
Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7048 of November 3, 1997****The President****National Adoption Month, 1997****By the President of the United States****A Proclamation**

Most American children are blessed with loving, stable families. But, tragically, in our country today there are too many children whose parents are unwilling or unable to care for them. While foster care offers these children a safe and nurturing temporary haven in their time of greatest need, as many as 100,000 foster care kids will need permanent homes in the next few years. Many of these children have special needs and require the security and stability of an adoptive family to develop their full potential. Adoption allows these and other children to have the permanent homes they deserve, and it enables many dedicated adults to experience the joys and rewards of parenting.

My Administration is working hard to find ways to help encourage adoption. On December 14, 1996, I issued a Memorandum to the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, the Treasury, Labor, and Commerce and to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, directing them to promote efforts to both increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year and to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes. I also urged them to increase public awareness about the children waiting for permanent families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards of adoption.

I challenged the members of my Administration to work with States, communities, and civic leaders to create a plan for doubling the number of adoptions and permanent placements for children to 54,000 by the year 2002. And on February 14, 1997, the *Adoption 2002* report, outlining changes in policies and practices necessary to reach this goal, was released. Since then, we have been actively implementing the recommendations included in the report, and States are reviewing data and submitting numerical targets for adoption and guardianships to be completed by the year 2002. The Office of Personnel Management has published a guide for Federal workers interested in adopting, and the Department of Health and Human Services is preparing to make the first annual Adoption 2002 Excellence awards later this year. Finally, the Congress is considering historic legislation that would provide the resources and statutory authority for financial incentives, technical assistance, and improved judicial decision-making for children in foster care.

As a Nation, we have before us an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our most vulnerable children. We must continue to promote public awareness of the need for adoptive families and to help families make the choice to provide loving, permanent homes for the many children who otherwise must continue to wait. We must also strengthen our support of those families who do choose to adopt. As we observe National Adoption Month, we reaffirm our commitment to adoption as a new beginning for thousands of children, and we celebrate the many American families who have embraced these children by accepting the rewards and responsibilities of adoption.

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 November 1997 as National Adoption Month. I urge all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor adoptive families and to participate in efforts to find permanent homes for waiting children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".

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