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## Missing Children Day, 1983

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Each year hundreds of thousands of American families are confronted with a unique tragedy—a missing child. While most of these children return home safely, far too many are exposed to serious danger and exploitation. Often the child's fate is never known. During the child's disappearance, the family faces an ordeal of imagined horrors and unknown consequences. Finding and safely returning these children to their homes has become a national problem.

Our children are the Nation's most valuable and most vulnerable asset. They are our link to the future, our hope for a better life. Their protection and safety must be one of our highest priorities.

The striking mobility of our society has created special difficulties for the law enforcement agencies that must deal with crimes involving children. The solution to this problem demands the attention and cooperation of all our law enforcement agencies, city, State, and local.

The date of May 25 has particular significance in the cause of missing children. On that day in 1979, six year old Etan Patz disappeared from his home in New York City. Unfortunately, Etan has never been found. His brave parents have fought to increase our awareness of this tragedy and to improve the agencies that work to solve this unique type of crime.

As a Nation and as individuals, we all have a responsibility to direct our resources and our efforts to this worthy goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 25, 1983 as Missing Children Day. I urge officials at all levels of government to take decisive action to ensure the safety and protection of the children in their respective jurisdictions, and I urge all our law enforcement agencies to take particular notice of the danger that threatens any child who has lost his or her home. I urge every American family to take the proper precautions to protect their children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

*Ronald Reagan*