

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8358 of April 8, 2009

National D.A.R.E. Day, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Drugs, gangs, and violence threaten our children and communities every day. Today we commemorate Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), a program that has worked to educate children and protect them from these problems. National D.A.R.E. Day provides the opportunity to reflect upon the dangers of drugs, gangs, and violence and to emphasize efforts to combat these threats.

From inner cities to suburbs and rural communities, gangs and drug dealers prey upon youth across the United States. Unaware of the dangers of drug abuse and violence, many youth surrender the promise of a bright future. Every child lost in this battle represents a tragedy for our Nation, and we must do more to stop it.

Education efforts to help children avoid drugs and violence must begin in the home. Parents must be positive role models and take the lead in advising their children on the effects of drugs on their health and well-being.

The D.A.R.E. program has worked to educate students about drugs, gangs, and violence for more than 25 years. Placing law-enforcement personnel in the classroom, D.A.R.E. provides students with important lessons from experts and seeks to prepare them for the difficult encounters and choices they may face.

Today we honor D.A.R.E. for its important work. The efforts of D.A.R.E.'s instructors and supporters benefit our Nation's children and are deserving of praise and appreciation. D.A.R.E.'s renewed efforts to implement science-based programs and to strengthen partnerships among law enforcement, families, and their communities are particularly worthy of commendation. Through effective teaching methods and broad participation, D.A.R.E. can help ensure that every child in America enjoys the opportunities he or she deserves.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, 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 8, 2009, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I call upon our youth, parents, educators, law enforcement personnel, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs and activities.

Proc. 8359

Title 3—The President

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8359 of April 8, 2009

National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, 2009

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

Sexual assault scars the lives of millions in the United States. To increase awareness about this issue, prevent future crimes, and aid victims, this month we mark National Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Sexual assault is pervasive in the United States. Study after study has shown that this crime impacts people at all age levels and in every part of this Nation. One recent study found that 18 percent of women in this country have been raped in their lifetime. In addition, rates of sexual assault remain startlingly high for students from high school to college. A 2005 survey of high school students found that 10.8 percent of girls and 4.2 percent of boys from grades nine to twelve were forced to have sexual intercourse at some time in their lives. A study of college women found that 13.7 percent of undergraduate women had been victims of at least one completed sexual assault since entering college. Unlike victims of sexual assault in the larger community, students victimized by other students often face additional challenges in a “closed” campus environment. For example, a victim may continue to live in danger if the perpetrator resides in the same dormitory or attends the same classes. These statistics are all the more alarming given that, according to recent research, a majority of victims do not report their attacks to police.

Victims of all ages suffer from both the physical and emotional consequences of the attack. Sexual assault can lead to long-term health problems including chronic pain, stomach problems, and sexually transmitted diseases. It can also cause severe emotional harm that may be even more painful than the assault itself and resulting physical injuries. The effects of sexual assault go well beyond the direct victim: sexual assault also has a profound impact on a victim’s family, friends, neighbors, and workplace.

Victims need an array of services to heal from the trauma of sexual assault, including crisis intervention, 24-hour sexual assault hotlines, medical and criminal justice accompaniment, advocacy, and counseling. Victim service providers are essential to this effort and work tirelessly to help victims cope with the trauma of sexual assault and transition from “victim” to “survivor.”

Landmark legislation has helped fund these critical services. The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA, Public Law 98–473) established the Crime Victims Fund to fund services such as forensic sexual assault examinations and compensation claims for both adult and child victims. For example,