

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7152 of November 20, 1998

National Family Week, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Of all the blessings that Americans enjoy, our families are perhaps the most precious. It is within the family that we first gain an understanding of who we are and learn to respect the individuality of others. It is to our families that we turn for the unconditional love, acceptance, comfort, and support we need. And it is our families who teach us how to give that love and support to others, helping us to grow into strong, caring adults who can contribute to the well-being of our communities and our world.

In the broad and diverse America of today, families take many different forms, but they all share a need for security and stability. If we are to maintain strong families as the cornerstone of our society and our hope for the future, it is our responsibility as individuals to strengthen and protect our own families—and it is our responsibility as Americans to reach out with compassion to help other families in need.

My Administration has worked hard to help provide America's families with the tools they need to thrive. Our economic policies have brought dignity, security, and opportunity to millions of families by creating new jobs and reducing unemployment.

The most important work, however, is always done in the hearts and homes of individuals. During this week, I encourage all Americans to reflect upon the many blessings of family life and to join in our national effort to promote strong, loving families across our country. By strengthening and supporting the American family, we are ensuring that the future will be bright for our children, our Nation, and the world.

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 the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 22 through November 28, 1998, as National Family Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to honor American families with appropriate programs and activities. I encourage educators, community organizations, and religious leaders to celebrate the strength and values we draw from family relationships, and I urge all the people of the United States to reaffirm their own family ties and to reach out to other families in friendship and goodwill.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight,

and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7153 of December 1, 1998

World AIDS Day, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On World AIDS Day, we are heartened by the knowledge that our unprecedented investments in AIDS research have resulted in new treatments that are prolonging the lives of many people living with the disease. Thousands of scientists, health care professionals, and patients themselves have joined together to advance our understanding of HIV and AIDS and improve treatment options. Because of the heroic efforts of these people, fewer and fewer Americans are losing their lives to AIDS, and for that we are immensely thankful.

But the AIDS epidemic is far from over. Within racial and ethnic minority communities, HIV and AIDS are a severe and ongoing crisis. While the number of deaths in our country attributed to AIDS has declined for 2 consecutive years, AIDS remains the leading killer of African American men aged 25–44 and the second leading killer of African American women in the same age group. African Americans, who comprise only 13 percent of the U.S. population, accounted for 43 percent of new AIDS cases in 1997 and 36 percent of all AIDS cases. Hispanic Americans represent just 10 percent of our population, but they account for more than 20 percent of new AIDS cases; and AIDS is also becoming a critical concern to Native American and Asian American communities. Young people of every racial and ethnic community are also disproportionately impacted by AIDS, both in the number of new AIDS cases and in the number of new HIV infections. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that approximately half of all new HIV infections in the United States occur in people under age 25 and that one-quarter occur in people under age 22.

Across the world, the situation is even more grim. As with other epidemics before it, AIDS hits hardest in areas where knowledge about the disease is scarce and poverty is high. Of the nearly 6 million people newly infected with HIV each year, more than 90 percent live in the poorest nations of the world. Entire communities are threatened by this epidemic, and the growing number of children who will lose parents to AIDS will have a devastating impact on these societies. By the year 2010, there may be as many as 40 million children who will have been orphaned by AIDS, and developing nations will have to struggle to deal with the overwhelming needs of a generation of young people left without parents.

This year's World AIDS Day theme, "Be A Force For Change," is a reminder that each of us has a role to play in bringing the AIDS epidemic to an end. Our response must be comprehensive and ongoing. It must also be a collaborative one, bringing together governments and communities in a shared effort to expand prevention efforts, raise awareness among young