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Save Your Vision Week, 1982

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The ability to see is precious. We depend on it for every waking moment. Most of us take this gift of sight for granted until it is threatened by disease or injury. There are, however, many things we can do to protect our eyes and prevent visual loss or impairment.

A very important sight-saving precaution is to have regular eye examinations by an eye care professional. Each year, checkups of this sort alert thousands of Americans to the fact that they have serious eye disease and should consider prompt treatment. For many, immediate attention to the eye problem saves vision that might otherwise be lost forever. This is particularly true for the more than one million people in this country who have diabetes. For years, diabetes has been the leading cause of blindness among middle-aged Americans. Now, however, there is a treatment that can help people with diabetic eye disease retain their vision. If all those who need help for this eye problem were to obtain treatment in time, thousands of cases of blindness could be prevented.

Children as well as adults can benefit greatly from regular eye examinations. A routine checkup may reveal some unsuspected eye problem that can be better corrected while a child is still young. Some of these childhood eye problems cause permanent visual loss if left untreated. Others remain correctable, but a delay in treatment may mean years of needless handicap in both schoolwork and play.

Protecting the eyes from injury is another important way to prevent visual impairment and even blindness. Safety glasses, goggles, or face shields should be worn in hazardous situations at work and while participating in potentially hazardous sports.

We should also remember that thousands blinded by corneal disease or injury could have their vision restored by corneal transplants if people would pledge their eyes at death to their local eye bank as a legacy of sight.

To encourage citizens of this country to cherish and protect their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629, 36 U.S.C. 169a), has requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as Save Your Vision Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 7, 1982, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all of our citizens to participate in this observance by making plans to take care of their own eyes and by considering what they can do to protect the vision of family members and co-workers as well. I also invite eye care professionals, the communications media, educators, athletic coaches, and all public and private organizations that support sight conservation to join in activities that will foster concern for eye care and eye safety.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 25th day of Feb., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

Ronald Reagan