



## National Poison Prevention Week, 1990

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Since its inception 29 years ago, "National Poison Prevention Week" has encouraged the American people to take measures to prevent childhood poisonings. Today we know that this important public awareness campaign has helped save lives. According to data gathered by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 450 children under 5 years of age died in 1961 after accidentally ingesting medicines or household chemicals. During 1987, the most recent year for which complete statistics are available, 31 deaths from accidental poisoning occurred among children—a 93 percent decrease.

Efforts to promote public awareness, coupled with educational programs for parents and the use of child-resistant packaging, have played a major role in the reduction of poisoning deaths. Offering lifesaving advice and information over the telephone, the Nation's Poison Control Centers have also helped prevent many serious injuries and deaths among children.

While many tragic deaths have been prevented in recent years, we still have much work to do. Each year, more than half a million children are exposed to potentially poisonous medicines or household chemicals, as documented through calls to Poison Control Centers.

More parents and grandparents must recognize their primary role in poison prevention. Accidental poisonings can be prevented if parents, grandparents, and other guardians keep medicines and household chemicals out of the reach of children. Adults should also be sure to store all potentially harmful substances in packages with child-resistant closures.

These important messages are carried across the country by the Poison Prevention Week Council, a coalition of 36 national health, safety, and governmental organizations and agencies concerned with preventing childhood poisonings. The annual observance of "National Poison Prevention Week" provides a special opportunity for Poison Control Centers personnel, educators, pharmacists, and other health professionals to remind every American adult of the need to protect our little ones from accidental poisoning.

To encourage the American people to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take more preventative measures against them, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 26, 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, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 18, 1990, as National Poison Prevention Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by participating in appropriate programs and activities and by learning how to prevent accidental poisonings among children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

*George Bush*