



National Red Ribbon Week for a Drug-Free America, 1989

A Proclamation

By the President of the United States of America

The consequences of illegal drug use have reached epidemic proportions in the United States. Excessive consumption of alcohol and other forms of drug abuse are among the largest causes of preventable illness, disability, and death in our society. Drug use is a public health threat that endangers our society at every level—in our homes, schools, and communities. It weakens our work force and businesses, threatening our Nation's productivity and economic strength. It also threatens the minds, health, and character of our Nation's most valuable resource—our youth.

The problem is not insurmountable, however. Americans have begun to confront the scourge of substance abuse, and we can be pleased with the important, positive strides we have made. Through the dedicated efforts of teachers, parents, celebrities, social service professionals, and volunteers, more and more young children are learning about the dangers of substance abuse. Experience has shown us that education and prevention programs are valuable tools in the fight against drugs. Many of our young people are choosing never to even try them.

Public opinion polls continue to indicate that the American people believe illicit drug use is the most serious domestic problem facing the Nation. With concern at a high level, public and private organizations, businesses, concerned parents, young people, and educators all across America are rallying to host town meetings, conferences, and other activities in support of community drug abuse prevention and education. We must build upon these efforts.

The National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth has seized upon this momentum by promoting the observance of the week beginning October 22, 1989, as "National Red Ribbon Week for a Drug-Free America." This week highlights a comprehensive public education drive involving thousands of parents' groups across the country. It is a time when we encourage all national and community service groups, as well as individual Americans, to exercise leadership, creativity, and determination in achieving a drug-free America. Through their efforts, we reaffirm the right of each and every American to live in a drug-free family, to dwell in a drug-free community, to learn in a drug-free school, to work in a drug-free workplace, and to drive on drug-free highways. Such campaigns are critical in our struggle to liberate the United States from the dangerous cycle of substance abuse and drug-trafficking.

We must get the message across that any use of an illegal drug, the excessive consumption of alcohol, and the use of alcohol by an underaged youth, is unacceptable. At every level, our society must develop an absolute intolerance for illicit drug use.

To mobilize and involve all Americans in efforts directed at preventing and eliminating drug use, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 213, has designated October 22 through October 29, 1989, as "National Red Ribbon Week for a Drug-Free America."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, 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 the week beginning October 22, 1989, as National Red Ribbon Week for a Drug-Free America. I call upon all Americans to join me in observing this week by supporting community drug abuse prevention efforts. I also encourage every American to wear a red ribbon during this week as an expression of his or her commitment to a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of October, 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