



## National Alcohol and Drug Treatment Month, 1989

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Each day, we Americans are confronted by grim reminders of the devastation wrought by excessive consumption of alcohol and other forms of substance abuse. Millions of Americans have suffered, either directly or indirectly, from the consequences of chemical dependency. Substance abuse contributes to accidents resulting in serious injury and death, and it accounts for much of the violent crime on our city streets. Disrupting or destroying the lives of families across the United States, this grave problem has placed our Nation's future at risk.

It has been estimated that as many as one-third of all families in this Nation are affected in some way by alcoholism. Perhaps as many as 18,000,000 Americans are problem drinkers or alcoholics. These estimates point to substantial costs in health care and lost economic productivity, as well as untold human suffering. Women who abuse alcohol or other drugs while pregnant endanger the lives of their unborn children. Alcohol abuse during pregnancy is one of the leading causes of mental retardation in infants; and, today, many of our Nation's hospitals must often treat chemically addicted newborns.

An entire generation is threatened by the use of illicit drugs. Intravenous use of cocaine, heroin, amphetamines, and other drugs is linked to an ever increasing proportion of new AIDS cases in the United States. An estimated 70 percent of children with AIDS have a mother or father who has used drugs intravenously. The use of cocaine alone now accounts for more hospital emergency room episodes than any other legal or illegal drug.

Today, parents, teachers, law enforcement personnel, and government officials are working hard to prevent young people from venturing into the dangerous web of substance abuse. We must continue to teach our children about the perils of experimenting with drugs and alcohol. We must also continue to help them develop the self-esteem, strength of character, and firm moral values that are the surest defense against peer pressure.

Across the country, we are also working hard to provide treatment for those Americans who have drug and alcohol problems. At the State and local level, public and private programs have been established to help these individuals overcome chemical dependency. The dedicated professionals and volunteers who make these programs work deserve our recognition and wholehearted support. The patients and clients struggling to regain control over their lives through these programs deserve our compassion and encouragement. This month, each of us should make a firm commitment to support drug treatment facilities in our communities. Effective rehabilitation and treatment programs are an essential part of our effort to win the war on drugs.

To enhance public awareness of the importance of alcohol and drug treatment services, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 132, has designated the month of September 1989 as "National Alcohol and Drug Treatment Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 1989 as National Alcohol and Drug Treatment Month. I call upon all citizens of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities designed to increase understanding of persons with alcohol and drug problems and to promote recognition of their need for effective treatment and rehabilitation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

*George Bush*