

---

# Presidential Documents

---

Title 3—

Proclamation 6937 of October 11, 1996

The President

National Character Counts Week, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

One of our most important goals as a Nation is to make this a better world for all people. Millions around the globe look to America as a champion of justice, and we must always strive to encourage the good and denounce the bad.

This week, as a Nation, we celebrate the fact that “Character Counts.” Whether in civic activities or in our daily lives at work and at home, we all contribute regularly to our American community and our national purpose—our sense of who we are as a people. In the end, the character of our Nation is determined by the character of our citizens.

During this special week, we recognize that character is not a quality we are born with; we must learn it. This means we must ensure that it is taught, clearly and thoughtfully, to our youth. Individual character involves honoring and embracing certain core ethical values: honesty, respect, responsibility, hard work, fairness, caring, civic virtue, and citizenship. Americans must do everything possible to create a society in which these virtues are not only taught but also acted out in daily life so that our young people can witness firsthand their value and learn right from wrong.

My Administration has made this effort a top priority. Our Improving America’s Schools Act promotes initiatives in character education, just as the Goals 2000: Educate America Act recognizes the crucial role of the family in nurturing strong values and encouraging children to embrace academic achievement. Our AmeriCorps national service program offers young people a practical means through which to demonstrate their beliefs in the civic virtues that traditionally have given our Nation much of its strength of character.

The family remains, of course, the core source of our values. Parents must teach their children from the earliest age, the difference between right and wrong. But we all must do our part. Teachers, religious leaders, and other early-childhood role models must display the highest standards of respect for themselves and others; young people must commit themselves to dealing nonviolently with the inevitable problems and difficulties they will encounter; and both public- and private-sector institutions must adopt corporate behavior that encourages individual character development.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 13 through 19, 1996, as National Character Counts Week. I call upon the people of the United States, Government officials, educators, and volunteers, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

*William Clinton*

[FR Doc. 96-26770

Filed 10-15-96; 11:31 am]

Billing code 3195-01-P