



National Family Week, 1989 and 1990

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As individuals, we find in our families a sense of identity, purpose, and security. As a Nation, we find in our families the vision and strength we need to remain a truly free and just society.

A family is more than a group of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption—a family is a community of persons united by their love and their commitment to one another. It is through family life that our Nation's most cherished values and traditions are passed from one generation to the next. Through our experience as members of a family, we learn important lessons about love and faith, duty and fidelity, personal responsibility and concern for others. Because those lessons are conveyed to the community at large, and because the family gives us a model of human relationships after which all other social institutions are fashioned, the strength and integrity of the family are vital to our well-being as a Nation.

Over the years, the family has withstood every assault upon it. It has endured in societies where rulers have sought to subject individuals to the collectivism of the state, and it has survived more subtle attempts to distort or belittle its value as an institution. As one expert on public policy and the family has so eloquently expressed it, "It is as if the family, as the fundamental reality of human society, is the small but stubborn rock that breaks the ideologues' plow of abstractions about human nature."

While the family is the most resilient and enduring of all human institutions, it needs protection and encouragement. Today, our Nation is confronted by problems that are, in large part, consequences of the breakdown of the traditional family. Drug abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, illegitimacy, teen pregnancy, and poverty cost the United States billions of dollars each year in social programs alone. But the waste in dollars pales before the most tragic loss—the waste of human spirit and potential.

As a Nation, we must remain committed to policies and programs that recognize and reinforce the family as the primary source of love and support that every individual needs. We must ensure that our families enjoy the benefits of economic opportunity and political representation, and we must recognize that parents have primary authority in the education of their children. American families need and deserve a cultural and legal framework that encourages and supports stable marriages and family life.

In the inimitable shelter of home and family, we learn how to give and receive love. There we discover the inestimable worth and unalienable rights God has granted each of us; and there we discover the responsibilities we have toward others. Thus, the integrity of the family is essential to our ability to remain a strong and stable Nation. During National Family Week, we renew our determination to strengthen and support the American family. Our children's future, and the future of the United States, depend on it.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 117 (Public Law 101-111), has designated the week of November 19 through November 25, 1989, and the week of November 18 through November 24, 1990, as "National Family Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of these weeks.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the weeks of November 19, 1989, and November 18, 1990, as National Family Week. I invite the Governors of the several States, the chief officials of local governments, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, 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