

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.

*Ante*, p. 70.

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.

Being a good father is an art that cannot be taught in schools. The main ingredient for success is simply a caring attitude. Fathers who love their families can never completely fail, and children will always remember the influence of a father who tries to do his best. For many children, the memory of a loving father will be the most important influence in their lives.

The love a father feels for his children can take many forms. The only constant is that he shares their lives in a special and irreplaceable way. He feels their hurts as well as their joys, their pains as well as their triumphs. In this way, he plays an indispensable role in their moral development, and they return to him a love and satisfaction that cannot be found anywhere else.

On Father's Day, we pay tribute to all in our society who have taken on the responsibilities and joys of fatherhood. Whether our fathers are near at hand or a continent away, with their families or watching from the light of eternity, we take this day to remember them, to say our thanks for the years they have given us, and to ask that they receive God's blessings.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in accordance with the joint resolution of the Congress (36 U.S.C. 142a), do hereby proclaim Sunday, June 16, 1985, as Father's Day. I invite the States and communities and the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies as a mark of gratitude and abiding affection for their fathers. I direct government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Federal government buildings, and I urge all Americans to display the flag at their homes and other suitable places on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth 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 5351 of June 14, 1985**

**Family Reunion Month, 1985**

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

Family reunions are occasions that renew the feelings of love, pride, and support that nurture our lives. There is no more joyous and poignant family reunion than the return to the family of a child who has run away from home.

The number of young people between the ages of 10 and 17 who ran away from home last year is estimated at more than one million. The heartache of such a breakdown in family relationships is incalculable. But for many thousands of families, the joy of reunion was realized with the return of a son or daughter and a resolution of the conditions that precipitated the flight of the child.

In all likelihood, the return was aided by one of the professionals and volunteers who staff runaway shelters throughout the country. Last year alone, some 200,000 young Americans and their families received counseling aimed at resolving family conflicts and pressures. Almost half the young people who sought help were returned safely to their homes.