

Many people do not understand the speed at which fire can spread, the intensity of its heat, or the toxic power of its smoke. Because a quick, decisive response often means the difference between life and death, it is important to learn about fire, to recognize how deadly a threat it is, and to react to it immediately. The National Fire Protection Association, in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and our Nation's fire services, has selected "Know When to Go! React Fast To Fire!" as the theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week. This theme reinforces a simple but essential element of fire safety: escape planning.

Because approximately 80 percent of last year's fatal fires occurred in the home, every family should develop a home escape plan. If a smoke or fire alarm sounds, everyone must react quickly. When away from home, we need to make it a habit to locate the nearest exit in any building we occupy. Most important, we must never reenter a burning building.

By following these basic safety rules, we can save lives and reduce the risks to our Nation's firefighters. Every 16 seconds, a fire department responds to a fire somewhere in the United States. Last year, thousands of firefighters were injured, and 92 made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Our Nation will acknowledge the extraordinary dedication of these valiant men and women by paying tribute to America's career and volunteer firefighters on Sunday, October 5, 1997, at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

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 5 through October 11, 1997, as Fire Prevention Week. I encourage the people of the United States to take an active role in fire prevention not only during this week, but throughout the year. I also call upon all Americans to honor the courageous members of our Nation's fire and emergency services by learning about the dangers posed by fire and by preparing their friends and family members to react immediately and safely to fires when they occur.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, 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.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7033 of October 6, 1997

Child Health Day, 1997

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

For children, childhood seems to last forever; but for adults—particularly for those of us who are parents—it passes in the blink of an eye. The little girl smiling at us from her tricycle and the little boy running to catch the school bus will soon be driving away to their first jobs.

One of the greatest gifts we can offer our children while they are still in our care is a healthy start in life.

We are making tremendous progress as a nation in helping more children get that healthy start. This year I signed into law historic legislation to extend health care coverage to millions of uninsured children. This \$24 billion initiative over 5 years is the largest investment in children's health since the creation of Medicaid in 1965. On October 1, the Federal Government and the States began a partnership to help provide meaningful health insurance to children whose families earn too much for Medicaid but too little to afford private coverage.

This new initiative will take an enormous step toward improving the health of our Nation's children. In 1995, approximately 10 million of them were not covered by health insurance, and they were either ineligible for or not enrolled in publicly financed medical assistance programs. Last year, another 800,000 uninsured children joined their ranks. These children are less likely to receive the primary care services they need to maintain good health, and they are at risk of receiving lower quality care. Too often they become trapped in a tragic downward spiral—poor health keeps them out of school, keeps them from pursuing their studies with energy and enthusiasm, and often keeps them from acquiring the knowledge and self-esteem they need to reach their full potential. With this new children's health initiative, we can provide millions of children the coverage they need to grow up healthy and strong.

We are making progress in other areas, as well. Thanks to advances in medical research and our increasing knowledge about prevention and the importance of good nutrition, many childhood diseases and illnesses can now be averted. Funding for childhood immunization has doubled since 1993, and immunization rates are at an all-time high. In addition, we recently announced an important Food and Drug Administration regulation requiring manufacturers to do studies on pediatric populations for new prescription drugs—and those currently on the market—to ensure that our prescription drugs have been adequately tested for the unique needs of children. We have dramatically increased participation in the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program, providing nutrition packages and information and health referrals to more than 7 million infants, children, and pregnant women. With the enactment of the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill last year, we have helped millions of children keep their healthcare coverage when their parents change or lose jobs.

We are also taking strong actions to prevent our children from smoking. Each day 3,000 children become regular smokers and 1,000 of them will die from a tobacco-related illness. Last year, my Administration issued guide-lines to eliminate easy access to tobacco products and to prohibit companies from directing advertising towards children.

To acknowledge our profound responsibility to nurture the health and development of America's children, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 18, 1928, as amended (36 U.S.C. 143), has called for the designation of the first Monday in October as "Child Health Day" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 6, 1997, as

Child Health Day. I call upon my fellow Americans to join me on that day, and every day throughout the year, in strengthening our national commitment to the well-being of our children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of October, 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.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7034 of October 6, 1997

German-American Day, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America has always drawn its strength from the millions of people who have come here in search of freedom and the opportunity to live out their dreams. Men and women of different nationalities, different races, and different religions have made their own rich and unique contributions to our national life.

From their arrival at Jamestown in 1607 until the present day, Germans have been among the largest ethnic groups to make their home in our country. Like so many others, the earliest German settlements in America were founded by men and women in search of religious liberty. William Penn invited a group of German Mennonites to Pennsylvania, which was to remain a center of German settlement during the Colonial period. Other German communities were founded in New Jersey and New York, as well as in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, the Carolinas, and Georgia. In the 19th century, German pioneers began to settle in the Midwest and West, and today a quarter of our Nation's population can trace its ancestry to German origins.

Germans and German Americans have profoundly influenced every facet of American life. Great soldiers, such as General Baron von Steuben in our Revolutionary War and General Norman Schwarzkopf in the Gulf War, have fought to preserve our freedom and defend America's interests. Scientists such as Albert Einstein and Wernher von Braun have immeasurably broadened our horizons, as have artists like Albert Bierstadt, Josef Albers, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Lillian Blauvelt, and Paul Hindemith. And generations of German Americans, with their energy, creativity, and strong work ethic, have enriched the economic and commercial life of the United States. All Americans have benefited greatly from the labor, leadership, talents, and vision of Germans and German Americans, and it is fitting that we set aside this special day to acknowledge their many contributions to our liberty, culture, and democracy.

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 Monday, October 6, 1997, as German-American Day. I encourage all Americans to recognize and celebrate the many gifts that millions of people of German ancestry have brought to our national life.