
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7076 of April 1, 1998

The President

National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

All of us at one time or another have been shocked by news reports about a child who has been abused, neglected, or abandoned. Unable to comprehend such a betrayal of trust, we find ourselves hoping that these incidents are isolated and rare. The most recent reports from State child welfare agencies, however, confirm that one million cases of substantiated child abuse or neglect occur in our Nation every year. Of these cases, more than a thousand children—many under the age of four—do not survive; and most die at the hands of a parent or other family member. As a caring society that cherishes our children, we must work together to protect these little ones who cannot protect themselves.

Two of our greatest resources in the crusade against child abuse and neglect are knowledge and compassion. We must raise public awareness that these cases, while often hidden, can occur in any family and community in America. As responsible adults, we must learn more about the signs of child abuse so that we may report suspected incidents as soon as possible. We must support community programs that help to identify families at risk and intervene before abuse becomes deadly. As individuals and as members of our communities, we need to support services, programs, and legislation that will help to relieve the stresses on families that can sometimes lead to violence. We must strengthen the partnerships among schools, social service agencies, religious organizations, law enforcement, and the business community so that child abuse prevention efforts will be comprehensive, swift, and effective.

Backing up such efforts at the State and local level, my Administration is focusing Federal attention and resources on combating child abuse and neglect. We are supporting family-based prevention services that help at-risk families reduce violence in the home. We also are continuing to give the States resources to build and maintain strong protection systems for children in danger. And for those children who cannot remain safely at home, we worked with the Congress to enact the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which makes it easier to place at-risk children more quickly into a permanent and secure environment.

This month, as Americans celebrate spring and its promise of new life, let us reaffirm our commitment to the lives of our Nation's children. I encourage communities across the country to join together to raise awareness of the tragedy of child abuse, to learn more about what we can do to help end such abuse, and to strengthen efforts to support children and their families before the cycle of abuse can begin.

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 April 1998 as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month by resolving to take every appropriate means to protect our children from abuse and neglect, to restore their shattered trust, and to help them grow into healthy, happy adults.

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

William Clinton

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