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Last Updated: 05/23/2023



National Poison Prevention Week, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Accidental poisonings, in which children swallow medicines or household chemicals, continue to be a tragic public health problem in our country. Since the first National Poison Prevention Week, in 1962, our Nation's yearly death toll has dropped by more than 80 percent. But even as we rejoice in this progress, we resolve to redouble our efforts to reduce the number and severity of childhood poisonings.

The National Center for Health Statistics reports that in 1984, the most recent year reported, 64 children died after accidentally swallowing household chemicals or medicines. And the American Association of Poison Control Centers in 1984 received more than 360,000 reports of ingestion of poison by children under five.

Thankfully, a number of organizations, private and public, continue to do a great deal to stop these accidents. The Poison Prevention Week Council coordinates a national network of health, safety, business, and voluntary groups to increase public awareness. The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission administers the Poison Prevention Act and requires child-resistant closures on many products that are potentially dangerous to children. The Poison Control Centers throughout our land provide emergency first aid information if poisonings occur. And many State and local health departments, hospitals, pharmacies, cooperative extension agents, and others conduct poison prevention programs. We can be most grateful for the caring and concern shown by these Americans.

To encourage the American people to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take more preventive measures, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 28, 1961 (75 Stat. 681), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of March of each year as "National Poison Prevention Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 15, 1987, as National Poison Prevention Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by participating in appropriate ceremonies and events.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan