

people can live and work more independently in the communities of their choosing. And I was pleased to announce on September 21 that dozens of corporate leaders from the technology sector and the presidents of many of America's leading research universities have pledged to make their products and services accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

A new generation of young people with disabilities is growing up in America today—graduating from high school, going to college, and preparing to participate fully in the workplace. They have a right to make the most of their potential, and our Nation must make the most of their intellect, talents, and abilities. By working together to break down barriers for Americans with disabilities, we will keep our economy growing, make a lasting investment in the future of our country, and uphold our fundamental commitment to justice and equality for all our people.

To recognize the enormous potential of individuals with disabilities and to encourage all Americans to work toward their full integration into the workforce, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 11, 1945, as amended (36 U.S.C. 121), has designated October of each year as “National Disability Employment Awareness Month.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 2000 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. I call upon Government officials, educators, labor leaders, employers, and the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities that reaffirm our determination to fulfill the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7348 of September 29, 2000

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Domestic violence transcends all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic boundaries. Its perpetrators abuse their victims both physically and mentally, and the effects of their attacks are far-reaching—weakening the very core of our communities. Domestic violence is particularly devastating because it so often occurs in the privacy of the home, which is meant to be a place of shelter and security. During the month of October, all Americans should contemplate the scars that domestic violence leaves on our society and what each of us can do to prevent it.

Because domestic violence usually takes place in private, many Americans may not realize how widespread it is. According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, conducted jointly by the Centers for Disease Con-

trol and Prevention and the National Institute of Justice, each year in the United States approximately 1.5 million women are raped and/or physically assaulted by their current or former husbands, partners, or boyfriends. Many of these women are victimized more than once over the course of a year. As unsettling as these statistics are, it is also disturbing to realize that the children of battered women frequently witness these attacks, thus becoming victims themselves.

My Administration has worked hard to reduce domestic violence in our Nation and to assist victims and their families. The cornerstone of our efforts has been the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which the Congress passed with bipartisan support in 1994 and which I signed into law as part of our comprehensive crime control bill. This important piece of legislation, which contains a broad array of ground-breaking measures to combat violence against women, combines tough penalties with programs to prosecute offenders and provide assistance to women who are survivors of violence.

In the 6 years since I signed VAWA into law, the legislation has provided more than \$1.6 billion to support prosecutors, law enforcement officials, courts, victim advocates, and intervention efforts. We have quadrupled funding for battered women's shelters, created the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and supported community outreach and prevention programs, children's counseling, and child protection services. The Department of Justice has awarded more than 900 discretionary grants and 280 STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) Violence Against Women formula grants to help State, tribal, and local governments and community-based organizations establish specialized domestic violence and sexual assault units, train personnel, enforce laws, develop policies, assist victims of violence, and hold abusers accountable.

These VAWA programs are making a difference across the country. A recent report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that the number of women experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner declined 21 percent from 1993 to 1998. I call on the Congress to reauthorize and strengthen VAWA so that we may continue to build on the progress we have made in combating domestic violence in our Nation.

Through VAWA and other initiatives and programs, we are striving to create a responsive legal system in American communities that not only prevents domestic violence and sexual assault, but also ensures that every victim has immediate access to helpful information and emergency assistance. By taking strong public action against this crime, we are creating a society that promotes strong values, fosters a safe, loving home environment for every family, and refuses to tolerate domestic violence in any form.

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 laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2000 as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, law enforcement agencies, health professionals, educators, community leaders, and the American people to join together to end the domestic violence that threatens so many of our people.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Inde-

pendence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7349 of September 29, 2000

Child Health Day, 2000

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

As parents and as concerned citizens, we have a profound responsibility to ensure that America's children not only receive a healthy start in life, but also that they continue to grow and develop in a nurturing environment where they have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Recognizing the importance of healthy, happy children to the future of our Nation, my Administration has strived to offer America's families the tools they need to fulfill their responsibilities. In 1997, I was proud to sign into law the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the largest investment in children's health care since the creation of Medicaid 35 years ago. This innovative program allows States to use Federal funds to provide health insurance for children of working families whose incomes are too high to qualify for Medicaid but too low to afford private health insurance. Children with health insurance are more likely to receive the immunizations and other preventive care they need to avoid serious illnesses and to enjoy a healthier start in life. In March of 1997, only 4 States provided such coverage for children. Today, 30 States have plans approved to cover qualified children, and I have proposed an additional \$5.5 billion over the next 10 years to cover even more children and to raise awareness of CHIP among families who may not realize they are eligible.

In addition to quality health care, children need nutritious meals every day. I am pleased that our national school lunch program provides healthy lunches to more than 25 million students in more than 96,000 schools across our nation, ensuring that some of our most vulnerable children can look forward to at least one healthy meal each day. We can also be heartened to know that children enrolled in programs funded under the Department of Agriculture's Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children not only receive the nutritious food they need, but also are immunized earlier, perform better in school, and spend less time in the doctor's office.

Since 1965, in addition to engaging parents in the early educational development of their children, the Head Start program has provided medical, mental health, nutrition, and dental services to more than 17 million children from birth to age 5. My Administration will continue this investment by increasing Head Start funding in our proposed fiscal 2001 budget by \$1 billion—the largest Head Start expansion in history.

It is also our responsibility to ensure that our children feel part of a safe, strong, nurturing community. Through our Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, my Administration is helping parents, school principals, police,