
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6977 of March 5, 1997

The President

National Poison Prevention Week, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

This year, as we observe National Poison Prevention Week, we highlight two achievements: the effectiveness of child-resistant packaging required by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the lifesaving work of the Nation's poison control centers. These public health efforts have reduced childhood poisoning deaths from 450 deaths in 1961 to 50 deaths in 1993. However, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, over one million children each year are exposed to potentially poisonous medicines and household chemicals.

Virtually all poisonings are preventable, and we must continue to inform parents, grandparents, and caregivers how to prevent childhood poisonings. The Poison Prevention Week Council, a coalition of 39 national organizations determined to stop accidental poisonings, distributes valuable information used by poison control centers, pharmacies, public health departments, and others to conduct poison prevention programs in their communities.

Simple safety measures—such as correctly using child-resistant packaging and keeping potentially harmful substances locked away from children—can save lives. And if a poisoning occurs, a poison control center can offer quick and lifesaving intervention.

The CPSC requires child-resistant packaging for many medicines and household chemicals. A recent CPSC study showed that every year approximately 24 children's lives are saved by child-resistant packaging for oral prescription medicines. The CPSC recently took action to ensure that child-resistant packaging will be easier for adults to use as well. This, in turn, will increase the use of child-resistant packaging, preventing more poisonings.

To encourage Americans to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take more preventive measures, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 26, 1961 (75 Stat. 681), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of March of each year as "National Poison Prevention Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 16 through March 22, 1997, as National Poison Prevention Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by participating in appropriate ceremonies and activities and by learning how to prevent accidental poisonings among children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of March, 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-first.

William Clinton

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