

America must also confront the recent senseless acts of violence that have taken the lives and the innocence of so many young people. Places where they once felt safe—schools and churches and day care facilities—have been shaken by violence. Addressing this assault on our society’s values and our children’s future is a top priority of my Administration. We must work together—parents, students, educators, public officials, and religious, community, and industry leaders—to instill in our youth a sense of compassion, tolerance, and self-respect, so that they may find their way in a troubled world. We must also help them develop the strength to express their own anger and alienation with words, not weapons.

One of the most powerful tools we have in this endeavor is youth mentoring. A recent Department of Justice study showed that mentoring programs help young people resist violence and substance abuse, perform better academically, and interact more positively with their families and with other youth. Recognizing the value of mentoring programs, particularly to the well-being of millions of at-risk youth, my Administration announced earlier this year several public and private initiatives to encourage mentoring, and we set aside \$14 million in grants for the Justice Department’s Juvenile Mentoring Program.

Children bring so much hope, joy, and love to our lives; in return, we owe them our time, our attention, the power of our example, and the comfort of our concern. It is a fair trade, and one that enriches the lives of us all.

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 10, 1999, as National Children’s Day. I urge all Americans to express their love and appreciation for the children of our Nation on this day and on every day throughout the year. I invite Federal officials, local governments, communities, and all American families to join in observing this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also urge all Americans to reflect upon the importance of children to our families, the importance of strong families to our children, and the importance of both to America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#### **Proclamation 7239 of October 8, 1999**

#### **Columbus Day, 1999**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Although Christopher Columbus’ first voyage to the New World took place more than 500 years ago, the momentous changes it brought about still resonate today. His journey triggered a historic encounter between Europe and the native peoples of the New World; helped open new continents to ex-

ploration, trade, and development; established a reliable route to the Americas; and was a major milestone in the inexorable trend toward expansion and globalization.

Columbus could not have imagined the full impact of his arrival in 1492 or how his journey would shape human history. The zeal for trade that motivated the Spanish crown to fund Columbus' voyages still exists today as we work to strengthen our commercial ties with other nations and to compete in an increasingly global economy. Columbus' own passion for adventure survives as an integral part of our national character and heritage, reflected in our explorations of the oceans' depths and the outer reaches of our solar system. A son of Italy, Columbus opened the door to the New World for millions of people from across the globe who have followed their dreams to America. Today, Americans of Italian and Spanish descent can take special pride, not only in Columbus' historic achievements, but also in their own immeasurable contributions to our national life. From business to the arts, from government to academia, they have played an important part in advancing the peace and prosperity our country enjoys today.

We are about to embark on our own journey into a new millennium of unknown challenges and possibilities. As we ponder that future, Columbus' courage and daring still capture the American imagination, inspiring us to look to the horizon, as he did, and see, not a daunting boundary, but a new world full of opportunity.

In tribute to Columbus' many achievements, the Congress, by joint resolution of April 30, 1934 (48 Stat. 657), and an Act of June 28, 1968 (82 Stat. 250), has requested the President to proclaim the second Monday in October of each year as "Columbus Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 11, 1999, as Columbus Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also direct that the flag of the United States be displayed on all public buildings on the appointed day in honor of Christopher Columbus.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#### **Proclamation 7240 of October 15, 1999**

#### **White Cane Safety Day, 1999**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

The white cane is widely recognized as a symbol of independence for people who are blind or visually impaired. This simple device has given freedom to generations of blind Americans by enabling them to move through their communities with greater ease, confidence, and safety.