

Proclamation 5348 of May 29, 1985**Very Special Arts U.S.A. Month, 1985***By the President of the United States of America**A Proclamation*

Art is one of the most important forms of human expression. Whether as creators or as spectators, Americans participate in the arts in some form almost every day, and their lives are made richer by this activity. Art also brings us into contact with the rich aesthetic tradition of our civilization, while the art of other cultures can be one of the best introductions available for those who want to learn more about them.

The importance of art makes it essential that all Americans be able to make use of this unique resource. The National Committee, Arts with the Handicapped, is an educational affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. During the past eleven years, it has served as the coordinating agency for arts programs for disabled children, youth, and adults. The Very Special Arts Program that it sponsors provides ongoing arts programs for many Americans with disabilities.

The Very Special Arts Program makes it possible for disabled Americans to participate in the arts and enrich their lives in the same way as all other Americans. Through it, they can gain the opportunity for self-expression within the context of our rich cultural tradition. This program deserves the support and assistance of all Americans.

In recognition of the importance of arts education in the lives of everyone, including those with disabilities, and in celebration of Very Special Arts Programs throughout the country, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 103, has designated the month of May 1985 as "Very Special Arts U.S.A. Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of May 1985 as Very Special Arts U.S.A. Month. I encourage the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5349 of June 4, 1985**Youth Suicide Prevention Month, 1985***By the President of the United States of America**A Proclamation*

During the past 20 years, the suicide rate has tripled among young people aged 15-24. In fact, suicide has become the third leading cause of death in this age group. Last year alone, over 5,000 young Americans took their own lives, and many more attempted to do so.

When a young person commits suicide, it is a personal tragedy as well as a source of deep anguish for family, friends, and neighbors. But it is also a tragedy for society, which must cope not only with the loss of human potential that is the result of the death of any individual, but also with its responsibility to identify the causes of suicide and develop strategies to reduce its incidence. Although the issues involved in each case are complex and unique, we can draw encouragement from the fact that suicide is no longer a silent subject but a recognized public health problem that can and must be addressed.

Because the root causes of suicide involve so many different psychological, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions, successful preventive action requires the combined efforts of individuals, families, communities, organizations, and governments at all levels. Young people and families who have a member who may be contemplating suicide need to know that there are indeed places to turn for advice and assistance. People who come into contact with youth—educators, counselors, coaches, ministers, health care providers—can play a key role in helping a despondent young person by identifying the existence of a problem or contributing factors like drug abuse and family break-up. Government can assist through research and policies which strengthen the family unit and foster a sense of individual self-worth. In short, all of us have the opportunity and responsibility to help deal with this growing problem.

In recognition of the increase in suicide among America's youth and its consequences for our society, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 53, has designated the month of June 1985 as "Youth Suicide Prevention Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of June 1985 as Youth Suicide Prevention Month. I call upon the Governors of the several States, the chief officials of local governments, all health care providers, educators, the media, public and private organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5350 of June 13, 1985

Father's Day, 1985

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

By tradition, the third Sunday in June is celebrated as Father's Day, a day on which we honor our Nation's fathers.

In honoring fathers, we honor families. Families are the bedrock of our Nation's strength, and fathers play an indispensable role in forming vital, whole families. They serve as models and guides for their sons and daughters and help to pass on to the next generation the heritage of our civilization.