
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7073 of March 12, 1998

The President

National Poison Prevention Week, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Protecting the well-being of our children must always be our highest priority as a people and as a Nation. Innocent and vulnerable, children are eager to explore the world around them, and in our society today, where every home is filled with potentially dangerous chemicals, this can put our children at grave risk. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, over one million children are exposed each year to potentially deadly medicines and household chemicals—a danger we must not, and need not, tolerate.

Since the first observance of National Poison Prevention Week 36 years ago, the number of children who have died each year from accidental poisonings has dropped dramatically, from 450 in 1962 to 29 in 1995. This remarkable progress is due in part to the dedicated efforts of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Poison Prevention Week Council, and our Nation's poison control centers. Nevertheless we still have much work to do if we are to prevent even a single child from suffering or dying due to poisoning. Because poisonings are almost always preventable, there are simple, practical steps we can take to protect our children: use child-resistant packaging correctly; keep toxic materials locked up and out of the reach of children; and, if a poisoning does occur, call a poison control center immediately.

This year, the focus of National Poison Prevention Week is the danger posed by pesticides, which are involved in the poisonings of thousands of young children each year. While the Environmental Protection Agency requires that most pesticides be in child-resistant packaging, it is up to parents and caregivers to make sure that these materials and other household chemicals and medicines are kept locked up and out of the reach of children. By taking a few moments to read labels and store pesticides properly, we can avoid a lifetime of regret.

To encourage the American people to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take responsible 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 15 through March 21, 1998, 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 protect our children from poisons.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of March, 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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