

Proclamation 4587

August 17, 1978

Child Health Day, 1978

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

On this, the 50th anniversary of the first Child Health Day, it is appropriate to reaffirm our strong commitment to the health and well-being of our Nation's children. Our children are our future. We all bear responsibility for assuring that they are as healthy as the healing arts permit.

After 50 years, barriers to child health care persist. The problems are now more social than technological: unequal distribution of medical personnel, inadequate access to medical services, and continuing diet problems still plague our poorer families. Despite a dramatic reduction in our infant mortality rate in recent decades, children in some parts of the country still suffer far more than children elsewhere. This geographic inequity persists to adulthood and these same areas generally have a higher percentage of handicapped individuals as well as higher infant and child mortality rates.

We need to nurture all our children. Until mothers and children throughout the nation have equal access to comprehensive health care we can't claim to have met our responsibilities.

This is particularly important for youngsters who suffer physical, emotional or developmental handicaps. Adequate research and rehabilitative programs are essential for these children but all children need our vigilant concern. Ultimately, our goal is a nation of vibrantly healthy youngsters, psychologically and physically fit to meet any future demand.

In 1979 the United States will join other nations in observing the United Nations International Year of the Child. This will provide a chance to focus world attention on the special needs of children. Let us make this a significant year of progress in our own Nation so that we set an example for all others.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 2, 1978, as Child Health Day. I am asking all the citizens of this Nation at home and abroad to unite with me in pledging our support of activities which provide for every child the promotion of health, accessible comprehensive health care services, physical and mental recreation, and the extension of cultural traditions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and third.

JIMMY CARTER