

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION WEEK, 1975

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

The spread of drug abuse across the country continues to threaten the quality of our national life by destroying individual lives, dividing families and disrupting the social structures of our cities and communities.

The economic cost alone, in terms of lost productivity, narcotics-related crime and drug abuse prevention programs, is estimated to be in excess of \$10 billion a year. The toll of human suffering is beyond measure.

The Federal Government, with the cooperation of States, municipalities and concerned community groups, has made marked progress in the last six years. Together, we have reduced both the supply and demand for drugs through vigilant law enforcement and humane treatment and rehabilitation programs. But, unfortunately, the prevalence and incidence of drug abuse remains high. Cities which only two years ago were reporting a decline in heroin use are now reporting an increase, and the demand for treatment continues to rise. These signs must be read realistically as clear signals of danger ahead. This danger is of such national significance that we must dedicate ourselves anew to the task of safeguarding the country against the consequences of drug abuse.

An important focus for our effort must be on developing the self-esteem which is the key to preventing drug abuse and other forms of destructive behavior. Prevention programs which address the broad developmental needs of children and youth and which respond to all the favorable social factors that affect young people offer the best promise of helping solve a range of youth problems, including drug abuse.

Successful prevention programs, however, cannot function in isolation. Experience has taught us that in all programs where prevention efforts have been successful, the local community has been a vital part of program planning, management and financial support.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate and proclaim the week beginning October 19, 1975, as Drug Abuse Prevention Week, 1975.

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I call upon officials of every level of government, upon educators, medical professionals, communicators, upon business communities, our civic groups, the churches and their clergy, and upon all who bear the trust of community leadership to rededicate themselves during this designated week to the prevention of drug abuse in America.

I ask for a coordinated community response in the conduct of drug prevention programs. Where that coordinated response exists, let us reaffirm it, and where it is absent, let us build it.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth,

GERALD R. FORD

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