networks; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria has become a valuable source of information for families who struggle daily and in crisis situations; and

WHEREAS, Family First of Alexandria recognizes annually Children's Mental Health Week, the first week of May, with an intent to increase within our community the awareness and understanding of children's mental health issues, and to raise awareness of the importance that children's mental health is as critical as physical health in every stage of life;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KERRY J. DONLEY, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim the week of May 6-12, 2001, as:

"ALEXANDRIA CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK"

and call upon all citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools in Alexandria to recommit our community to increase awareness and understanding of children's mental health and meet the need for family-centered, appropriate and accessible services for all families with children with social, emotional and behavioral disorders.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 8th day of May 2001.

KERRY J. DONLEY **MAYOR**
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk